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Food and Word: How Food Utilizes Literature and Language in its Various Manifestations?

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ABSTRACT

The captions associated with cooking, feasting, dining and serving employs wide range of vocabularies for representing the uniqueness of extended arena of cuisines. The major aim of the research is to analyze the far-reaching usage of expressions and the equivalent symbols that are often used and discussed in food domain. The research involves analysis of lexicon of the descriptions and sign of the captions that is fairly important in carrying out the desired result of establishing and popularizing the food as well as representing a particular culture. It further tries to explore the possible importance of language and symbols in promoting food in its various manifestations and how the narrative of culinary has taken form. Words along with food create great literature. As a continuation this includes probing of pattern and repetitive occurrence of words in the labels, Mottos, captions, advertisements, cookbooks, tweets and food posts in social Medias.

Key words: lexicon, culture, captions, posts, culinary narratives, popular culture, social media

Introduction

Food is a significant and basic need that is essential for the well being of any living organism. Food, beyond being a thing that sates appetite and a life saver has reached further levels. Food has been commoditized. Cooking has become a hobby and a way of living. Gastronomy has developed into separate branch of study employing food for medical purposes. Food is important in molding the physical as well as the mental health of the individuals. Food creates a kind of memory and associations. It can sometimes be a source of joy and happiness as they create a bond with the person preparing and serving it. It is a fundamental necessity and is inextricable for the growth and development of physical and mental health. Food is always a great part of culture, geography and community. Their choice of food depends on their location and the indigenous group they belong to. Preparing, eating, serving and presenting them involve and bring in their custom, tradition and rituals that are preserved as a trademark and identity of their place and group. They secure and safeguard their habits as a part of social functions. An analysis of food habits of a group can provide considerable insight into the lives and culture of the people. Food is universal. It is an integral part of everyday life. It is difficult ponder into this

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domain without talking of culture for culture is incomplete without food.

In this world where the boundaries are broken the world is being considered one single entity. Multicultural, multiethnic, mosaic culture are predominantly used. Nothing is pertained to any particular group. Though preserved by the natives much is followed by the rest from any part of the world. In metro and cosmopolitan cities people from various cultures come into contact hence food belonging to various nations are available hence letting people taste the savory of all available cuisines.

Literature speaks of endless themes. But language is an intricate part of food narratives. Images can convey more than words but it's an undeniable fact that lexicon aid is significant in taking a cuisine to its targeted foodies. They form a literature, a domain that stitches language and food. Verbal communication is as important as visual impacts. Those tempting words create an idea to taste it while on the other side they denote a culture. In popular there is something that unites all the groups, it is as universal as the habit of eating. They are evenly employed in an array of entities ranging from books, advertisements, blogs, vlogs, shows, to posts in social media. The richness of words employed creates a sensible impact upon the eaters. They convey an indefinable sense of taste through definite terms and words to knock the hunger pangs and to enter the taste buds.

They try passing the bounty of abundant range of cuisines and recipes of the complex domain in varied dimensions Food had become a commodity and hobby in popular culture. It is an attraction to most people of this era. Not just consumed for stomach, also to please all the senses. Such sense of aestheticism taken them to a level where food is added with sensual words in the suffix. 'Foodie', 'Foodgasm', and 'food porn' are all exotic words used to show the exquisite love for eating. Web and internet cannot be denied its importance. The posts put up on social Media showcase their encounter with the recipe and their experience to set a model for their peer group and followers.

Every narrative of food, oral or written, can instigate the taste buds, hence increasing the craving for the food - this applies largely to visual advertisements. This depends much on the picture shown, however the vital part that the narrative plays is undeniable. It communicates the story of the dish served on the plates. Though the pictures of the food are enthralling and captivating, due acknowledgment has to be given as well to the narratives and their quality. The narratives here are associated with the story of the food, its course and its output. Equally important are these narratives in persuading and providing meaning. They are more like figures of speech to prose and poetry. Those that use rhetorical devices stands unique and are more appealing than mundane ones. So is the case with food narratives that are exhibited in any platform or medium. It is carried out not just with pictures but with narratives as well. This has become a kind of culture in media, especially in advertisements where this is employed in persuading people to buy a particular food product as they are capable of manipulating the minds of the buyers. This convinces them that something is best in them than those of other products in the market. These narratives engage in the performance of convincing. Sara Jane calls that the food narratives function as rhetoric. It forces a man of sense to get into action through its persuasion. It is a deep rooted process that takes place without the awareness of much of the mass. These narratives similar to election propagandas, in that they function to manipulate the minds of the people; as the propaganda makes one to vote to particular party, these narratives makes one to choose a product of food to buy or items to cook in their kitchens.

The video files, blogs available in the web and the cookery shows telecasted in television by their eloquence and efficient use of language persuade their fellow beings to try the same. They create a bond, increasing their craving, tempting them to eat and making them rush to the kitchen. This is what is referred as “Human agents to persuade other human agents into action.” They constantly engage the audience to the narratives that they involve themselves in, to the practices related to cooking and buying the products related to that. If food products are on one hand manipulating the minds and hence influencing the thoughts and actions of those people, on the other hand there are similar captions that are

supporting the cutleries used for cooking. This is very much visible in the handbook provided along with Whirlpool microwave oven that states “Every great chef has the best accessories.” Captions are significant for the promotion of any food product. Few products are familiar among the crowd of buyers just for their captions that are used in their advertisement. We are what we eat can be better modulated to we eat what are promoted to eat.

Advertisement of food delivery apps like Swiggy, Zomato or Uber Eats occur just before the videos on YouTube. They are very short and yet the contents are delivered fast encompassing their motto and at least one adjective that perfectly suits the domain of food. The words that echo in the background enter the minds of the viewers more rapidly than the pictures of the food that they see and they tend to remember what they heard. There are songs that have become trademark lines for few food products. Few instances are “I can read your lips on your finger tips and happiness in your eyes” that occurs in Diary Milk and “Can't take my eyes off you” could be found in Arun Ice creams. Amul products use the phrase 'The taste of India', while nestle had 'Good food good life', and 'I'm Lovin' it' had become the slogan of McDonalds. Like any other promotions food advertisements have the capability to manipulate the mind of the buyers by saying and showing items in a more detailed and informative way and more importantly in vibrant colors and moving vocabularies. “Discover the joy” and “have you felt silk” echo in the ear drums of many Diary Milk Silk lovers.

Most of the chefs in the cookery shows are capable of managing tougher things and impressing the audience, like it is very simple and takes no time and effort. The food that is presented at the end makes the best part, as they taste the food and describe how it tastes which is definitely sufficient for the audience to try that in the same way as they have watched.

“We are a bunch of mates in London looking for exceptional things in the food world that will help make our and your life that little bit better” is how a video in SORTEDfood, a YouTube channel, begins, making the viewers expect more from them and hence preventing them from skipping the video. They assure to make a difference to them as well as to their audience. The video that Jamie Oliver has recently updated was Best Bircher Muesli, for which he adds the introduction in the following way “Let me give you an amazing breakfast that is delicious, nutritious and you are gonna love. We are gonna make a beautiful chocolate Bircher.” All the ingredients he uses are easily available but the manner in which he describes the benefits of each makes his video special. It had been a week and has already reached five thousand likes. He speaks of pectin in apple, acid in oranges and potassium in banana. The method of preparation suffices for one to learn the recipe, but whatever he says along with the technique, i.e. the words he uses to describe his output, is close to poetry.

“This is beautiful, it is so good, so really nice that today it feels really indulgent. But of course this bowl is full of goodness. What are you waiting for! Get those oats, get with, and get making your Bircher!”

A YouTube channel that uploads culinary videos does that in three levels all comprising in a single video. Three or four styles of the same dish, be it pizza or a brownie. They get noticed by an amateur, a home cook and even an expert. They present them like they are the simplest variety of food and their narration duly supports them. Allrecipes begin their food blog describing process of preparing brownies as “these brownies always turn out.”

All the cookery shows, cook books and blogs boost the confidence in their targeted audience to break the prejudices and presuppositions they would hold. Their first attempt is to break the stigmas that are widely possessed by people. They promise to show the best possible way of preparing food with minimal time, ingredients and resources, and create a kind of illusion that the expected items are incredibly easy and quick to prepare. Their aim is to make cooking a fun eating bliss. Most shows follow their introduction with wishes, commonly saying 'happy cooking.' One of the widely used technique to make their show best is providing suggestions to enhance the dish, kitchen and cutleries. They constantly provide cooking tips to improvise their show. Other shows have moved ahead, marketing the wares and knives they use. They use such things primarily while the pictures and videos try providing them an equal attention as the food

items and finally appreciating their wares and revealing the place they bought them. Some shows bring in a concept called kitchen tour, where they introduce the viewers to all the kitchen items and the way they had been arranged and as a tradition they provide ideas to choose the best among the available items.

How can something done monotonously be made to not look boring? In popular culture everything is preserved, recognized and appreciated. They take the credit for making cooking an exciting pastime and passion. The word foodie is extensively used in popular culture to show their inevitable desire for relishing different kind of cuisines. People on social media are using this for the purpose of gaining more fame and popularity. However these are not completely pertained to the domain of food. They explain the tale of the food, the method of cooking, place it was cooked and served, and their relationship with the food. These people prepare and consume food not for the purpose of satisfying their appetite but as a passion, hobby and out of interest. They add captions like 'chilling out', 'lunching', and 'hungry mood', and when the table is full they caption it 'Gluttony at its best' - this is literature modified, for instance how Faustus learns that it is one among the seven deadly sins. It is not just about food that tastes good but also of food that tastes bad, just warning the rest of the being not to try that one. The narratives don't just talk of the food but things that are close to their heart, why they chose to eat them at that place, the occasion, how much they love them, foodie words for people who has joined them in the venture and those who has shared the bliss of eating, the related stuffs and sometimes even throwback memory stories in Instagram. Most of those posts give suggestions for exploring the similar feast. The culinary narratives equally comprises of words of fulfillment and excitation that popped on tasting such food and sometimes words of clarification for other foodies. They speak of their goodness, their benefits and worth.

These are group of men and women who are passionate about posting about everything they do and cooking or eating or serving food is nowhere exceptional. They do post of the food they prepared or of the dishes they felt scrumptious that they ate in various restaurants ranging from roadside paani puri to exotic butter chicken. Not all the pictures that are uploaded do carry professional kind of look but it is the captions that the individual puts to add value to the picture that is mediocre in reality. Every food post that carries compliments, for sure provides suggestions as well. They do a sort of marketing just to be loyal to the food they ate. They call it a devotion to food and themselves a devotee or more precisely a foodie. They provide ideas of restaurants, cuisines available and the best of items available there and they make sure they recommend viewers to add it to their wish list.

Posts that people put on social media are mostly personal ones that they have prepared or that they have relished. Captions are added to them to make them more interesting. Adding icons on the photos has become common, where location and time are mentioned along with emojis that represents excitation and love for the food item they have posted. Culinary narratives are modeled upon the words that support the food while the concept of food porn glamorizes the food through presenting in a way that is most appealing to the senses. This is very much aided by the narratives that add value to such posts. Foodgasm has become a familiar in hashtag culture to show the pleasure that is guaranteed by eating few foods. Foodstagram is as popular as the other in Instagram. Clean eating, delicious, yummy, amazing, must try, tempting, food love that had been seen in conventional usage has entered hashtag culture related to food and cuisine. Here is caption of a post that read, "There is nothing better than a good friend unless it is a good friend with a chocolate!" They call them 'food beast'. "When life gives you lemon make lemonade is customary" but a post said "when life gives you lemon make lemon drizzle cake" and adds to her note stating its gluten free and says this has become her favorite dessert - to this she puts of all times and ever and ever in parenthesis. She describes herself a devoted chocoholic.

Words like bake, garnish, roast, tempering, icing, fry, roast, grill and toast are just few examples of words that give a base to any kind of food narratives. They have the tendency to induce the pangs of hunger to put them wait to relish the flavor and savory of the food. Anyone with good aesthetic sense can present a dish in pleasing way and good

knowledge of vocabulary is essential. It is not of using more number of words but using in a right way to enthrall the readers or viewers and make them move to taste the food or try the recipe. When food of any kind is aided by relevant use of lexicon they can make wonders. Food and word together indeed give way to exhilarating and unsurpassable literature to humanity.

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