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A theoretical analysis of food meaning in anthropology and sociology

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to present a theoretical analysis that seeks an answer on the question of what the meanings of food are in anthropology and sociology. As a result of the analysis, it is determined that food has three main meanings (i) consumption, (ii) transfer, and (iii) identity. Moreover, six sub-meanings are found under these three main meanings. Consumption is represented by hedonic and symbolic sub-meanings, transfer is represented by culture and emotion sub-meanings, and identity is represented by personal and national identity sub-meanings. One of the reasons that make this work unique is that it defines and categorizes meanings of food in terms of individual and society. Another value added by this study is the Food Meaning Diagram (FMD) as a contribution to the literature. Furthermore, the study provides a basis for the construction of research in the related fields and to guide the studies to be carried out within the framework of human sciences.
Key words: food meaning; food anthropology; food sociology; food meaning diagram

1. Introduction

Although food has been neglected by social sciences for many years (Drouard, 2015), the studies on food as an academic field have increased rapidly in recent years (Neuman, 2018). Two areas of increased interest in food-related studies are anthropology and sociology. According to Boas (1940), "anthropology is the science of man and might be understood to cover a vast range of subjects. … the aim of anthropology has been largely to explain the phenomena observed among tribes of foreign culture. These phenomena are naturally divided into three groups: (1) the physical appearance of man, (2) the languages of man, and (3) the customs and beliefs of man" (p. 621). Anthropologists have long recognized the importance of food for sources to interpret the meaning of human life (Burnett & Ray, 2012). The founding works of anthropology and ethnology emphasized the socio-cultural and symbolic dimensions of kitchen (Cohen & Csergo, 2012).

Sociology is concerned with revealing the foundations of social life (Comte, 1855) and building the theory for social relations (Bidgood, 1922). The interest in food, in sociology, begins later than anthropology due to the fact that sociologists did not pay attention to food as a social phenomenon (Burnett & Ray, 2012; Golino, 2014; McIntosh, 1996; Mennell, Murcott, & van Otterloo, 1992a; Symons, 1994; Warde & Hedherington, 1994). The studies towards kitchen have not generally made happy sociologists working on culture and society (Symons, 1994). Moreover, sociology did not see kitchen as a privileged area for the reproduction and change of identity, and did not consider food to analyze social changes (Galino, 2014). Gregory (1995) asserts that the nature of food and eating as the basis of life may prevent sociologists from recognizing the importance of food in understanding social

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interactions. Furthermore, it is claimed that a study on the sociology of food is based on anthropology and historical sources (Warde & Hedherington, 1994).

Food anthropology studies can be examined in cultural differences (Mead 1943; Smith, 1889), change and modernization (Laudan, 2013; Mallery, 1888; Sobreira, Garavello, & Nardoto, 2018), communication (Douglas & Gross, 1981; Ing, 2011; Manderson, 1986), religion (Carneiro, 2005; Douglas, 1966; Fieldhouse, 1995), social analysis (Barthes, 1972; Lévi-Strauss, 1964), and identity (Abbots, 2016; Holtzman, 2006; Messer, 1984).

Food sociology studies, on the other hand, can be examined in consumption and sociocultural elements. The relationship between food and consumption has been examined on gender (Beardsworth, et al., 2002; Charles & Kerr, 1986a; Kerr & Charles, 1986), modernization (Bauman, 2007; Ritzer, 1992; Warde, 1999), status (Bennett, 1943; Bourdieu, 1984; Veblen, 1918), and health (Germov, 1997; Gofton, 1989). In the context of sociocultural elements, the relationship between food and culture (Baudrillard, 1998; Bell & Valentine, 1997; Poulain, 2002; Stajcic, 2013) and the functions of food (Bennett, Smith & Passin, 1942; McIntosh, 1996; Seymour, 1983) have been emphasized.

It can be stated that the studies conducted so far have reached sufficient maturity to have a general idea about food in the fields of anthropology and sociology. According to McGee (2004), there is always a valid reason to discover and understand something new about food. One of these reasons is considered to reveal the meaning of food for the individual and society in the socio-cultural framework. Furthermore, it is thought that there is a lack of study in which the meaning of food is examined in detail as a whole for individuals and societies. The reason for this may be that both disciplines, which see food as something from life (Gregory, 1995; Mennell et al., 1992a), do not need to elaborate on the subject. However, in order for the subject to be interpreted within the framework of human sciences, a semantic analysis should be made at first. The semantic analysis of food will show the meaning of food for the individual and the society from past to present, and the semantic expansion of food perception.

The study was conducted in two stages. Firstly, a comprehensive overview of the studies on food has been reviewed in anthropology and sociology. Secondly, a model based on the theoretical analysis of the common meanings attributed to food has been introduced to define the main and sub-meanings of food from past to present.

2. Food anthropology

Food anthropology has adopted a wide range of theoretical and methodological approaches to diet, food habits, and kitchen practices (Ayora-Diaz, 2015). Food anthropology focuses on structural and symbolic analysis of food (Ing, 2011). Food, for anthropologists, offers a different perspective in understanding individual cultures and societies (Tierney & Ohnuki-Tierney, 2012). Ayora-Diaz (2019, p. 1), an anthropologist expressing that understanding the taste will begin to recognize human nature, thinks that social, economic, ecological, and political context should be examined in order to understand the meaning of taste in different socio-cultural groups. Furthermore, Mintz (1985) stated in "Sweetness and Power" that the anthropology of sugar can be learned by examining where and for what purposes sugar is produced, its history, and its combination with other tastes such as tea, coffee, and chocolate.

When the literature is examined, food anthropology studies can be evaluated under six groups. The first one is cultural differences. There are differences in eating, preparation, and consumption from a culture to another one. Smith (1889) described the traditions of Semitic societies, such as the Arabs, Hebrews, Aramis, and Assyrians and explained some of his determinations, in particular about the

sacrification of animals and plants. He stated that while the Israelis did not use the camel as food or sacrifice, the camel was used as a common food and sacrifice among the Arabs. Boas (1921) talked about the Kwakiutl people and took care of the Kwakiutl tribe's salmon recipes and gave recipes such as roasted and blistered salmon. Boas, in this study, emphasized that salmon shaped the daily life of the people of Kwakiutl and the importance of salmon in daily life from marriage to dance.

Mead (1943) described eating habits as a set of standardized behaviors and claimed that eating habits should be differentiated from other habits. Eating traditions are influenced by different societies and cultures. For example, noodles and peaches are the traditional foods for birthday in China. However, many people affected by western culture celebrate birthday with cake and candles. Some people also synthesize both cultures, eating pastries and noodles at the same time (Ma, 2015).

The second is modernization and change. Laudan (2013) stated that societies became dependent on cooked food due to the fact that since the earliest periods of history raw food has been eaten only as an additional food that led to begin to create new mouth-watering flavors with cooking and over time people start to master more cooking methods. In short, cooking has changed the way we use our time and our social lives (Wrangham, 2010). Mallery (1888), who discusses the cultures of primitive societies through the definitions of living only to eat and eating only to live, expressed that dinner, in particular, became more and more of an established practice than eating. Mallery (1888) interprets this situation as a result of modern aesthetics and industrial victories with the discourse of twelve legs under a table.

According to Goody (1982) the industrial process and the means of communication have erased many of the external boundaries that define the areas of food consumption in developed countries. Gumerman (1997) stated that the traditions related to food changed over time and the examination of these changes would provide information about social changes. Sobreira, Garavello and Nardoto (2018), who deal with food anthropology in social, industrial and political contexts, focus on how the historical and technological transformations in Brazil starting from harvest affect and transform food systems including production, distribution, and consumption. As a result, they interpreted this situation as a transformation of food into a commodity.

The third is communication. Food, which is the subject and symbol of social life, is a tool for people to communicate with each other (Manderson, 1986). Douglas and Gross (1981) highlighted that food is a part of social relations and has social meanings. Moreover, a kitchen is an area that people use to explain themselves and others (Ing, 2011). Sensory events, at the same time, such as hearing, sight, tasting, and smelling also lead to the transmission of cultural elements in sensory anthropology (Classen, 1997). Richards (1939) in his work on the Bemba Tribe asserted that food could represent human relations. Moreover, Richards (1948) discussed the cultural aspects of southern Bantu's, an ethnic people in Sub-Saharan Africa, cooking activities and emphasized that family meals reinforce trust among them. Barthes (1961) stated that the meal was a primary need, but since human beings abandoned their life with wild fruits we have come to the stage of establishing food communication by structuring this need. Therefore, food can be considered as a communication system.

Counihan (1999, p. 6), who defines food as a glorious thing in the center of biological and social life, expresses that we eat food for days, seasons, and years to satisfy our physical hunger, our emotions and to feed our bellies. Moreover, Counihan notes that we have also established family and friendships by sharing our meals, tastes, and values. Mintz and Du Bois (2002) claimed that the meal has served both to consolidate group membership and to separate groups from each other. According to Douglas (1997), if we take food as a code, the messages food encoding will be in the model of social relations.

The fourth is religion. Food is seen as a symbol of religion and an important role in traditions (Ing, 2011). Douglas (1966) mentioned the determinants of religious taboos in "Purity and Danger" and concluded that foods could be interpreted as pure and dangerous within the framework of beliefs. Fieldhouse (1995) stated that the meal mediates communication with God or the supreme beings, and spiritual commitment to the rules of food accompany the sense of belonging. The symbolic importance of food eaten for religious purposes is more important than its nutritional value. The consumption of some foods can determine the relationship between human-God and human beings and re-establish these relationships (Ma, 2015, p. 196). Religious identity is often related to food (Carneiro, 2005). For instance, being a Jew or a Muslim means not eating pork, being a Hindu means being a vegetarian (Carneiro, 2005). Stajcic (2013) claimed that religion has an important role in the development of Japanese culinary culture.

The fifth is social analysis. Lévi-Strauss (1964) described cooking as a language by defining the basic opposition between nature and culture. Moreover, Lévi-Strauss (2004) continued this idea in his article titled "The Culinary Triangle" and interpreted this trilogy for social analysis by expressing that a food could manifest itself in three different ways that are raw, cooked, and rotten. Barthes (1972) focused on the symbolic meanings of certain foods and beverages such as Dutch milk and steak in his work "Mythologies". Furthermore, Zagorin (1977) claimed that every society should have the necessary rules for food collection and distribution. Despite the limitations of the physical environment to obtain food, people's mastery of adapting the lifestyle may be seen in the anthropological sources. According to this statement, we can say that Zagorin thinks of food as a means of helping the social order.

The last one is identity. Messer (1984) stated that food was also analyzed as a substance and symbol pointing to ethnic identity, social class, and the generally accepted prevailing sexual division of labor. Abbots (2016) asserted that food played an important role in the social life of diasporas and revealed a sense of belonging. He mentioned that anthropological analysis established a dichotomous relationship between the places those the migrants left and those they arrived. Furthermore, Holtzman (2006) saw food as a rich area for the preservation of historical identities and the discovery of memories. Lupton (1994) reported that food by associating with memory is an element that embodies our relationship with the past. Similarly, Moldanova (2016) emphasized that there is a link between food and individual or cultural memory and concluded that eating has become a cultural experience in addition to an effective tool leading to building social and ethnic groups.

3. Food sociology

According to Germov and Williams (2008), food sociology focuses on sociocultural, economic and philosophical factors that affect our eating habits (i.e., what, when, why, where, and how we eat). "All Manners of Food" written by Mennell in 1985 and "Distinction a social critique of the judgment of taste" written by Bourdieu (1984) are considered as the pioneering studies in the field of food sociology. Mennell (1985) and Bourdieu (1984) do not think of food separately from social life. Since food is at the center of social relations chain from production to consumption, it is in the interest of sociology. For instance, lunch is not only a meal but also a social institution (Yakunin, 2019). On the other hand, Beardsworth and Keil (2002) claimed that food has two dimensions in sociological framework, (1) production and consumption of food, (2) how we select, acquire, prepare, and share food. A general evaluation can be made within the framework of these two dimensions.

The first dimension of food has three focuses. The first one is the connection between food and status. According to Ma (2015), people can use food to express their social status. According to Veblen (1918),

expensive drinks are a sign of high status showing noble and honorable. Bourdieu (1984) claimed that eating habits cannot be considered independent of the whole way of life, especially when it is represented by consumed products. According to Bennett (1943), "one of the important symbols of status, and of aspiration for higher status, is food" (p. 561). Similarly, Fieldhouse (1995) identifies the social meaning of food as concepts of prestige and status, friendship and communication, and gifts and sharing. Whit (1995) gave rice as an example of the idea that a crop can construct a civilization. For instance, the communities that grow rice are often associated with large-scale bureaucratic structures.

The second one is the modernization in food consumption. The studies (Bauman, 2007; Warde, 1999) emphasize that the occurrence of convenience foods, fast-food consumption, eating out, and eating frozen food led to reorganization of time and space relations in contemporary society and disappearance of shared-consumption in context of modernization. The transformation in social life with modernization is interpreted by the change in eating practices. For example, Ritzer (1992) in his book "The McDonaldization of Society" has interpreted the social transformation based on globalization and modernization through fast food.

The third one is focusing on nutrition and gender-based differences in food consumption. Germov (1997) and Gofton (1989) interpreted the food sociology in the context of health concerns and changes in consumption. According to Charles and Kerr (1986a), although a woman is deprived of food to protect her charm, she is interested in food for healthy nutrition of her husband and children. This situation shows the contradiction between food and woman. According to Kerr and Charles (1986), as a result of their interviews with 200 women, gender differences that characterize families and the power relations within the family have an impact on women's food choices and family members' food needs. Moreover, Wood (1990) and Beardsworth et al. (2002) expressed that men and women have different thoughts related to food.

The second dimension of food sociology has two focuses. The former is associating food with culture. According to Stajcic (2013, p. 5) "the meaning of food is an exploration of culture through food". Moreover, Murcott (2019, p. 13) states that people cannot live for more than three weeks without eating but "food is not simply 'something to eat' but is culturally identified." in her book "Introducing the Sociology of Food and Eating". Poulain (2002) considered food as the concrete state of culture's most basic values. Baudrillard (1998) stated that while food does not address only one person, the boundaries of food in cultural system are uncertain. Furthermore, Whit (1999), and Bell and Valentine (1997) expressed that food defines the boundaries of the culture of a society and indicates identity.

The latter is the functions of food. Simmel (1997) emphasizes the unifying power of food. Food and foodways are the indicators pointing to social structure, social status, cultural change, and economic situation (Bennett, Smith, & Passin, 1942). Moreover, Seymour (1983) examined the social functions of food in five groups; social grouping, relations, symbolism, role performance, and socialization. Drouard (2015) considering food as symbolism asserted that food is the matter of representations and beliefs. Charles and Kerr (1986b) highlight the culture by stressing the importance of social and ideological values related to food in terms of defining what it means for proper eating. McIntosh (1996, p. 9) claimed that nutrition and the sociology of food would contribute to sociology in many areas such as social change, culture, social status, and social problems. Poulain and Proença (2003) defined the social space of food as a six-dimensional area including eatable products, food production, culinary aspect, food habits, temporality, and social differentiations.

4. Food meanings in anthropology and sociology

Based on the review of the food anthropology and food sociology literature examined in the previous two headings of the study, consumption, transfer, and identity are determined as three main meanings attributed to food. Figure 1 shows these main meanings. Each main meaning composed of sub-meanings will be examined in detail below.

Figure 1
The main food meanings diagram
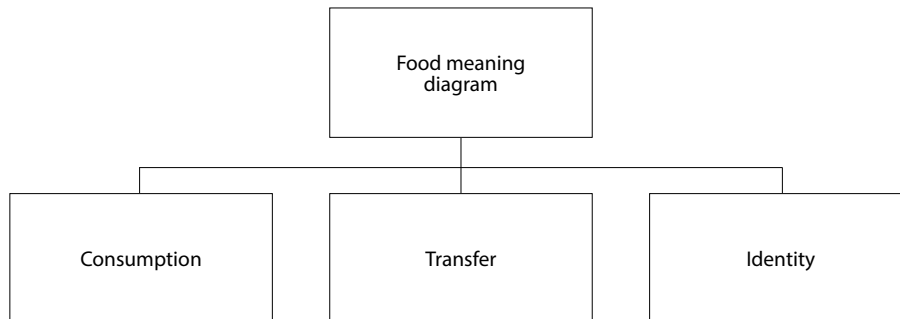
Source: Created by the authors.

4.1. Consumption meaning

Food is one of the most important things that all living organisms need from birth to death. However, when people reveal new flavors by learning new cooking methods (Laudan, 2013), food becomes the most basic tastes of people beyond a need (Belasco, 2002) and emotional satisfaction as well as physical hunger (Counihan, 1999). This situation caused food to be seen as the largest category of expenditure around the world (Rozin, Fischler, Imada, Sarubin, & Wrzesniewski, 1999).

Ibn Khaldun addresses hunger and thirst as physical needs at his first wish in the classification of the quintessence of human needs. Nevertheless, he addresses the need for tasting in the fifth wish (Ibrahim, 1989). Today, food has turned into the need to taste things that give taste and pleasure. Gastronomy is the best example of this transformation due to the fact that it is defined as the art of choice, preparation, presentation, and pleasure of food (Velissariou & Vasilaki, 2014).

Food, along with hedonic consumption, is the object of symbolic consumption. According to Levy (1959), all trade objects have a symbolic aspect and purchasing involves the evaluation of this symbolism. Appadurai (1981) claimed that people formed a powerful semiotic device when they transformed some of the objects into food in their environment and considered food as part of the semiotics system in a particular social context. For example, Loveday and Chiba (1985, p. 119), symbolically illustrating Japanese culinary culture, gave a sample of rice cakes (mochi), four leaves of laurel expressing tight family ties to decorate rice cakes, seaweed showing joy and happiness, an orange called daidai representing Japanese generations, and Empress Gemmi, some dried Japanese figs representing a happy family. Another example can be given from China. In the Civilité, the chopsticks recommended by Calviac in 1560 replaced the knife as a symbol of peace (Sennett, 2008). Moreover, in Chine, peanuts mean longevity, oranges and chestnuts mean good luck, and noodle means health and longevity (Ma, 2015, p. 197).

Food used as a tool and indicator of social differentiation (Fernández-Armesto, 2002; Tierney & Ohnuki-Tierney, 2012) is seen as a symbol of social status (Bessière, 1998). For example, prestige is

earned in exchange for things such as food and blanket which are indicators of strength of material in the tradition of potlatch (Kottak, 2000). A similar example given by Fjellström (2009) refers to the large companies desiring to show their financial strength by offering champagne at meetings during 1980s and 1990s in Sweden. In other cases, a man's demand for red meat (Symons, 2002) and blowfish for some Japanese men (Tierney & Ohnuki-Tierney, 2012) are the symbols of masculinity, caviar eating is a sign of social supremacy (Symons, 1994), wine is absorbed as a totem drink, and a steak with a bull-like power (Barthes, 1972). Figure 2 presents sub-meanings of consumption meaning attributed to food.

Figure 2
Food consumption meanings
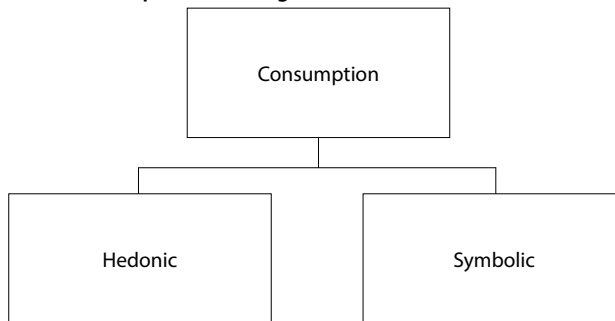
Source: Created by the authors.

4.2. Transfer meaning

Food is also seen as a means of transfer in addition to being an object of consumption. In other words, emotions and culture are transferred by food that is moved through travel, tourism, migration, etc. The key concept in the transfer of food is communication. Transfer is possible through interpersonal communication and interaction. Neuman (2018) considered the cultural symbols and social differences as communicative functions of food. Food having the effect of mobilizing strong emotions (Appadurai, 1981) can be viewed as a tool of communication (Manderson, 1986; Stajcic, 2013), as the symbol of sharing (Bessière, 1998; Mauss, 1966), and as an event bringing the whole family together (Fox, 2003). In other words, food has a unifying effect (Mallery 1888; Simmel, 1997). Moreover, food mediates interaction with family members, friends, and strangers (Henderson, 2004). According to Ferguson (2011, p. 372) "The same tastes that set the individual apart also bring people together." Food, along with physiological and biological transformation, is a psychological, emotional, and spiritual transformation tool (Méndez-Montoya, 2012, p. 2).

As in Mauss's (1966) statement, sharing is at the core of food. Meal times create opportunities to build relationships that strengthen and change the social order (Ochs & Shohet, 2006). Moreover, meal times are the times in which we share our food, our tastes, our values (Counihan, 1999), our joys, our sorrows and eliminate our aspirations. Thus, we can express that food mediates the survival of some of the forgotten values in daily rush and psychological well-being by transferring of emotions. Meigs (1987) asserted that food is alive and dynamism because it conveys the liveliness, emotion, and excitement of the producer.

Food is a culture as well as nutrient (Golino, 2014). In his work "Food is Culture" Montanari (2006) claimed that the definition of flavor belongs to the cultural heritage of the society. In addition to a history of every cuisine of a region or a country, there is a food that has become a cultural narrative

over time (O'Connor, 2008). We can also bring food to the places we go to feel like home (Bailey, 2017). When people migrate from one place to another, food and eating habits (Bailey, 2017; Bell & Valentine, 1997) can be moved and transferred to the new culture as well as a new culture can be adapted to a hybrid structure. For example, Arab merchants brought with them the practices of Islam to Malacca, one of the states of Malaysia (Raji, Karim, Ishak, & Arshad, 2017). The mixed salads (e.g., Rojak) combining different flavors on a single plate can be considered as a metaphor of the ethnic mix in Malaysia (Van Esterik, 2008, p. 75).

In addition to international migration, travel movements for tourism, foreign policy of the country, bilateral agreements with different countries, education, marriages, foreign trade, etc. develop the intercultural relations and the spread of food and culinary culture through this network of relationships takes place. Thus, food as a cultural object crosses its boundaries and becomes a tool of intercultural confusion in different lands and melts different cultures in a pot. Figure 3 shows sub-meanings of transfer meaning attributed to food.

Figure 3
Food transfer meanings
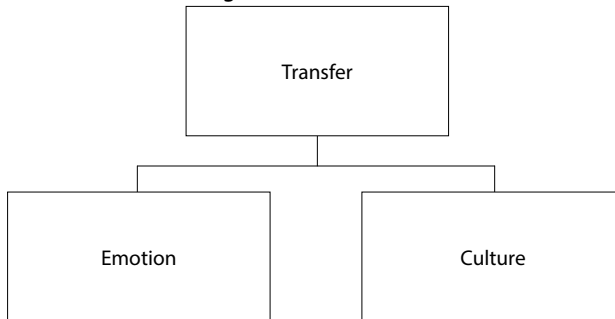
Source: Created by the authors.

4.3. Identity meaning

There is a sense of belonging on the basis of the relationship of food with identity. Fischler (1988) examined the relationship between food, a central role in the identification of identity, and human in two dimensions; (1) the omnivorous paradox between neophobia and neophilia and (2) the incorporation principle expressing identity formation by integrating with what people eat. Moreover, food is a tool supporting and forming identity (Richards, 2003). Brillat-Savarin's (1854) saying "Tell me what kind of food you eat, and I will tell you what kind of man you are." emphasizes the importance of food in defining personal identity. Mennell, Murcott, and van Otterloo (1992b) argued that food should be seen as a means of expressing group identity in relation to other people. Furthermore, food also has a role in consolidating group membership (Mintz & Du Bois, 2002). For example, different themed restaurants for lunch and dinner are the places that mediate identity acquisition of people and also provide socialization opportunities. Therefore, we can infer that food is a reflection of identity on the one hand and a tool that creates the identity on the other.

Radjenović (2014) stated that cuisine is an important part of local culture, history, and identity. Having an important role in the preservation of historical identities (Holtzman, 2006) food is the most conservative element of a society (Mennell, 2005, p. 23). We can say that food is one of the important devices for the meaning of the cultural texture of a society. Meat, vegetables, and spices used in meals, eating habits, and cooking methods of a particular culture help to define the culture through food.

Food is also closely linked to national and territory identity (Stajcic, 2013). Research on the role of food in ethnic, regional, and national identity has been one of the important issues in the anthropology of food (Dirks & Hunter, 2012). Moreover, Mishchenko (2017), who considers food as an instrument of ethnic identity and intercultural interaction, expressed that food is one of the determinants of ethnic identities. For example, he stated that frozen fish and meat were the symbols of Russia's ethnic identity in the Mansi and Komi peoples.

The national identity is expressed through the consumption of food (Bell & Valentine, 1997). Moreover, Brillat-Savarin (1854) claimed that "the destiny of nations depends on the manner in which they are fed." The questions like what we eat, how we eat, who prepares, and who serves food are all indicators that shape the society (Innes, 2001, p. 5). Bak (2006), who explores the relationship between food and national identity, expresses that rice is the symbol of Korea and hamburger is the symbol of the United States of America. Cwiertka (2006) asserted that rice, soy sauce, and seafood are the most important symbols of Japan. Moreover, Stajcic (2013) states that a pizza with tomato, basil, and mozzarella cheese points to Italy.

Ching Chan (2010) explained the relationship between food and identity with the Pancai-Poon Choi dinner, which represents Hong-Kong's socio-economic transformation from urbanization, migration, globalization, and colonialism. Yen-ho (2001) considered Hong-Kong-style tea cafes that spread abroad in the course of time as an important metaphor of Hong-Kong identity and as the symbol of Hong-Kong's cultural tradition. Moreover, Hall (1990) asserted that cultural identity reflects the common history and shared cultural codes. Furthermore, Thai or Mexican spices, Canadian maple syrup, Turkish coffee, and English mustard explain the link between food and national identity (Ichijo & Ranta, 2016).

In summary, we can express that food, which carries the codes specific to a culture from preparation to consumption, is an important tool in sustaining identity as a carrier of cultural elements and as an indicator for the reflection of personal and national identity. Figure 4 shows sub-meanings of identity meaning attributed to food.

Figure 4
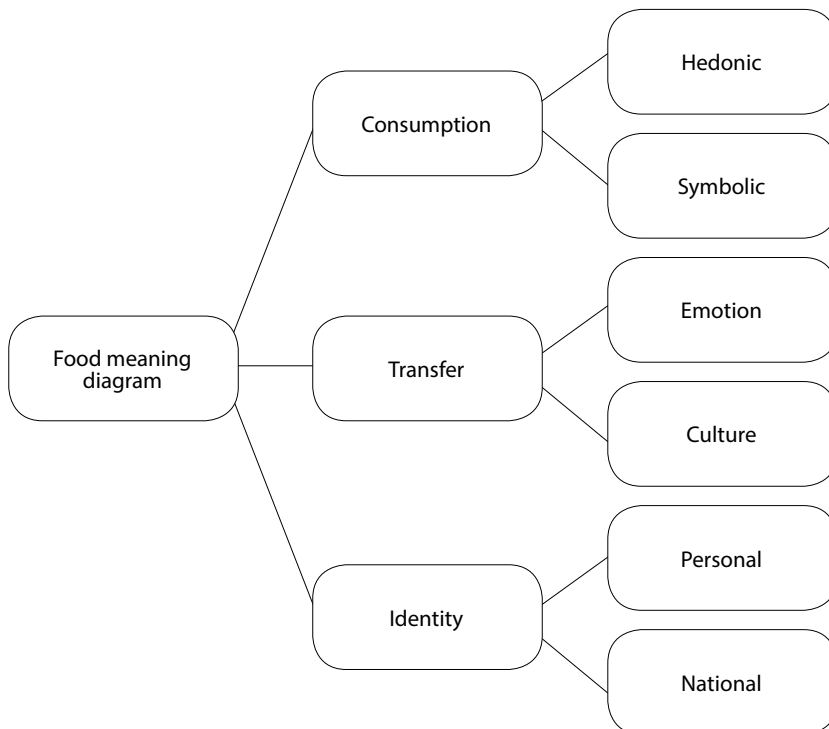**Food identity meanings**
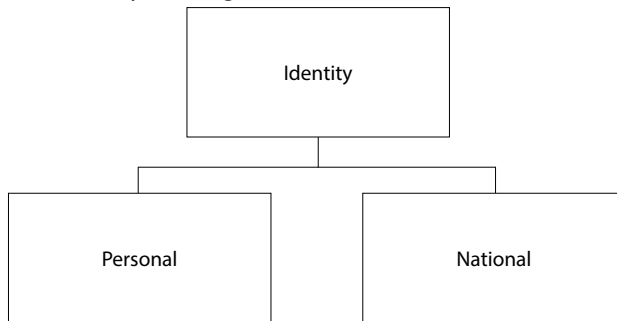
Source: Created by the authors.

5. The food meaning diagram (FMD)

Although food has different codes according to cultures, we can state that food generally has common meanings in almost all societies. Figure 5 presents the main meanings and sub-meanings attributed to food.

Figure 5
The food meaning diagram

Source: Created by the authors.

According to the FMD, the first of common meanings of food is consumption. We can assert that the consumption-oriented meaning of food goes beyond being a main object of consumption as a result of the cultural and social transformations. Thus, the need for hunger, which is defined as the basic physiologic need, has become an instrument that responds to many needs implicitly, such as status, dignity, prestige, and self-realization.

The second common meanings of food is transfer. In other words, meal times are an opportunity for people to come together as well as important moments for emotional sharing. For instance, breakfast and dinner bring the family members together in the private life. Moreover, in the working environment, we can see the unifying power of the meal, especially lunch, in the arrangement of working hours. Cooking is also a cultural element carried with temporarily or permanently movements through migration, tourism, travel, marriages, etc. Food moved with the people in a sense serves as the intercultural bridge. With this mobility, people are introduced to the new culture by introducing their original culture and met the original food of new culture.

The third common meanings of food is identity. Food is an indicator of who we are in a personal sense. Moreover, food is a living element protecting the national identity. Furthermore, eating habits,

cooking, consuming, preserving and storing methods, materials used in meals etc. are the indicators showing that food plays a role in the construction of identity. As one of the most vivid witnesses of the cultural heritage, food serves as a bridge between past and future generations by witnessing history.

6. Conclusions

Food as the intersection of nature, culture, and human (Nutch, 2007) is one of the interested areas of anthropology and sociology. In the discipline of anthropology, food is considered as an important element in the study of the cultures (Mallery, 1888; Richards, 1939; Smith, 1889). On the other hand, in sociology, the researches on food can be combined under the production and consumption of food and what we choose, how we obtain, prepare and share (Beardsworth & Keil, 2002). Therefore, we can claim that one end of the pen extends to sociology and the other to anthropology in the search of meaning of food.

As a result of this study started with the question of what the meanings attributed to food are in anthropology and sociology, the FMD has been created in the light of the basic discourses on the food anthropology and food sociology. The FMD, on the one hand, considers food as a necessary element for the maintenance of vital activities (i.e., food is just food that suppresses hunger) while on the other hand, it emphasizes that food has become a symbol by starting to gain more meaning than the need in time (i.e., people can use food to show and transfer their emotions, status, wellness, and individual and cultural identity).

The study has not only examined the meaning of food on an anthropological and sociological basis, but also provided a basic framework for the studies on human sciences. When the FMD is supported by empirical researches, the proposed meanings will be deepened and cultural and demographic differences of the meanings attributed to food will be revealed. Moreover, it can be obtained more information about the geographic region, family life, and values given importance. The culture-specific codes can also be analyzed through the differences in meanings of food in terms of cultural and demographic elements.

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