



Article

The Expression of Food Names in Religious Texts

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Abstract: This article examines the lexical-semantic and linguocultural features of food names in religious texts. Based on the Qur'an and Hadith, it explores the role of gastronomic vocabulary in religious discourse and analyzes its denotative, normative, and symbolic meanings. Particular attention is paid to semantic oppositions such as halal–haram, rizq–blessing, gratitude–wastefulness, and pure–impure, which reveal the spiritual and ethical dimensions of food-related lexical units. The study also investigates the religious, cultural, and conceptual significance of food names such as milk, honey, dates, grapes, olives, meat, and other food products. The findings contribute to the study of the religious-gastronomic lexicon of the Uzbek language, religious discourse, ethnolinguistics, and linguocultural studies, while also providing a deeper understanding of the conceptual representation of food in the linguistic worldview.

Keywords: *religious text, gastronomic lexicon, food names, Qur'an, Hadith, religious discourse, lexical-semantic analysis, linguocultural studies, halal, haram, rizq, blessing, food concept.*

1. Introduction

Tourism In religious texts, the names of food items function not merely as lexical units denoting a biological need, but as conceptual units embodying ethical, legal, spiritual, and cultural meanings. In Islamic sources, the concepts of food, drink, table manners, the halal–haram criterion, fasting, iftar, charity, hospitality, gratitude, wastefulness, and rizq (provision) form an interrelated semantic field. For this reason, the analysis of food names in religious texts is of considerable scholarly importance for the gastronomic vocabulary of the Uzbek language, linguoculturology, religious discourse, and ethnolinguistics [1].

2. Literature review.

In the Holy Qur'an, the attitude toward food is primarily interpreted in connection with the criteria of lawfulness and purity. For example, verse 168 of Surah al-Baqarah commands people to eat from the lawful and pure things on earth. In this verse, the units “halal” and “tayyib” appear as the two main religious-normative criteria for evaluating food. “Halal” denotes what is permitted, while “tayyib” denotes purity, benefit, and spiritual-practical acceptability [2]. Thus, in the Qur'anic text, food is not merely something to be eaten, but a concept linked to a person's moral choice, religious responsibility, and spiritual purification. The Qur'an also clearly expresses a normative-legal layer concerning food: verse 3 of Surah al-Ma'idah lists carrion, blood, the flesh of swine, animals

slaughtered in a name other than Allah's, and certain other prohibited products. In these verses, food names do not simply designate an object; rather, they become linked to a religious-legal evaluation, forming the paradigm of "permitted" and "prohibited" units [3]. In this respect, the food-related vocabulary of religious texts is organized around opposing semantic pairs such as "halal-haram," "pure-impure," "permitted-forbidden." In the Qur'an and Hadith, the attitude toward food appears in two main directions:

1. The normative-legal layer concerning permitted and prohibited foods, in which units such as halal, haram, tayyib, rizq, ne'mat (blessing), pure, and impure occupy a central place [4].

2. The culture of eating, i.e., the moral-etiquette order of consuming food, in which practical and spiritual-normative units such as saying "bismillah," eating with the right hand, eating from what is directly in front of oneself, feeding the hungry, avoiding wastefulness, and expressing gratitude are actively employed [5].

These two layers are not separate from one another: while eating lawful food is a religious norm, consuming it with proper manners is a moral-cultural norm. Table manners occupy a special place in Hadith texts. In a hadith narrated by Umar ibn Abu Salama, the Prophet (peace be upon him) instructed him to mention the name of Allah, eat with the right hand, and eat from what was directly in front of him. This hadith points to three important etiquette units regulating the process of eating: "bismillah" as a sign of beginning the meal in a spiritual manner; "the right hand" as a criterion of practical etiquette; and "eating from what is in front of oneself" as a principle of table culture and respect for others. It can thus be understood that in the hadith text, eating is treated not as a physiological need but as a practice connected with upbringing, discipline, and social etiquette [6]. In Islamic texts, the concepts of rizq (provision) and ne'mat (blessing) are also among the central senses of the concept of food. "Rizq" is understood as a person's portion granted by Allah, a source of livelihood, and provision for life, while "ne'mat" reminds one that what has been given must be valued, that gratitude must be expressed for it, and that it must not be wasted. For this reason, in religious discourse, eating food, drinking water, fasting, or breaking the fast is treated not merely as a personal need but as a state connected with gratitude, patience, self-discipline, and social responsibility [7]. The units of fasting, the pre-dawn meal, and the meal for breaking the fast form a distinct group within religious gastronomic vocabulary. Fasting is an act of worship connected with self-discipline, patience, piety, and spiritual purification through temporary abstention from eating and drinking. The pre-dawn meal refers to preparation for the fast, while iftar refers to the practice of breaking one's fast with lawful provision after abstaining throughout the day. In Uzbek linguoculture, units such as the iftar meal, the iftar table, charity, and the breaking of the fast have formed at the intersection of religious norms and national traditions of hospitality [8]. In religious texts, units such as feeding the hungry, giving food to the poor and orphans, and giving charity also carry an important social-moral function; in these units food is interpreted as a sign of compassion, generosity, and social responsibility among people. Therefore, in Islamic discourse, food is not merely a consumable product but also appears as a means of material assistance, religious merit, mercy, collective solidarity, and moral purification. In studying food names in religious texts, lexical analysis alone is not sufficient, since units such as halal, haram, tayyib, rizq, ne'mat, iftar, saharlik, ehson, and isrof do not carry only a lexical meaning but are also connected with religious norms, moral evaluation, social responsibility, and linguocultural memory. For this reason, these units need to be studied comprehensively on the basis of lexical-semantic, discursive, linguocultural, and ethnolinguistic approaches [9].

3. Methodology.

In religious texts, gastronomic vocabulary performs two main functions. First, it names actual food products, beverages, and items derived from animals and plants. Second, it carries spiritual, moral, legal, and social meanings. In this respect, in the texts of the Qur'an and Hadith, food names appear not as simple nominative units but as conceptual units possessing religious-normative and linguocultural content. Food-related units function within opposing yet interconnected semantic fields such as "halal-haram,"

“pure-impure,” “rizq-isrof,” “ne'mat-shukr,” and “hunger-charity.” In the Holy Qur'an, products such as milk, honey, dates, grapes, grain, olives, figs, water, and meat are mentioned as Allah's blessings, as provision, as examples for reflection, and as reasons for gratitude. For instance, verse 66 of Surah an-Nahl describes the emergence of “pure milk” from within livestock for human beings as a sign for reflection. In verses 68–69 of the same surah, the subject of bees and honey is introduced, with honey interpreted as a blessing associated with healing for people. In these verses, milk and honey are used not as mere biological products but as religious-semantic units expressing Allah's power, the wisdom present in nature, and the blessing granted to human beings.

Plant products also carry considerable semantic weight in the Qur'an. Surah an-Nahl mentions the provision obtained from dates and grapes, while verse 99 of Surah al-An'am describes the descent of water from the sky and, through it, the emergence of grain, dates, grapes, olives, and pomegranates as a sign demonstrating Allah's power. In Surah at-Tin, the mention of figs and olives in the form of an oath likewise indicates the symbolic status of these products within the religious text. Thus, in religious texts, the names of plants and fruits express not only the name of a food item but also the senses of creation, provision, example, blessing, and a call to reflection.

Prohibited food items also form a distinct semantic group in religious texts. Verse 3 of Surah al-Ma'idah lists the meat of carrion, blood, swine, animals slaughtered in a name other than Allah's, animals killed by strangling, by a blow, by falling, by goring, or partly eaten by a predator. These units, while being names of actual animal products, also carry religious-legal evaluation. Used within the “haram” paradigm, they define not merely the suitability of food for consumption but its status as religiously permitted or prohibited. In such texts, food names are not confined to simple nomination; they become connected with religious-semantic fields such as “blessing,” “purity,” “lawfulness,” “gratitude,” “piety,” and “charity.” For example, milk is interpreted in connection with purity and natural blessing; honey with healing and abundance; dates with provision and the culture of fasting; water with life and purification; meat with sacrifice and lawful slaughter; and bread and food in general with provision and gratitude. In this respect, the gastronomic vocabulary of religious texts unites theological, moral, and social content.

Table manners also occupy an important place in Islamic texts. Hadiths emphasize practical etiquette such as mentioning the name of Allah before eating, eating with the right hand, eating from what is directly in front of oneself, avoiding wastefulness, feeding the hungry, and honoring guests. According to certain narrations, the Prophet (peace be upon him) stated that a meal becomes complete when four things are present: that the food is lawful, that Allah's name is mentioned while eating, that many hands share the meal, and that praise is offered to Allah after eating. In this hadith, the process of eating appears not merely as a physiological need but as a religious-practical phenomenon connected with upbringing, order, and social etiquette.

The expression of food names in religious texts has also formed a distinct lexical layer in the Uzbek language. Units such as *halal*, *haram*, *rizq*, *ne'mat*, *iftar*, *saharlik*, *ehson*, *qurbonlik* (sacrifice), *nazr* (votive offering), *shukr*, *baraka* (abundance), *savob* (religious merit), *isrof*, and *sadaqa* (alms) are actively used in the religious-gastronomic vocabulary of the Uzbek language. For example, units such as lawful food, lawful meat, the iftar table, the pre-dawn meal, sacrificial meat, votive food, and charitable meals during fasting have formed at the point where religious norms and national eating culture intersect. In these units, the name of the food merges with religious practice, social duty, and cultural etiquette.

The reflection of religious-gastronomic vocabulary in Uzbek linguoculture is especially evident in the rites of Ramadan, Eid al-Adha, iftar, the pre-dawn meal, sacrifice, and charity ceremonies. For example, the iftar table is regarded not only as food prepared for a fasting person to break their fast, but also as a sign of generosity, prayer, hospitality, and communal spirit. Sacrificial meat forms a semantic field connected with worship, charity, distribution, and social assistance. In units such as charitable meals or votive food, food becomes a means of religious merit, memory, intention, and collective compassion. Gastronomic vocabulary in religious texts is realized on two levels:

- a) it names actual products such as milk, honey, dates, grapes, grain, meat, blood, and swine's flesh;
- b) it becomes connected with religious-moral concepts such as halal, haram, tayyib, rizq, ne'mat, gratitude, wastefulness, charity, and piety.

4. Results.

In the text of the Holy Qur'an, food-related units are divided into several groups according to their semantic and functional characteristics. These units not only express the name of a particular product or dish but are also closely connected with religious concepts such as divine blessing, provision, gratitude, purity, lawfulness, trial, and piety. In this respect, the gastronomic vocabulary of the Qur'an is not a simple nominative system but constitutes a complex religious-semantic field [10].

1. Gastronomic units connected with plant products. One of the largest layers of gastronomic vocabulary in the Qur'an consists of the names of plant products, including grain, wheat, barley, dates, grapes, olives, figs, pomegranates, and other fruit and vegetable names. Most of these units are mentioned as signs of Allah's creative power, the provision granted to human beings, and the wisdom present in nature. For example, verses 10–11 of Surah an-Nahl mention the cultivation of crops, olives, dates, grapes, and various fruits by means of rain; these products are described as blessings necessary for human life, calling for reflection on the power of the One who created them [11]. Likewise, verses 99–141 of Surah al-An'am mention various fruits, dates, and grain products as sources of human provision. Here, gastronomic units, in addition to being names of biological food products, become connected with the concepts of "rizq," "baraka," and "shukr." One of the most frequently mentioned plant names in the Qur'an is the olive. The olive is used not only as a food product but also as a symbol of light, purity, and blessing. Verse 35 of Surah an-Nur mentions the olive tree as a blessed tree. Surah at-Tin itself begins directly with the words "By the fig and the olive...". This further reinforces the symbolic status of these products within the religious text [12].

2. Gastronomic units connected with animal products. This layer includes milk, meat, fish, and other seafood, as well as the names of animals connected with the rite of sacrifice. Verse 66 of Surah an-Nahl describes milk as a "pure drink, palatable to those who drink it." Although the verse notes that milk is extracted from within the bodies of livestock, it emphasizes that it is a pure and beneficial blessing for human beings. For this reason, milk in the Qur'an is interpreted not only as a food product but as a sign of divine wisdom and power. Units connected with meat also occur in several contexts: in some verses, the description of the blessings of Paradise mentions the meat of birds and other meat products, where meat becomes connected with the semantics of pleasure and reward [13].

Regarding seafood, verse 96 of Surah al-Ma'idah mentions the lawfulness of hunting at sea and the food obtained from it. This verse is regarded in Islamic jurisprudence as one of the important pieces of evidence concerning the consumption of aquatic products, clearly demonstrating the religious-legal function of gastronomic units.

In verses related to sacrifice, the names of animals such as camel, cow, sheep, and goat occur. Verses 34–37 of Surah al-Hajj describe the rite of sacrifice and its spiritual essence. In particular, the verse stating that "It is neither their meat nor their blood that reaches Allah, but it is your piety that reaches Him" (al-Hajj, 37) shows how gastronomic units are transformed into a religious symbol.

3. Units connected with the semantics of healing and blessing. In this group, honey occupies a special place. Verses 68–69 of Surah an-Nahl describe the activity of bees, noting that honey comes in different colors and contains healing for people. Owing to these verses, honey has come to be formed in Islamic thought as a unit possessing a meaning broader than that of a mere food product; it becomes connected with senses such as "blessing," "healing," "the miracle of nature," and "divine wisdom." In exegetical sources, the mention of honey is explained in connection with a person's physical and spiritual well-being. For this reason, honey, in addition to being a gastronomic unit in the religious text, also acquires linguocultural and theological content. The verses concerning the rivers of

milk, honey, and wine found in descriptions of Paradise likewise demonstrate the religious-aesthetic function of gastronomic units, where food names become a descriptive means for the blessings of Paradise.

4. Units connected with prohibited products. This layer is one of the clearest manifestations of religious-legal content. Verse 3 of Surah al-Ma'idah lists carrion, blood, the flesh of swine, animals slaughtered in a name other than Allah's, and animals killed by strangling, by a blow, by falling, or partly eaten by a predator. Similar prohibitions are repeated in verse 173 of Surah al-Baqarah, verse 115 of Surah an-Nahl, and verse 145 of Surah al-An'am. These units are used in the Qur'an not as the names of biological products but as a religious-legal category, through which the dietary norms of a Muslim are established. In this respect, gastronomic vocabulary becomes a means of juridical (fiqh) regulation. As many studies have noted, the system of lawful and unlawful products in the Qur'an is based not only on hygienic or biological criteria but also on religious-moral principles. As a result, food units become closely connected with the concepts of "piety," "obedience," "purity," and "responsibility."

Discussions. From the analysis presented above, it can be seen that the gastronomic vocabulary of the Holy Qur'an is divided into the main groups of plant products, animal products, units connected with the semantics of healing and blessing, and prohibited products. In addition to naming actual food products, all of these units also express religious concepts such as provision, blessing, purity, gratitude, piety, lawfulness, and divine power. For this reason, the study of food names in the Qur'an is not merely a lexicological issue but also serves as an important scholarly source for linguocultural, ethnolinguistic, and religious-discursive research [14].

In religious texts, food names carry denotative, normative, and symbolic meanings.

1. At the denotative level, the name of a product or dish denotes an actual object: units such as milk, honey, dates, grapes, grain, meat, blood, water, olives, and figs are used directly as the names of food items or beverages.

2. At the normative level, whether the given object may or may not be eaten, whether it is pure or impure, and whether it falls within the sphere of the permitted or the forbidden is determined.

3. At the symbolic level, the names of food and products are interpreted as signs of blessing, healing, provision, gratitude, trial, piety, or divine power [15].

5. Conclusion.

Food names and units related to eating in religious texts form the spiritual-semantic layer of the gastronomic vocabulary of the Uzbek language. Within this layer, product names denote actual objects, but at the same time they also express religious-moral oppositions such as halal-haram, gratitude-wastefulness, provision-blessing, and generosity-responsibility. For this reason, the comprehensive lexical, semantic, moral, and linguocultural analysis of gastronomic units in religious texts is of significant scholarly importance in illuminating the spiritual dimensions of the concept of "food" in the Uzbek language.

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