



# SEMANTIC CLASSIFICATION OF HOLIDAY NAMES IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK LANGUAGES

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**Abstract.** This article focuses on the semantic classification of holiday names in English and Uzbek languages. It explores the cultural, historical, and linguistic aspects embedded in the names of holidays, dividing them into thematic groups. The study highlights the similarities and differences between the two languages, emphasizing how cultural and social traditions shape holiday naming conventions. Through comparative analysis, it examines the influence of religion, history, and globalization on holiday names.

**Keywords:** holidays, semantics, English, Uzbek, classification, culture, traditions, globalization

The word *holiday* comes from the Old English word *hāligdæg* (*hālig* "holy" + *dæg* "day") The word originally referred only to special religious days. The word *holiday* has differing connotations in different regions. In the United States, the word is used exclusively to refer to the nationally, religiously, or culturally observed day(s) of rest or celebration or the events themselves, whereas in the United Kingdom and other Commonwealth nations, the word may refer to the period of time where leave from one's duties has been agreed upon and is used as a synonym for the US preferred *vacation*. This time is usually set aside for rest, travel, or participation in recreational activities, with entire industries targeted to coincide with or enhance these experiences[1]. The days of leave may not coincide with any specific customs or laws. Employers and educational institutes may designate 'holidays' themselves, which may or may not overlap nationally or culturally relevant dates, which again comes under this connotation, but it is the first implication detailed that this article is concerned with. Modern use varies geographically. In North America, it means any dedicated day or period of celebration. In the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand, *holiday* is often used instead of the word *vacation*.

Holidays are central to cultural identity, encapsulating a nation's history, traditions, and values. The names of holidays, as linguistic expressions, serve as a window into a society's worldview and its relationship with the past and present. The semantic study of holiday names in English and Uzbek not only reveals linguistic patterns but also sheds light on the socio-cultural aspects of both societies. This article aims to classify holiday names in English and Uzbek into semantic groups and analyze the linguistic and cultural elements that influence their formation[2].

Holidays can be thematic, celebrating or commemorating particular groups, events, or ideas, or non-thematic, days of rest that do not have any particular meaning. In Commonwealth English, the term can refer to any period of rest from work, such as vacations or school holidays. In American English, "the holidays" typically refers to the period from Thanksgiving to New Year's (late November to January 1), which contains many important holidays in American culture[3].

## 1. Religious Holidays

Religious holidays serve as significant markers of faith, spirituality, and communal unity. Their observance includes rituals, celebrations, and traditions that reflect the core values of a



community or religion. Below is an expanded examination of religious holidays in English and Uzbek cultures, focusing on their linguistic and cultural aspects.

**Christmas:** The name comes from "Christ's Mass," a special church service celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ. Although rooted in Christianity, Christmas has become a global holiday celebrated even by non-Christians, often focusing on family and generosity.

**Easter:** The word is believed to derive from *Eāstre*, a goddess associated with spring in pagan traditions, later adapted by Christianity to mark the resurrection of Jesus Christ. A blend of Christian and pre-Christian traditions, Easter symbolizes renewal and hope.

**Thanksgiving** (in the U.S.) Originally a harvest festival rooted in gratitude to God for blessings. Family feasts featuring turkey, prayers of thanks, and charitable acts.

Derive from Arabic or Persian origins, reflecting the influence of Islam on Uzbek culture (e.g., *Ramazon* from "Ramadan"). Names are descriptive, focusing on the purpose or activity of the holiday (e.g., *Qurbon* meaning "sacrifice") [6].

### Similarities and Differences Between English and Uzbek Religious Holidays

| Aspect                      | English-Speaking Cultures  | Uzbek Culture  |
|-----------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Focus of Celebration</b> | Christian traditions, often linked to Jesus Christ or saints.            | Islamic practices, tied to Quranic teachings.                                      |
| <b>Naming Conventions</b>   | Rooted in Christian theology or pagan origins (e.g., Easter, Christmas). | Reflect Islamic terminology (e.g., <i>Ramazon Hayiti</i> , <i>Qurbon Hayiti</i> ). |
| <b>Cultural Integration</b> | Many holidays, like Christmas, have secular elements.                    | Religious holidays retain strong spiritual focus.                                  |
| <b>Traditions</b>           | Incorporate symbolic rituals like gift-giving, Easter eggs, and carols.  | Emphasize charity, communal prayers, and family visits.                            |

Religious holidays in English and Uzbek cultures represent the deep connection between language, culture, and faith. While English religious holidays often blend religious and secular traditions, Uzbek religious holidays maintain strong ties to Islamic teachings. Studying these holidays provides valuable insights into the cultural and linguistic heritage of both communities, highlighting shared values like gratitude, generosity, and community spirit.

## 2. Historical Holidays

These holidays commemorate key historical events, celebrating national achievements and identity.

**Independence Day:** Celebrates the United States' independence from Britain on July 4th.

**Veterans Day:** Honors military veterans who served in the armed forces [9].

**Thanksgiving:** A uniquely American holiday, originally marking gratitude for the harvest and survival [8].

**Mustaqillik Kuni:** Celebrates Uzbekistan's independence on September 1, 1991.

**Vatan Himoyachilari Kuni:** Honors the defenders of the homeland, celebrated on January 14.



**Xotira va Qadrlash Kuni:** A day of remembrance for those who contributed to the nation's history[5].

The difference lies in how these holidays are named. English names often specify the purpose or occasion (e.g., Veterans Day), while Uzbek names typically include the word "Kuni" (Day) to indicate the event's significance.

### 3. Seasonal and Agricultural Holidays

These holidays are tied to natural cycles, agricultural traditions, or seasonal changes, reflecting humanity's reliance on nature.

**Harvest Festival:** Celebrated in rural areas to give thanks for the year's harvest[10].

**Halloween:** Originally rooted in pagan traditions marking the end of the harvest season and beginning of winter.

**Navro'z:** Marks the spring equinox and the start of a new year, deeply rooted in Zoroastrian traditions.

**Hashar Kuni:** A day for community cleaning and preparation for seasonal changes.

Seasonal holidays in both languages highlight the agricultural origins of many traditions. However, Uzbek holidays like Navro'z hold a more significant cultural and national identity.

The semantic classification of holiday names in English and Uzbek languages reflects the interplay of culture, history, and language. While the two languages share thematic similarities, their differences highlight unique worldviews and traditions. Understanding these naming conventions enriches cross-cultural communication and appreciation of linguistic diversity.

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