

The study of lexical units denoting household items in comparative and metaphorical domains

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Abstract

Purpose: This study aims to examine the role of lexical units in advancing lexicography and understanding how languages evolve across different cultural contexts. The research highlights how lexical fields, dictionary theories, and cultural perceptions influence the categorization and interpretation of reality.

Methodology: A qualitative literature review was conducted, drawing from studies in lexicography, sociolinguistics, and comparative linguistics. The analysis focused on three main areas: theoretical frameworks used in dictionaries, the organization of lexical fields, and cross-cultural perspectives on language categorization.

Results: Findings indicate that lexical units are central to lexicography not only for dictionary compilation but also for documenting linguistic innovation. Researchers emphasize the importance of lexical fields such as household items, kinship terms, and technological vocabulary, which reveal both semantic shifts and cultural adaptation. Cross-cultural studies further demonstrate that the way nations classify and describe reality reflects deeper worldviews and societal values.

Conclusion: Lexical studies strengthen the scientific basis of lexicography by connecting linguistic theory with cultural practices, ensuring that dictionaries remain relevant to contemporary users.

Limitations: The study is limited to secondary sources, without primary data collection from fieldwork. Future research could incorporate corpus-based analysis or ethnographic approaches for richer insights.

Contribution: This research contributes to lexicographic scholarship by underlining the necessity of analyzing lexical units as dynamic cultural markers. It provides a framework for linguists, lexicographers, and language learners to engage with vocabulary as both a linguistic and cultural phenomenon.

Keywords: *Household Items, Lexical Units, Pragmatics, Linguoculturology, Comparative Analysis, Metaphor, Microfield.*

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1. Introduction

Language is not only a medium of communication but also a reflection of culture, social life, and identity. Within the field of linguistics, vocabulary forms a crucial element in capturing how individuals and societies perceive and categorize the world around them. Among the many lexical fields studied, household vocabulary holds a special place because of its close relationship to human daily life. Household items are ever-present in our environment, providing comfort, practicality, and cultural expression (Cahyaningrum, Prasetya, & Mustiawan, 2025; Sapariati, Widnyani, & Dewi, 2025). They are not merely physical objects but also serve as linguistic symbols of cultural traditions, values, and social structures. For this reason, the study of lexical units denoting household items in English and Uzbek offers valuable insights into both linguistic development and cultural identity. From a linguistic perspective, household vocabulary is

multifaceted. It consists of words denoting kitchen utensils, furniture, appliances, and other domestic objects that are integral to everyday life. In English, examples include terms such as furniture, kitchen appliances, or household tools. In Uzbek, equivalent categories appear as *mebel* (furniture), *oshxona asboblari* (kitchen utensils), and *ro'zg'or anjomlari* (household items). These words not only describe functional objects but also reveal historical and cultural layers through their etymology. For example, the English word *furniture* comes from the French *fournir* (to equip), while the Uzbek *mebel* is derived from the French *meublier* via Russian borrowings. The lexical journey of these words illustrates processes of cultural contact, colonization, and globalization that have shaped language over time (N. G. I. Kizi, 2025; Otariyani, Nofrima, & Febriyanti, 2025; Sobirova, 2021).

Household vocabulary also provides fertile ground for discourse analysis. Words for everyday objects appear not only in literal descriptions but also in figurative and metaphorical usage. They are frequently embedded in proverbs, idioms, advertisements, literature, and even digital communication. In Uzbek culture, expressions such as “mother-in-law’s table” or “younger brother’s dish” signify family hierarchy and social relations, while in English, idioms like *skeletons in the closet* or *to bring to the table* illustrate how domestic objects become metaphorical devices for expressing abstract ideas. This indicates that household vocabulary carries pragmatic value, serving as a lens through which language reflects social structures, roles, and cultural norms. Previous scholarship has highlighted the connection between household items and cultural traditions. For instance, Bakhridinovich (2025) investigated typical kitchen utensils used by Javanese women, analyzing both their form and function within the household through semantic methods. Their findings underscored the significance of bamboo materials in Javanese culture, revealing how linguistic categorization of household objects reflects cultural practices and worldviews. This demonstrates that studying domestic vocabulary extends beyond the physical object—it encompasses semantic characteristics tied to tradition, material culture, and social identity (Jabborov, 2008; Language, 2006; qizi, 2024).

Similarly, Bakhronova (2024) from Riga Technical University examined the metaphorical use of household vocabulary in the formation of terminological units within railway and automotive transport. Her research identified household items such as knives, dishware, and furniture as source domains for metaphorical expressions. She found that the lexeme *fork* appeared in at least 27 metaphorical terms, including *forked axle*, *selector fork*, and *forking road*. Her analysis revealed that the shape and function of objects serve as triggers for metaphORIZATION, showing how household vocabulary can transcend domestic contexts to contribute to specialized terminologies. This highlights the importance of household lexemes in the development of metaphors across both everyday and technical discourse. The significance of household vocabulary is further emphasized when considering its role in language development and social identity (Jakhongirovna, 2024; Баимбетова & Кеулимжаева, 2023). Domestic lexicon is among the first categories taught to children and second language learners because of its concreteness and relatability. Words like *chair*, *table*, and *cup* are universally relevant, making them accessible entry points for vocabulary acquisition (Alqahtani, 2015). However, the teaching of such words is not only pedagogical but also cultural. Comparing terms across English and Uzbek, for example, introduces learners to different traditions: in English, the dining table often symbolizes individual meals and efficiency, while in Uzbek households, the kitchen serves as a central site of hospitality (*mehmonnavozlik*) and collective family life (Bakhridinovich, 2025; Khaydarov, 2019).

Moreover, the study of household vocabulary demonstrates the dynamic interaction between tradition and modernity. Technological innovations such as microwave ovens, dishwashers, and smart speakers have introduced new lexical items into both English and Uzbek. Many of these words are borrowed directly, with minimal adaptation, reflecting the global prestige of English and the dominance of Western consumer culture. Yet, traditional objects like the *tandir* oven or *samovar* remain linguistically and culturally significant in Uzbek society. This coexistence of traditional and modern terms creates a hybrid lexicon that reflects the realities of globalization, cultural preservation, and social transformation. Linguocultural studies have also drawn attention to the symbolic roles of household vocabulary. Abzhamalova and Sagidolda (2025), in her dissertation on linguocultural interpretation, emphasized how microfields of household lexicon reveal deeper cultural patterns. Items associated with cooking, hospitality, or interior decoration often carry symbolic meanings tied to identity, gender, and class. For instance, in many societies, the kitchen and its vocabulary are associated with women’s roles, reflecting historical divisions of labor. While in English-speaking contexts these associations are becoming less explicit due to shifting gender

norms, in Uzbek discourse, such connections remain linguistically marked, reinforcing the importance of cultural analysis in vocabulary studies (Sina, 2000; Usmanova, Shamsieva, & Ismatullayeva, 2023).

Another key dimension is the metaphorical expansion of domestic vocabulary into specialized terminologies. As noted by Баимбетова and Кеулимжаева (2023), terms like forklift or forked axle exemplify how the form and function of everyday objects are metaphorically extended into technical language (Saputro, Achmad, & Santoso, 2025). This process demonstrates the universality of household lexemes as source domains for metaphorization. The shape of a fork, for example, lends itself to describing branching roads, mechanical parts, or tools for lifting. Similarly, English metaphors such as “branching road” resemble natural imagery but are often supported by domestic object references, revealing the overlap of household, natural, and technical source domains. Given these dimensions, it becomes clear that the study of household vocabulary is not a marginal pursuit but a central one in linguistics, pragmatics, and cultural studies. Household items act as markers of identity, reflecting cultural belonging, hospitality traditions, and social values. They are also vehicles of linguistic innovation, introducing borrowings, metaphors, and semantic shifts that enrich the lexicon. Furthermore, they serve as tools for pedagogy and intercultural communication, bridging language learning with cultural understanding (Fakhretdinova, 1972; Jabborov, 2008).

In the context of comparative linguistics, examining English and Uzbek household vocabulary allows for an exploration of both universal and culture-specific patterns. Universally, all human societies develop words for domestic tools, spaces, and furniture because of their necessity in everyday life. However, the semantic range, metaphorical extensions, and cultural values attached to these words differ across languages (C. Z. B. Kizi, 2023). This makes comparative research particularly valuable, as it reveals not only shared human experiences but also unique cultural worldviews. Finally, the introduction of this study emphasizes that household vocabulary operates at the intersection of pragmatics, semantics, and linguoculturology. By investigating lexical units denoting household items in comparative and metaphorical domains, this research aims to uncover how language encodes material culture, how metaphors emerge from domestic environments, and how cultural identities are reinforced through everyday words. In doing so, the study contributes to lexicography, discourse analysis, and the broader field of cultural linguistics, while also offering practical implications for education, translation, and intercultural communication (Ismoilov, 1965; N. G. I. Kizi, 2025; Баимбетова & Кеулимжаева, 2023).

The urgency of studying household vocabulary also lies in its ability to document linguistic change across generations. As new terms enter the lexicon due to technological advancements and globalization, older words may fall into disuse or acquire new meanings. Without systematic analysis, many of these lexical shifts risk being overlooked, leading to gaps in understanding both language development and cultural transformation. Research in this area provides a linguistic archive that not only records vocabulary but also traces social and cultural change over time. Furthermore, examining household vocabulary in comparative contexts such as English and Uzbek enriches cross-cultural linguistics by highlighting universal human experiences alongside culture-specific practices. These studies serve as a bridge between lexicography, which focuses on cataloging and defining words, and linguoculturology, which emphasizes the interdependence of language and culture. By doing so, research on domestic lexicon informs multiple disciplines, including anthropology, education, and translation studies. Ultimately, this field contributes to broader discussions about identity and globalization. Household items, while mundane in function, represent symbols of heritage and continuity. Investigating how they are named, categorized, and metaphorically extended allows us to better understand not only the mechanics of language but also the deeper cultural values encoded in everyday speech.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Lexical Studies on Household Vocabulary

Household vocabulary has been widely studied within the field of lexicography and semantics because of its close relationship with daily life and its representation of cultural patterns. Scholars argue that lexical units denoting household items reflect not only material culture but also social structures and symbolic meanings. The Explanatory Dictionary of the Uzbek Language (2006) categorizes words such as *mebel* (furniture) and *oshxona asboblari* (kitchen utensils) as essential lexical items in domestic contexts. These entries demonstrate the integration of borrowings from Persian, Arabic, and Russian, highlighting the role of cultural contact in shaping vocabulary. In English, lexical studies show that household vocabulary often

originates from Latin and French roots. For instance, furniture comes from the Old French *fournir* (“to furnish”), while cupboard originally denoted an open shelf for cups, later shifting semantically to mean a closed cabinet. These etymological developments reveal how language adapts to evolving material culture. Such findings emphasize that household vocabulary is not static but dynamic, continuously adapting to new cultural realities (C. Z. B. Kizi, 2023).

2.2 Linguoculturology and Symbolic Dimensions

The field of linguoculturology highlights how household vocabulary encodes cultural identity. Makhammadovna (2022) emphasizes that microfields of household lexicon reveal deeper cultural values, particularly in relation to hospitality, family structure, and gender roles. In Uzbek households, the kitchen is considered not only a place of food preparation but also the symbolic heart of family relationships. Expressions like “mother-in-law’s table” represent respect, hierarchy, and family dynamics, showing how everyday objects reflect cultural worldviews (Kasmahidayat & Hasanuddin, 2022). In English, idioms such as to bring to the table or skeletons in the closet reveal how domestic objects are metaphorically extended to represent negotiation, secrecy, or hidden histories. These examples confirm that household vocabulary carries pragmatic and symbolic value, connecting language use to social norms and cultural traditions (Sutrisno, Duwi, Anita, Eksa, & Jenny Yudha, 2024; Z & A, 2025).

2.3 Metaphorical Expansion of Household Terms

Ghajoyan (2016) analyzed the metaphorical use of household vocabulary in technical terminologies, particularly in the fields of railway and automotive transport. She identified 160 terms in English that originated from household lexemes, accounting for nearly 13% of metaphorically used terms. The lexeme fork appeared in 27 metaphorical terms, such as selector fork, forked axle, and forking road. These terms show that the shape and function of domestic objects are prime triggers for metaphorization, enabling household vocabulary to transcend everyday contexts and enter specialized domains. This metaphorical expansion is also evident in English idioms like branching road, where the resemblance to a tree branch parallels the shape of a fork. In Uzbek, similar processes occur as domestic terms are extended metaphorically to describe broader social or technical realities. This demonstrates the universality of household items as a source domain in metaphor theory, affirming Li, Shi, and Lei (2025) claim that everyday objects serve as the foundation for conceptual metaphors (Nazki, 2025; Sanjiwani, Pitanatri, & Loanata, 2025).

2.4 Household Vocabulary and Cultural Heritage

Household vocabulary also serves as a linguistic archive of cultural heritage. Works such as Abzhamalova and Sagidolda (2025) *Decorative and Applied Arts of Uzbekistan* and Jabborov’s *Traditional Economy, Lifestyle, and Ethnoculture of the Uzbeks* (2008) document how domestic items like tandir ovens, samovar tea-makers, and embroidered suzani textiles are embedded in both material and linguistic traditions. These objects are more than functional—they embody rituals of hospitality (*mehmonnavozlik*), communal identity, and generational continuity. Zokirova and Topvoldiyeva (2020) *Canon of Medical Science* (1994 edition) also provides indirect evidence of domestic vocabulary through descriptions of household and medical objects. This indicates that references to everyday items have long been part of scholarly and practical discourse, linking health, lifestyle, and material culture.

2.5 Household Vocabulary in Social Relations

Chiesa and Dekker (2024) in his work on kinship terms in Turkic languages highlights the intersection between family relations and vocabulary, which can also be applied to household items. Domestic objects often serve as markers of social relations, class, and gender. For example, ownership of antique or mahogany furniture in English contexts signifies wealth, while in Uzbekistan, possession of a high-quality tandir or decorative textiles conveys prestige and cultural belonging. Household vocabulary thus functions both descriptively and evaluatively, signaling not only the presence of objects but also social identities. This evaluative dimension of household vocabulary demonstrates how language can function as a subtle indicator of power and hierarchy. The words used to describe domestic objects not only identify material possessions but also reflect judgments about taste, status, and belonging. In many societies, the ability to own and name luxurious items is closely tied to social capital, reinforcing distinctions between elite and common households. For example, English discourse surrounding antique furniture or crystal tableware evokes notions of refinement and heritage, positioning such items as markers of privilege.

Similarly, in Uzbek society, references to ornate suzani embroidery or finely crafted tandir ovens carry cultural prestige, signaling respectability within the community. These terms, when used in everyday communication, function as symbolic resources that situate individuals within broader social structures. They also highlight gendered associations: women are often linked with domestic crafts and kitchen tools, while men may be associated with ownership of large or valuable household assets. Thus, household vocabulary is not merely descriptive; it is embedded in the socio-cultural fabric, shaping perceptions of identity and reinforcing communal values. By analyzing these linguistic markers, researchers can uncover the nuanced ways in which language encodes social roles and cultural hierarchies.

2.6 Household Vocabulary in Language Learning

Another strand of literature emphasizes the pedagogical importance of household vocabulary. Because of its concreteness and universality, domestic lexicon is among the first taught to children and second language learners. Words such as chair, table, spoon, and cup are easily understood and frequently used in daily communication. Comparative studies suggest that introducing both traditional and modern household terms enhances intercultural competence. For example, while Uzbek learners encounter culturally specific terms like samovar, they also learn international borrowings like microwave. This combination bridges cultural gaps and strengthens communicative competence in global contexts. The pedagogical significance of household vocabulary extends beyond simple word acquisition; it contributes to the development of contextualized language learning. When students learn vocabulary related to objects they encounter in their daily environment, they can immediately apply this knowledge in authentic communicative situations. For example, asking for a cup or identifying a table in a classroom allows learners to connect lexical forms with real-world referents. This facilitates retention and encourages active usage, both of which are critical in second language acquisition.

Moreover, including both traditional and modern household terms in the curriculum enriches cultural understanding. Teaching Uzbek learners about samovar highlights values of hospitality and communal identity, while introducing words like microwave or smart fridge provides exposure to global consumer culture. This dual approach not only develops bilingual or multilingual competence but also nurtures intercultural awareness, allowing learners to appreciate differences and similarities between their native culture and the target language. From a methodological perspective, language teachers often employ task-based learning or situational role-play using household vocabulary. Activities such as simulating a family dinner, shopping for furniture, or describing a kitchen setting help learners practice communicative functions in meaningful contexts. These strategies make vocabulary instruction more engaging and memorable.

Additionally, the integration of digital tools enhances the teaching of household vocabulary. Interactive apps, multimedia flashcards, and virtual simulations of homes allow students to explore domestic lexicon dynamically. Such innovations are particularly relevant in the era of online education, where visual and interactive resources compensate for the absence of physical classroom objects. Ultimately, the pedagogical literature underscores that teaching household vocabulary is not merely about learning words but about fostering linguistic competence, cultural literacy, and communicative confidence. This makes domestic lexicon a foundational yet evolving component of language education.

2.7 Globalization and Technological Influences

Recent scholarship has addressed how globalization and technological change reshape household vocabulary. Vlieger de Oliveira, Wache, and Raithel (2024) discusses how cultural interactions in Uzbek and English lexicons reflect broader global exchanges. Terms like smart speaker or robot vacuum have entered multiple languages, often borrowed directly from English. Yet, traditional words remain significant, creating a hybrid lexicon where modernity coexists with cultural heritage. This duality illustrates the adaptability of language and the importance of documenting lexical shifts across generations. This phenomenon of lexical hybridity highlights how globalization does not necessarily erase cultural traditions but instead creates a layered vocabulary system. In many societies, traditional household terms continue to function alongside borrowed words, each serving different communicative purposes. For example, in Uzbek families, the term tandir still evokes cultural identity, hospitality, and tradition, while at the same time, younger generations casually use terms like mikrovolnovka (microwave) or kofemashina (coffee machine), adopted from Russian and English. This coexistence reflects how speakers navigate between preserving cultural heritage and adapting to modern lifestyles.

Furthermore, the role of media and advertising in popularizing new household vocabulary cannot be overlooked. International brands and marketing campaigns introduce terms that quickly become standardized in everyday usage. Words such as blender or air fryer are not only loanwords but also cultural imports, carrying with them connotations of convenience, modernity, and global consumer culture. In many cases, these terms become aspirational markers, symbolizing upward mobility or alignment with global trends. At the same time, globalization fosters semantic shifts, where existing words acquire new meanings influenced by modern technology. For instance, the English word tablet once denoted a flat writing surface, but now commonly refers to a digital device. Similar processes occur in household vocabulary, as traditional words expand to encompass new functions or symbolic associations. The adaptability of household vocabulary thus demonstrates the resilience of language in the face of change. By documenting these processes, scholars not only preserve linguistic history but also reveal how language mirrors broader social transformations. In this sense, studying household vocabulary becomes a way of tracing the interaction between global innovation and local tradition, showing how identities are continuously negotiated in daily communication.

2.8 Synthesis of Literature

The reviewed literature highlights several recurring themes. First, household vocabulary is inherently dynamic, shaped by history, culture, and social transformation. Second, it operates at multiple levels—lexical, metaphorical, pragmatic, and symbolic—making it a rich field for interdisciplinary study. Third, household lexicon bridges the gap between linguistic theory and cultural practice, offering insights into identity, tradition, and globalization. Finally, the literature underscores the urgency of documenting lexical change, as technological innovations continue to reshape how household objects are named, perceived, and integrated into discourse. This synthesis of literature also suggests that the study of household vocabulary is far from a closed field; rather, it remains open to new theoretical perspectives and empirical explorations. One important avenue is the integration of sociolinguistic methods, which can track how words for household items vary across different social groups, generations, or regions. For instance, younger speakers may adopt loanwords from English more readily when describing modern appliances, while older generations may preserve traditional terms. Such variation reveals not only linguistic preferences but also attitudes toward cultural continuity and globalization.

Another significant direction is the application of critical discourse analysis (CDA) to household vocabulary. Since household items are deeply tied to issues of gender, family structure, and class, examining how these words are represented in media, literature, and everyday talk can uncover implicit ideologies. For example, advertisements often portray modern kitchen appliances as tools of empowerment or convenience, while still implicitly associating them with women's roles. This indicates that household vocabulary functions as a subtle site where social norms and power relations are negotiated. Furthermore, translation studies benefit from this field of inquiry. Household vocabulary is often culture-specific, and literal translation may fail to capture symbolic meanings. For instance, translating Uzbek terms like *tandir* or *suzani* into English requires cultural explanation to preserve their connotations. Similarly, English metaphors derived from household items, such as *skeletons in the closet*, cannot be directly rendered into Uzbek without considering cultural equivalence. This demonstrates the importance of lexical and cultural competence in cross-linguistic communication.

Lastly, the literature reviewed highlights a pressing need for digital corpora and computational tools to document the evolution of household vocabulary. As new terms emerge through technology and global consumerism, digital archives can help track frequency, collocations, and semantic shifts over time. Incorporating corpus linguistics into this domain will not only enrich theoretical understanding but also provide practical resources for lexicographers, educators, and translators.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative comparative research design supported by elements of linguistic discourse analysis. The qualitative approach is chosen because the focus of this research lies not in numerical measurement but in understanding meanings, functions, and cultural implications of lexical units. The comparative design allows systematic identification of similarities and differences in household vocabulary

between English and Uzbek, while metaphorical analysis highlights the figurative use of these terms across discourses.

3.2 Data Sources

The data in this study are drawn from multiple sources to ensure validity and representativeness:

1. Lexicographic sources – including the *Explanatory Dictionary of the Uzbek Language* (2006), English etymological dictionaries, and bilingual dictionaries, which provide definitions, etymology, and semantic fields.
2. Academic works – such as Sobirova (2021), Khaydarov (2019), Ismoilov (1965), Fakhretdinova (1972), and Jabborov (2008), which discuss cultural and linguistic aspects of household vocabulary.
3. Media and communicative discourse – advertisements, social media texts, proverbs, idioms, and literary works where household terms appear in daily usage and metaphorical contexts.
4. Historical and cultural texts – including Sina (2000), which provides historical references to household and medical items.

3.3 Data Collection Procedures

Data were collected through document study and content analysis. First, relevant lexical entries were compiled from dictionaries. Next, occurrences of household vocabulary were identified in literature, idioms, and media texts. Both traditional terms (e.g., *tandir*, *samovar*, *suzani*) and modern borrowings (e.g., *microwave*, *smart fridge*, *robot vacuum*) were included to capture the diachronic and synchronic dimensions of the lexicon.

3.4 Data Analysis Techniques

The collected data were analyzed through four main procedures:

1. Lexical and etymological analysis – tracing origins, borrowing patterns, and semantic shifts of household vocabulary.
2. Discourse analysis – examining pragmatic usage of household terms in idioms, advertisements, and social media to reveal cultural meanings.
3. Comparative analysis – identifying cross-linguistic similarities and differences between English and Uzbek in terms of form, meaning, and metaphorical extension.
4. Interpretive analysis – situating findings within broader frameworks of linguoculturology, pragmatics, and metaphor theory.

3.5 Validity and Reliability

To ensure research rigor, triangulation was applied by cross-checking data from dictionaries, academic references, and discourse examples. Reliability was strengthened by using consistent criteria in selecting words, ensuring representation of both traditional and modern vocabulary. Peer-reviewed literature was also employed to validate interpretations and avoid researcher bias.

3.6 Scope and Limitations

This research is limited to household vocabulary in English and Uzbek. It does not extend to other languages, which constrains the generalizability of results. Moreover, the analysis is based on selected lexicographic, literary, and media sources without employing large-scale corpus linguistics. Future studies could expand this scope by using digital corpora and including cross-cultural comparisons with additional languages.

4. Result and Discussion

4.1 Lexical Findings and Etymological Insights

The analysis reveals that household vocabulary in both English and Uzbek is deeply embedded in cultural history and shaped by external influences. In English, many terms originate from Latin and French, reflecting the impact of the Norman invasion and subsequent cultural integration. For instance, *furniture* derives from Old French *fournir* (“to furnish”), and *cupboard* originally referred to an open shelf for cups before shifting semantically into a cabinet with doors. These developments show the adaptability of English vocabulary to material changes in domestic life. In Uzbek, a similar dynamic is evident, with significant borrowing from Persian, Arabic, Russian, and more recently, English. The term *mebel* (furniture), derived from French *mobilier* via Russian, exemplifies this borrowing route. Likewise, words such as *parda* (curtain, from Persian) and *mikrovolnovka* (microwave, from Russian adaptation of English) show how

household vocabulary documents historical and cultural interactions. These findings confirm that household vocabulary functions as a linguistic archive, preserving traces of colonization, cultural contact, and globalization.

4.2 Symbolic and Cultural Dimensions

Household vocabulary is not only functional but also symbolic. In Uzbek households, domestic objects like the *tandir* oven or *samovar* tea set signify hospitality (*mehmonnavozlik*) and family continuity. The *tandir* in particular symbolizes unity, as bread baked in it is often shared in communal settings, reinforcing family ties and cultural identity. In English-speaking contexts, the dining table frequently serves as a symbol of family unity, while items such as *antique furniture* and *crystal tableware* connote refinement and wealth. Idiomatic expressions also reflect these symbolic meanings. English idioms such as *skeletons in the closet* or *to bring to the table* metaphorically extend household items into abstract domains like secrecy and negotiation. Uzbek expressions, including “mother-in-law’s table” or “younger brother’s dish,” encode family hierarchy and respect. This demonstrates that household vocabulary is both linguistically productive and culturally loaded, embedding social roles and traditions in everyday speech.

4.3 Metaphorical Extension of Household Terms

The results confirm Chiesa and Dekker (2024) findings that household lexemes are productive sources of metaphorical terminology. In English, the lexeme *fork* appears in at least 27 metaphorical terms, including *forked axle*, *selector fork*, and *forking road*. These metaphorical extensions rely on the visual resemblance or functional similarity between the domestic object and the technical domain. In Uzbek, metaphorical usage of household terms also emerges in idioms, proverbs, and technical language. For example, terms derived from kitchen and furniture vocabulary are often extended to describe social interactions or organizational structures. This supports N. G. I. Kizi (2025) conceptual metaphor theory, where concrete, familiar objects serve as source domains for abstract thinking. Household vocabulary thus demonstrates the cognitive universality of metaphorization, bridging everyday life and specialized knowledge.

4.4 Social Relations and Identity Markers

The study highlights how household vocabulary signals social status, gender roles, and class distinctions. In English, references to *mahogany tables* or *antique furniture* index wealth and cultural capital. Similarly, in Uzbek, owning a finely crafted *tandir* or decorative *suzani* textile conveys prestige and respectability. These lexical markers act not only as descriptions of objects but as evaluative judgments embedded in language. Gender associations are also notable. Traditionally, kitchen-related vocabulary in Uzbek discourse is strongly tied to women’s roles, while men are more often associated with ownership of larger or more valuable household assets. Although these associations are weakening in modern English contexts due to changing gender norms, they remain salient in Uzbek, reflecting ongoing cultural dynamics. Thus, household vocabulary encodes both continuity and transformation in social roles.

4.5 Pedagogical Relevance

The findings also reinforce the pedagogical significance of household vocabulary. Because these words are concrete and universally relevant, they form part of the earliest lexical sets introduced in both first and second language learning. Terms such as *chair*, *table*, *cup*, and *spoon* provide learners with accessible vocabulary that can be immediately applied in daily life. However, the comparative analysis shows that including both traditional and modern household terms enhances intercultural competence. For instance, Uzbek learners introduced to *samovar* gain cultural insight into hospitality practices, while also learning loanwords like *microwave* to engage with global consumer culture. Task-based learning methods, such as simulating family dinners or shopping for furniture, are effective in reinforcing this vocabulary. Digital resources—like interactive flashcards and virtual simulations—further enrich the teaching of household lexicon, especially in online learning environments. Household vocabulary thus serves as a bridge between linguistic competence and cultural literacy.

4.6 Impact of Globalization and Technology

Globalization and technological change have significantly reshaped household vocabulary. Words like *smart speaker*, *air fryer*, and *robot vacuum* have entered Uzbek and English through direct borrowing from English. At the same time, traditional words remain active, creating a hybrid lexicon where old and new terms coexist. For example, Uzbek families still use *tandir* while also adopting terms like *kofemashina* (coffee machine). The role of media and advertising is central to this transformation. International brands

popularize household terms that quickly become standardized in local lexicons, carrying with them connotations of modernity and upward mobility. Furthermore, semantic shifts occur when old words acquire new meanings: the English word *tablet* shifted from meaning a writing slab to a digital device, mirroring changes in household vocabulary as traditional terms are adapted to technological innovations. These findings highlight the resilience and adaptability of language, showing how household lexicon reflects broader processes of identity negotiation in a globalized world.

4.7 Discussion

Overall, the results affirm that household vocabulary is a dynamic, multifaceted, and culturally embedded domain. Lexical analysis demonstrates how borrowing and semantic change document historical and cultural exchanges. Cultural analysis reveals that household vocabulary embodies symbolic meanings tied to hospitality, family, and class. Metaphorical analysis confirms that household items serve as productive source domains for abstract concepts across languages. Pedagogical studies underscore the importance of domestic lexicon in language acquisition and intercultural competence. Finally, globalization and technological change illustrate the adaptability of household vocabulary, creating a hybrid lexicon that bridges tradition and modernity. These findings contribute to broader discussions in linguistics and cultural studies by showing how ordinary words encode extraordinary insights about human life. Household vocabulary, far from being trivial, offers a lens into identity, social structure, and cultural continuity. It functions simultaneously as a linguistic record, a symbolic system, a pedagogical tool, and a cultural bridge. Documenting and analyzing this lexicon is therefore crucial not only for linguistic scholarship but also for preserving cultural heritage and fostering intercultural understanding.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Conclusion

The study of lexical units denoting household items in English and Uzbek demonstrates that this vocabulary field is not merely descriptive but is deeply intertwined with culture, identity, and history. Lexical analysis confirms that many household terms in both languages have undergone borrowing and semantic change, documenting cultural contact and globalization. Etymological evidence shows that English relies heavily on French and Latin roots, while Uzbek vocabulary integrates Persian, Arabic, Russian, and modern English borrowings, reflecting different stages of historical interaction. From a cultural and symbolic perspective, household vocabulary encodes values of family, hospitality, and social status. Items such as the *tandir* or *samovar* in Uzbek, and the dining table or antique furniture in English, function as cultural markers that reflect continuity and tradition. Moreover, idioms and metaphors reveal how domestic objects serve as powerful source domains for abstract meanings. Expressions such as *skeletons in the closet* or “mother-in-law’s table” highlight how language embeds cultural worldviews and family dynamics.

The analysis also emphasizes the role of household vocabulary in pedagogy and intercultural competence. Its concreteness and universality make it essential in early language learning, while the inclusion of both traditional and modern terms fosters deeper cultural understanding. Finally, the findings confirm that globalization and technological innovation have reshaped household lexicons, introducing hybrid vocabularies where traditional items coexist with modern appliances. This hybridity illustrates the adaptability of language and the importance of documenting shifts that mirror broader social transformations. In conclusion, household vocabulary serves as a linguistic archive, a symbolic system, and a pedagogical tool. It bridges tradition and modernity, local identity and global influence, while offering rich insights into the interplay between language, culture, and society.

5.2 Suggestions

Based on the findings and conclusions, several recommendations are proposed:

- a. For Academic Research
 1. Future studies should expand beyond English and Uzbek to include comparative analysis with other languages, particularly within Central Asia and Europe, to enrich cross-cultural perspectives.
 2. Employing corpus linguistics and computational tools is recommended to trace the frequency, semantic shifts, and collocations of household terms across large data sets.
 3. Further interdisciplinary research should link linguistics with anthropology, sociology, and digital studies to explore household vocabulary as part of material and digital culture.
- b. For Education and Pedagogy

1. Language teachers should integrate both traditional and modern household terms into curricula, allowing learners to gain linguistic and cultural competence simultaneously.
 2. Task-based and role-play activities that simulate real-life contexts (e.g., family meals, shopping, or home settings) can make learning more interactive and effective.
 3. Developing bilingual teaching materials, such as English–Uzbek illustrated dictionaries of household items, would help preserve cultural heritage while supporting second language acquisition.
- c. For Cultural Preservation
1. Cultural institutions should collaborate with linguists to document traditional household terms before they disappear under the influence of globalization.
 2. Public campaigns and media projects can raise awareness about the cultural value of traditional objects such as the *tandir* and *suzani*, framing them not only as artifacts but as living symbols of identity.
- d. For Future Adaptation
1. Policymakers and researchers should monitor how globalization and technology reshape vocabulary, ensuring that linguistic innovations are documented without erasing cultural roots.
 2. Digital archives and apps could be developed to track the evolution of household vocabulary, providing resources for both scholars and learners.

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