



LINGUOCULTURAL AND SEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF THANKSGIVING DAY LEXEMES IN ENGLISH NATION

Alieva Sarvinoz Abbosjon kizi

aliyevas907@gmail.com

Doctoral student of Fergana State University,
Fergana, Uzbekistan

G.Rozikova

Scientific supervisor

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10005906>

Annotation: This article highlights main lexical units used in people's daily usage during the holiday Thanksgiving in England. Actually, all semantic and lexical phrases will be analyzed by dividing them into three categories: general, food-related and idiomatic expressions. Each category will be explained with reasonable examples.

Key words: Thanksgiving Day, heortonym, onomastics, holiday, food lexemes, idioms, celebration, linguoculturology, semantic analysis.

Introduction

English nation is considered as a rich culture with a great deal of holidays and festivals. Some of them may possess deep history and might have already disappeared while others still can be celebrated and are on the process of transformation during last years. By analyzing most of the English holidays, there will be created real proof of how English people are active and eager to celebrate such wonderful days and these holidays may show how English culture influences social life through different spheres.

All terms and word expressions related to holidays and celebrations are called heortonyms in linguistics and they are studied in the field of onomastics. The name for that linguistic field – Onomastics, originated from Greek language and means “the art of giving name”¹. Onomastics is considered to study any proper names, their origin and transformation times in those names. In uzbek linguistics, heortonyms are proper names of all holidays, festival, ritual, special days, celebrations and so on.

Methods and Methodology

For writing this article, comparative method, semantic, linguocultural, historical, qualitative methods were used in appropriate way. Most of the definitions for lexical units were gathered from online dictionaries, such as Macmillan and Cambridge dictionaries. By applying historical method, certain word and expression lexemes were analyzed and explained properly.

Results, Analysis and Discussion

The term “holiday” derived from Old English haliday² means “holy day, religious anniversary, consecrated day”. In 14th century, the term “holiday” was used as both “religious festival” and “day of exemption from labor and recreation” meanings, but from 16th century it was also utilized as a notion for summer vocation from school. Holy has begun to be used as an intensifying word from the middle of 19th century, such as **holy smoke**, **holy mackerel**,

¹ Бегматов Э., Улуков Н. Ўзбек ономастикаси терминларининг изоҳли луғати. – Наманган, 2006. – Р.24

² <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/holiday>

holy cow, holy moly and so on. Day means “period during which the sun is above the horizon” and also “lifetime, definite time of existence” according to Old English. Some word expressions such as **Day-by-day (daily), all day (all the time), day off (day away from work)**, were originated from the term day.

Celebration and origin of Thanksgiving Day

Thanksgiving Day is regarded as a holiday that began to be celebrated from 1621. At that time, a group of English people travelling to America had been having a very challenging time in adopting to the new culture. Then a group of Native people in America gave a helping hand to those English people for planting food and surviving the difficult winter, therefore they aimed to organize large dinner to give thankfulness to their American friends. In that way they tried to celebrate the fact that they were still alive in order to live on that island. After the organization of big dinner table for native Americans by their English acquaintances, such occasion started to be named Thanksgiving Day due to giving thanks by participants of that holiday.

Most people, of course, invite prayers at Thanksgiving table, but in fact anyone has a chance to participate in Thanksgiving dinner. Actually, there can be observed several types of holidays, such as Muslim Thanksgivings, Christian Thanksgivings and even Atheist Thanksgivings.

Moreover, in Canada people celebrate a holiday named Thanksgiving too, but the celebration is held in October and its origin is absolutely different from the American celebration history of Thanksgiving Day. Americans organize a big dinner table full of all meals and cuisines praying for God to say thanks that they have such things to survive and live.

This article intends to analyze certain lexemes related to Thanksgiving Day in English culture and presents those lexemes in 3 groups:

- General lexemes related to Thanksgiving Day
- Food-related lexemes
- Idioms relevant to Thanksgiving Day

General lexemes related to Thanksgiving Day

Thanksgiving Day is celebrated in most English countries in the world, in fact the second Monday of October in Canada and the fourth Thursday of November in America can present massive celebration of that day with exciting games, activities and huge parades of people. Actually, according to Macmillan dictionary, the lexeme **Thanksgiving**³ derived from the combination of words “thanks” (taken from the Old English and meaning “grateful thought”) and the current participle of the verb “give” (meaning “to bestow or grant” in the Old English). In the Macmillan Dictionary, there are given two definitions for the meaning of **thanksgiving**:

1. An expression of thanks, often in the form of a prayer to God
2. An annual celebration when families gather to eat a special meal and give thanks for the things they are grateful for

Thanksgiving is a noun that indicates to both the act of showing gratitude for good and positive fortune and the American holiday celebrated in November to commemorate the initial harvest at Plymouth colony in 1621. In that place pilgrim settlers shared their dishes with the native Massasoit tribes who helped them. Although lexeme of thanksgiving was seen

³ <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/thanksgiving>

in different cultural phenomenon through centuries, the most well-known version is Thanksgiving Day holiday which is celebrated in Canada and the USA and honors the great deal of the year's harvest. During traditional Thanksgiving Day occasions, there can be seen exciting parades, Canadian and American professional football games, and families gather with their close friends and relatives for a table of roast turkey, cranberry sauce, mashed potatoes and pumpkin pie.

Most people from the USA living in foreign countries frequently celebrate together with their friends or else family members by holding huge Thanksgiving Day dinner table. Native American people living in other countries are called "expats" or "expatriates". Oxford dictionary defines the lexeme expat as a person who is voluntarily absent from home or country. This word is a shortened variant of the lexeme "expatriate" and mostly refers to a person who decided to live away from their native home country, Expatriate originated from the Latin roots ex-, "away from", and patria, "one's native country"⁴. Earlier this term was utilized as a meaning of "someone who is banished", but later it become to be used in the context of "anyone who chooses to live abroad".

Among the group of lexemes related to Thanksgiving, the term **Pilgrim** means one of the settlers in the colony of Plymouth. The Plymouth Pilgrims settled in England then moved to America in the beginning of 1600s. If it is needed to refer to that specific group of people, the word should be capitalized as "Pilgrim". This lexeme, actually, has two definitions according to Oxford dictionary, including "a person who journeys to a sacred place for religious reasons" and "a member of the Pilgrim Fathers". When this word is used in the first meaning, it is not capitalized and written as "pilgrim". Therefore, the special trip made by pilgrim is named a pilgrimage.

A large group of the Pilgrims that celebrated first Thanksgiving and traveled to America from Europe on a boat which was called the **Mayflower**. This lexeme is a combination of May (noun meaning the name of month) and flower (noun meaning the general concept of smaller plants). The Mayflower was regarded as a well-known merchant ship having special significance in British and American history. In 1620, this vessel ferried around hundred passengers and more than 30 crew members from Plymouth to Massachusetts in the USA.

Thanksgiving Day was first celebrated in the form of a **harvest festival**, as a meaning of a good harvest after some challenging years. When the crops are ready enough to gather, the farmers have to bring the crops in from the fields in order to eat or sell them. The lexeme harvest can be a verb (to harvest – to gather crops from the fields) and also a noun (harvest – the time when crops are gathered from the fields, or the act of gathering them).

Additionally, the lexeme **cornucopia**⁵ (also called "**horn of plenty**" (Latin "cornu" meaning "horn" and "copia" meaning "plenty")) is a symbol of a harvest — usually pictured as goat's horn overflowing with various fruits like apples, pears, grapes, etc.; corn on the cob; pumpkin (or gourds); and some even have nuts and flowers. It is usually made from natural materials and is woven like a basket. On Thanksgiving Day, this is filled with all the delicious vegetables and fruits that English people collected on the process of harvest. This is a symbol of both Thanksgiving and harvesting time. Generally, this lexeme can also be used to describe anything that include a huge, amazing variety of items.

⁴ <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/expatriate>

⁵ <https://medium.com/foodie-luv/cornucopia-a-beautiful-symbol-for-celebrating-a-bountiful-harvest-96706ba1183>

Food-related lexemes

A large meal that is served as a special or fun occasion is called a **feast**⁶ and Cambridge dictionary defines this lexeme as a [special meal](#) with very good [food](#) or a [large meal](#) for many [people](#). Moreover, the main and special food that all English people prepare during Thanksgiving Day is a **turkey**, which is actually name of a large strange-looking bird. According to definition provided by Cambridge dictionary, there are five meanings for this word⁷:

- 1) a [large bird grown](#) for [its meat](#) on [farms](#)
- 2) the [flesh](#) of this [bird](#) used as [food](#)
- 3) something that [fails badly](#)
- 4) a [stupid](#) or [silly person](#)
- 5) a [country](#) in [southeastern Europe](#) and [Western Asia](#) (if this lexeme is capitalized and changes to toponym)

Pumpkin pie is also famous dish cooked on that holiday. It is actually pie made from pumpkin. Pumpkin is itself a large, orange fruit. Most English people eat pumpkin pie with whipped cream on top of it. Another typical Thanksgiving foods are **yams** and **sweet potatoes**. English people mostly prepare them, then mash them into a puree and add brown sugar or another sweet ingredients such as marshmallows. When the main Thanksgiving food, turkey is cooked, it tends to be filled with some ingredients such as herbs, celery and cubes of bread depending on the cook's preferences. Putting such ingredients inside the turkey and these things can be called **stuffing** or **dressing** also in some places of England.

Idioms relevant to Thanksgiving Day

The usual phrase that English people tell each other during Thanksgiving is **(to be) thankful (for something)**, which means to be grateful for having something for God. Another one is **(to be) turkey**. If a person is called as a turkey, it means someone who is funny or weird. Actually, this is not related to Thanksgiving, but relevant to the food name, turkey. The large, unusual and rude appearance of the bird turkey is being transformed to a person's character.

A difficult problem or situation that an individual doesn't have any willing to solve can be described in the phrase **hot potato**. In fact, a real hot potato may burn your hand, when you get it on your palms, so this difficulty of touching the hot potato is giving such meaning to problematic situation. This can be also the name of a game that is played in class at schools.

During Thanksgiving, many people receive two days off from work: Thursday and Friday. As a result, many individuals vacation or engage in enjoyable activities in the days after Thanksgiving. Also, since Christmas is typically approximately a month after Thanksgiving, folks have a decent chance to purchase for it a day or two following Thanksgiving. The day after Thanksgiving, however, came to be known as **Black Friday** since it was typically a chaotic, "dark" time to go shopping because many stores were absolutely packed with people. This is because many people had the same idea. In recent years, numerous retailers have started holding "Black Friday Deals," especially with the advent of the Internet.

Conclusion

⁶ <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/feast>

⁷ <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/turkey>

In conclusion, it can be clear that Thanksgiving Day is full of linguistic and linguacultural terms related to the celebration. By doing analysis on those lexemes and phrases, a true culture and living style of English people may be revealed and imagined in a right way. The fact that English people pay a great attention to preserving their own culture while celebrating national and international holidays in the world.

References:

- 1.Mills, David; Neilson Bonikowsky, Laura; McIntosh, Andrew. "Thanksgiving in Canada". Canadian Encyclopedia. Historica Canada. Retrieved October 6, 2017, P.125-128.
- 2.Forbes, Bruce David. America's Favorite Holidays: Candid Histories. University of California Press. October 27, 2015, P. 155.
- 3.Woodlief, H. Graham. "History of the First Thanksgiving". Berkeley Plantation. Retrieved November 23, 2021, P. 79-82.
- 4.Бегматов Э., Улуқов Н. Ўзбек ономастикаси терминларининг изоҳли луғати. – Наманган, 2006, P.24
- 5.Cambridge dictionary
- 6.Oxford dictionary
- 7.Aliyeva, S. A. Q. (2021). LINGUOCULTURAL PROPERTIES OF PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS. CURRENT RESEARCH JOURNAL OF PHILOLOGICAL SCIENCES, 2(11), 135-140.
- 8.Toirova N. et al. LINGUOCULTURAL ANALYSIS OF PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS IN EASTERN CULTURE //FAN, TA'LIM VA AMALIYOTNING INTEGRASIYASI. – 2022. – T. 3. – №. 5. – C. 75-84.
- 9.Sarvinov A., Maftuna A. LINGUOCULTURAL PECULIARITIES OF THE UZBEK GEORTONYM NAVRUZ //IJODKOR O'QITUVCHI. – 2023. – T. 3. – №. 28. – C. 180-186.
10. Zaylobidinovna, R. G. (2023). "AYOL" KONSEPTI BILAN BOG 'LIQ INGLIZ XALQI GEORTONIMLARI. BARQARORLIK VA YETAKCHI TADQIQOTLAR ONLAYN ILMIY JURNALI, 3(3), 518-523.
- 11.Mo'minova, G. (2022, February). Factors affecting vocabulary learning strategy use. In International journal of conference series on education and social sciences (Online) (Vol. 2, No. 2).
- 12.Isakovna T. N. LEXICAL AND STYLISTIC PECULIARITIES OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE. – 2022.
- 13.Sharifovna, S. M. (2023). Using Community Language Learning Approach to Cope with Affective Filters in Second Language Learning. JOURNAL OF EDUCATION, ETHICS AND VALUE, 2(5), 74-77.
- 14.Abduolimova, M. ., & Ibrokhimova, M. . (2023). Metaphors in Marketing: the Benefits of Using Metaphors in Advertising. Pindus Journal of Culture, Literature, and ELT, 3(4), 129–131. Retrieved from <https://literature.academicjournal.io/index.php/literature/article/view/704>
- 15.Kosimova, F. K., & Raxmatullayeva, D. A. (2023). THE SYMBOLIC MEANING OF NUMBERS IN CULTURE. Journal of new century innovations, 28(2), 128-132
- 16.Ganiyeva Dildora, & Yusupova Omina. (2023). JAHON TILSHUNOSLIGIDA ERTAK DISKURSINING O'RGANILISHI. Involta Scientific Journal, 2(5), 118–122. Retrieved from <https://www.involta.uz/index.php/iv/article/view/564>

17. Parpieva Mokhirakhon, Inomova Xurmatoy, & Muqaddam Jurayeva. (2023). A METHOD OF SOUND ORGANIZATION OF ENGLISH AND RUSSIAN ARTISTIC TEXT USING PHONOTYLISTIC LANGUAGE. *Involta Scientific Journal*, 2(4), 135–139.
18. Alimov, S. S., & Yusupova, O. M. (2022). LINGUOCULTURAL FEATURES OF BORROWINGS FROM ENGLISH TO UZBEK LANGUAGE. *Galaxy International Interdisciplinary Research Journal*, 10(1), 1-4.
19. Ravshanjonovna, K. S. (2023). The Meaning of Causative Verbs. *Jurnal Multidisiplin Madani*, 3(1), 14-18.
20. Hakimova, Z. (2021). THE INFLUENCE OF FRENCH BORROWINGS ON THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE. *Студенческий вестник*, (10-4), 13-15. Z. T. Hakimova
21. Mamadjanova, M. U. (2022). O 'ZBEK VA INGLIZ TILLARIDA EPITETNING CHOG 'ISHTIRMA TADQIQI. *ANTONAMAZIYA EPITETLAR. RESEARCH AND EDUCATION*, 1(5), 110-115.