



Integrating The DLC Framework And Culinary Context In English Language Teachingannotatsiya

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Abstract

This article presents an innovative pedagogical approach based on the integration of the Dominant Language Constellations (DLC) theory and foodways in teaching English to Uzbek-speaking learners. The study is fundamentally defined by the necessity to move away from traditional monolingual paradigms and link language learning with the student's personal experience and cultural heritage. The article analyzes how culinary terminology, being closely intertwined with sensory and synesthetic memories (smell, taste, color), serves as a powerful tool for reinforcing vocabulary and creating emotional connections. The DLC framework allows learners to harmonize their native language and cultural identity with the process of acquiring English. Practical activities include menu analysis, simulation of culinary shows, and writing essays based on food memories. This methodology develops not only linguistic skills but also intercultural communicative competence and tolerance toward the concept of "otherness." The final conclusion emphasizes that integrating food culture into language education improves academic results while supporting the psychological well-being and personal development of students in a multilingual environment. For educators, this approach helps maximize students' multilingual repertoires.

Keywords: Dominant Language Constellation (DLC), ELT, foodways, culinary lexicon, intercultural communication, Uzbek learners.

DLC Yondashuvi Va Pazandachilik Madaniyati Orqali Ingliz Tili Leksikasini O'Rgatisht

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Ushbu maqola o'zbek tilida so'zlashuvchi o'quvchilarga ingliz tilini o'rgatishda Dominant til turkumlari (DLC) nazariyasi va pazandachilik madaniyati (foodways) integratsiyasiga asoslangan innovatsion pedagogik yondashuvni taqdim etadi. Tadqiqotning asosi an'anaviy bir tilli paradigmalardan voz kechib, til o'rganishni o'quvchining shaxsiy tajribasi va madaniy merosi bilan bog'lash zarurati bilan belgilanadi. Maqolada pazandachilik terminologiyasining sensor va sinestetik xotiralar (hid, ta'm, rang) bilan bog'liqligi, uning lug'at boyligini mustahkamlashda va hissiy bog'liqlikni shakllantirishda kuchli vosita ekanligi tahlil qilinadi. DLC tizimi o'quvchilarga o'z ona tili va madaniy o'zligini ingliz tilini o'zlashtirish jarayoni bilan uyg'unlashtirish imkonini beradi. Amaliy mashg'ulotlar sifatida menyular tahlili, pazandachilik shoulari simulyatsiyasi va oziq-ovqat xotiralari asosida esse yozish kabi usullar qo'llaniladi. Bu metodika nafaqat lingvistik ko'nikmalarni, balki madaniyatlararo muloqot kompetensiyasini hamda "o'zgalik" (otherness) kontseptsiyasiga nisbatan bag'rikenglikni rivojlantiradi. Yakuniy xulosada ta'kidlanishicha, taom madaniyatini til ta'limiga integratsiya qilish akademik natijalarni yaxshilash bilan birga, ko'p tilli muhitda o'quvchilarning psixologik farovonligi va shaxsiy rivojlanishini qo'llab-quvvatlaydi. Pedagoglar uchun bu yondashuv o'quvchilarning ko'p tilli imkoniyatlarini maksimal darajada oshirishga xizmat qiladi.



Kalit so‘zlar: Dominant til turkumlari (DLC), ELT (ingliz tilini o‘qitish), taomlanish madaniyati (foodways), pazandachilik leksikasi, madaniyatlararo muloqot, o‘zbek o‘quvchilari.

Обучение Английской Лексике Через Подход Dlc И Культуру Питания

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Аннотация

В данной статье представлен инновационный педагогический подход, основанный на интеграции теории доминантных языковых созвездий (DLC) и культуры питания (foodways) в обучении английскому языку узбекоязычных учащихся. Основа исследования определяется необходимостью отказа от традиционных монолингвальных парадигм и связи изучения языка с личным опытом и культурным наследием учащегося. В статье анализируется роль кулинарной терминологии как мощного инструмента укрепления словарного запаса и формирования эмоциональной привязанности через сенсорные и синестетические воспоминания (запах, вкус, цвет). Система DLC позволяет учащимся гармонизировать родной язык и культурную идентичность с процессом освоения английского языка. В качестве практических занятий используются такие методы, как анализ меню, симуляция кулинарных шоу и написание эссе на основе воспоминаний о еде. Данная методика развивает не только лингвистические навыки, но и межкультурную коммуникативную компетенцию, а также толерантность к концепции «инородности» (otherness). В заключении подчеркивается, что интеграция культуры питания в языковое образование улучшает академические результаты, поддерживая психологическое благополучие и личностное развитие учащихся в полиязычной среде. Для педагогов этот подход служит инструментом максимального расширения многоязычных возможностей учащихся.

Ключевые слова: Доминантные языковые созвездия (DLC), ELT (Обучение английскому языку), культура питания (foodways), кулинарная лексика, межкультурная коммуникация, узбекские учащиеся.

Introduction

The recognition of the rich and diverse complex of languages in society is a primary focus of modern multilingualism research. Nevertheless, scholars note a significant hierarchy (stratification) regarding the value of various languages both within educational institutions and among the public. This hierarchical approach often prioritizes global languages while bypassing local ones. The Dominant Language Constellations (DLC) perspective proposes a move away from this stratification, as it does not place one language above another but emphasizes their functional harmony. Introduced by Larissa Aronin [2,3], the DLC concept represents a set of languages that perform vital communicative functions for individuals or communities. While multilingual individuals may know several languages, a DLC typically includes the three most actively used languages; these are often local, official, and international languages. In diverse environments where many languages are spoken, individuals utilize multiple DLCs at personal, collective, and national levels [19]. The multimodal nature of DLC can be considered not only from a linguistic or cultural perspective but also in terms of the material culture associated with these languages [4,16].



DLCs form holistic linguistic units that evolve dynamically as a result of the interaction between constituent languages. DLC maps visually depict language usage within individual repertoires and DLC clusters. Being adaptable to changing conditions, DLCs can shift when life events trigger the activation or deactivation of languages within the constellation. This natural multilingual dynamic involves the redistribution of language functions and the continuous evolution of language proficiency and usage. Although DLC does not imply a hierarchy, this does not mean equal roles or emotional attachments for every language within it. Rather, languages within a DLC perform different roles and carry different weights based on factors such as proficiency level, time of use, and emotional connection.

DLC is a multimodal entity encompassing not only pure linguistic features but also the cultures and materialities associated with language. Food, in turn, is closely linked to culture, lifestyle, and materiality. We focus on analyzing the relationship between the various languages spoken by individuals [5,6] and eating habits in communities, highlighting the dominant or influential languages within these constellations [25]. In this article, we examine the linguistic and material aspects of DLC in their unity. During the sessions, our students researched culinary concepts and their impact on human life at both local and international levels. They reconsidered their perceptions of "otherness" and learned to identify and analyze food models and their roles in our modern era [18,28]. They also had the opportunity to taste various "national" and "fusion" dishes and analyze how emotion, history, and migration relate to language and cultural practices.

In various communities, children's access to diverse food is determined not only by family income but also by tradition [17]. Taste, smell, evaluative-emotional vocabulary, and perceptions of tasty and healthy food are shaped accordingly. It is reasonable to assume that as individuals explore the world of food, their identities develop progressively. Memories of childhood meals and foods tasted during travels become a treasury of personal experience, serving as both a criterion for perfection and a sign of dread [10,26]. The status of personal memories in relation to socio-historical construction and the narration of shared memories in oral history raises questions about the risk of accepting collective discourses without critical analysis. Nevertheless, alternative approaches to examining individual and collective memories can be explored [27]. As cultural blending becomes common in everyday family life, traditional home meals are increasingly at risk [1]. Dual cultural eating habits show how people manage their sense of belonging, balancing integration and separation in their relationships with the host society. Nonetheless, individuals continue to link their past eating experiences with specific events and their former identities [15]. This article highlights the value and flexibility of DLC theory in education and includes recommendations for designing an educational module that links the study of diverse food practices with the study of language and culture [11]. Helping students develop culinary vocabulary in their DLC can contribute to preserving the mother tongue and embracing cultural hybridity from the perspective of linguistic anthropology [29]. The research question focuses on analyzing how students integrate the concepts gained from practical lessons with their own experiences.

Literature Review and Methodology

In this study, we analyze practical lesson materials, learning journals, and essays. Our research combines pedagogical and sociolinguistic approaches. Our goal was to understand which aspects of multilingualism and multiculturalism teachers manifest in their lessons, as well as to investigate the methods through which students can explore and analyze these dimensions. We conducted research essentially on the application of research methods—a form of reflexive inquiry [20,23,24]. That is, we studied how students worked with these methods as part of the learning process, which allows us, as teachers, to reflect on further developing the lessons.



This work is a qualitative case study analyzing how students applied research methods during a university-level course. Thematic analysis was used to study how students selected, understood, and implemented research methods, as well as how their methodological thinking developed during the course.

Discussion

Gastronomy and food culture, as integral parts of human civilization, inspire many things, including the educational process. It is well known that the close connection between food and culture provides motivation for language learning. The existence of specialized language courses for tourists wishing to learn culinary arts on-site confirms the linguistic component of dining. The processes of shopping, cooking, and eating can be accompanied by vocabulary building and the study of idioms and specific language structures [9,12]. Consequently, teachers often use food-related stimuli to explain and activate complex language concepts for students. For culinary students in technical and vocational education, training also involves logical thinking and problem-solving, developing practical skills, and adapting activities to various educational stages and cultural conditions.

The topic of food is a flexible tool for teaching language to both young children and adults. Young children draw and describe food, which develops their synesthetic perception. They visualize concepts by creating imaginary sandwiches, salads, and soups. Food-themed games support a playful approach to grammar. The taste of food is linked to many aspects of civilization and culture [8,21,22]. Analyzing recipes offers examples of intercultural communication and text structure. Role-playing in an imaginary TV show certainly aids speech development. All these activities involve intensive language practice. Through culinary practices, both old and new texts are taught, familiar ones are seen from a new perspective, and in every case, it serves as a cross-cultural comparison [30].

The practical portion of this study comprehensively explored culinary traditions and their impact on human life at local and global scales. The sessions were designed to encourage students to reconsider their perceptions of "otherness" and to analyze food models and their contemporary roles. The central theme during the sessions was the idea of ethnic and linguistic connections influenced by historical and modern proximity and migration.

In their essays, students focused more on their own memories, linking them with what they learned during the practical sessions. Students recalled synesthetic images focused on nature-related activities, such as picking herbs and stones, closely associated with visiting grandmothers' houses and adventures in nature. Students' independent work generally reflected their academic interests, such as comparative linguistics and the study of linguistic landscapes. They analyzed the origins of dishes, their reflection in stories, menu composition, and cultural influences. The results emphasize the role of food as a cultural connector, aligning with DLC theory, which highlights the interconnectedness of language, culture, and identity. By studying the nuances of menu composition, cultural influences, and dining experiences, the students' research showed that food serves as a means of expressing cultural identity and strengthening connections between different communities. This aligns with theoretical views that language and culture are intertwined, influencing individuals' perceptions and interactions in a social context [13].

These findings demonstrate the deep connection between language, food, culture, and identity, showing that culinary traditions serve as markers of historical influences and social interactions. The sessions successfully engaged students in both theoretical and experiential learning, integrating information and research to enhance their understanding of international food practices and dominant language constellations. One of the key conclusions is the role of food as a cultural bridge, showing how ethnic and linguistic connections shape culinary traditions [31]. Students' reflections added another dimension to the research by linking



personal experiences with broader cultural and linguistic themes. The emphasis on synesthetic memories linking food with sensory and emotional experiences shows how deeply culinary traditions are rooted in identity formation. Furthermore, menu language and restaurant ethnographies align with DLC theory, which emphasizes the interaction between language, culture, and social identity. The activity effectively demonstrated that food is not merely sustenance—it is a symbol of cultural heritage, a means of communication, and a tool for community building.

Beyond its educational and cultural significance, food plays a vital role in shaping identity and belonging. For individuals, the lack of food security is not just a physical nourishment issue but a cultural and emotional challenge. Limited access to familiar ingredients or culturally appropriate foods can exacerbate feelings of alienation and loss. Conversely, the ability to cook traditional meals or share culturally-based food can reinforce identity and provide a sense of stability in a new environment. Therefore, culinary practices become a form of cultural expression and resilience. When integrated into language education, such practices not only aid linguistic development but also support intercultural understanding and psychological well-being. DLC theory provides a valuable framework for understanding these dynamics by emphasizing the role of food and language in facilitating emotional connections and cultural diversity.

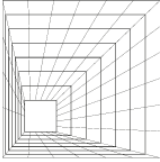
Results

Our pedagogical experiment and observations focused on an in-depth study of culinary concepts and their impact on human life at local and global scales. This process prompted students to reconsider their perceptions of "otherness" and to analyze food models and their place in modern society from a sociolinguistic perspective. The curriculum included studying food cultures and culinary traditions specific to various geographical regions, creating a rich semiotic landscape for language learning. The core content of all sessions consisted of the idea of ethnic and linguistic connections formed under the influence of historical and modern proximity and migration processes.

Historical cases studied within the research show that food culture is dynamic and in constant change [8,21,22]. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, a large number of Indians, primarily from Punjab and Bengal, moved to the western United States to work in farming and railroad construction. Due to discrimination and bans on interracial marriage, many Indians began families with Mexicans, leading to a fusion of their cuisines. This synthesis resulted in new, hybrid dishes such as "curry chicken enchiladas." This phenomenon is a clear example of how cultural identity is reshaped through language and food. For a long time, Indian food in the United States was largely perceived as "buffet-style," cheap, and low-quality food. However, today the weight of Indian restaurants offering high-level "American" interpretations or fusion styles is increasing, reflecting the development of Indian food culture in the US and indicating a shift in the sociolinguistic context of language learning.

People attach special importance to memories associated with their food. Beyond a simple collection of ingredients, food has a unique quality in the human mind capable of reviving complex emotions; every scent and taste brings the past to life. While family celebrations serve as examples of ceremonial rituals, food becomes the central element in remembering traditions. Despite varying cultural interpretations of holidays, the symbolic meaning of food remains constant. It is a unifying force that stands above socio-economic barriers, allowing families to participate in shared values and experiences.

Since DLC theory studies the dynamic interaction between dominant and subordinate languages in an individual's repertoire, it can be applied to understand the role of food in the migrant experience. Similar to how languages evoke emotions and express cultural identity, food serves as a powerful symbol of heritage and identity for migrants. It acts as a substitute



for lost possessions, providing a material connection to the homeland that is difficult to recreate in a new environment. Food, like language, facilitates social connections and often becomes the center of family and holiday celebrations, strengthening the sense of community and belonging. The feelings of security and happiness derived from familiar culinary practices play a crucial role in enhancing well-being and developing identity. In this process, children often act as cultural mediators, influencing their parents' food choices and contributing to cultural evolution.

During the sessions, students reflect on food names, the language of recipes, menus as a means of advertising, olfactory experiences, names of spices, tastes, and concepts such as "delicious," "cheap," "home-cooked," "pure," and "clean." However, in their essays, they focused more on personal memories, linking them with information heard in class. Specifically, all Uzbek students recalled synesthetic images closely linked to visiting their grandparents' homes and adventures in nature: "In my childhood, I was often woken up by the smell of hot bread and butter my grandmother made for breakfast"; "I remember how we used to make sumalak together." Students reflect on unique culinary experiences gained at their paternal and maternal grandparents' homes, focusing primarily on various activities in nature. From the aromatic scent of traditional yopgan non (bread) spreading from the tandir (oven) to the unique taste of sumalak—every dish served in the grandparents' home was saturated with feelings of warmth and nostalgia.

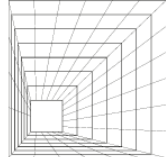
In contrast, American students recalled being exposed to a variety of flavors from a very early age, as their daily consumption often came from restaurants. Family gatherings, particularly Thanksgiving, are marked by abundant food, cheerfulness, and specific traditions such as a grandfather smoking a cigar and the complex processes of food preparation.

Students' independent work usually reflected their academic interests. Students immersed in comparative linguistics and linguistic landscapes compared how the same dish is named in menus or on signs in different languages. One student, analyzing this research direction using English cuisine as an example, analyzed the TV series "Jamie's Great Britain" by famous British chef Jamie Oliver.

In this TV show, British food culture is portrayed as a "melting pot" where traditional dishes and global influences blend. The student reflected on regional interpretations of classic fish and chips, the cultural significance of the Sunday roast, and hybrid flavors like tikka masala (an Indian-influenced dish) which is an integral part of British cuisine. The analysis also explored the diversity of street food, particularly flavors and spices found in places like London's Borough Market—concepts like mint sauce or gravy and how they are used in English culinary discourse. These results highlight the role of food as a cultural connector and fully align with DLC theory, which emphasizes the interconnectedness of language, culture, and identity.

Conclusion

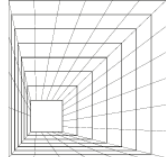
The concept of Dominant Language Constellations (DLC) serves as a foundation for studying language practices and facilitates the transition from a monolingual to a multilingual paradigm. This approach is effective in studying the new culinary practices and the discourse dedicated to them among indigenous and migrant populations. The absence of a strict hierarchy within DLC opens new horizons in language policy. This approach offers invaluable opportunities, especially for multilingual countries and minority languages facing complex problems regarding language choice in the education system. Language policy experts working within the DLC framework prioritize the acquisition and use of languages considered important for their communities, which differs from traditional social assumptions about language status [7].



Food studies is a close and rapidly expanding branch of the humanities. It is an excellent lens for researching modern cultural practices related to migration, sense of belonging, cultural hybridity, and many concepts of identity. Taking languages into account within the DLC framework, it is necessary to recognize their connection with various aspects of human experience, including the brain, body, material environment, culture, and natural environment.

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