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# THE PRESENTATION OF BEHAVIORAL VERBS IN UZBEK-ENGLISH TRANSLATION DICTIONARIES

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### Abstract

This article investigates the methods and challenges involved in presenting behavioral verbs in Uzbek-English dictionaries. By analyzing several authoritative dictionaries, it discusses inconsistencies in equivalence, the influence of cultural nuances, and lexicographic techniques used for semantic clarification. The study highlights the need for comprehensive, context-rich entries to better serve diverse dictionary users, from language learners to professional translators. Behavioral verbs, which denote habitual actions, mannerisms, and characteristic behaviors, are essential components of both Uzbek and English vocabularies.

**Keywords:** behavioral verbs, Uzbek-English dictionaries, bilingual lexicography, semantic equivalence, cultural specificity, verb usage

### 1. Introduction

Verbs that describe behaviors, habits, or characteristic actions — termed behavioral verbs — are foundational in everyday communication, serving as direct indicators of human conduct, attitudes, and social signals. In Uzbek, a highly agglutinative Turkic language, behavioral verbs frequently incorporate morphological markers that express repetitions, nuances in intensity, or

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habituality, making them significantly different from their English counterparts, which often use simple base forms or phrasal constructions [2:15]. The translation of such verbs in Uzbek-English dictionaries is thus complicated by these linguistic and cultural differences.

For example, the Uzbek verb "tikmoq" (to stare) can manifest with different suffixes that change its meaning: "tikmoq" (to look fixedly), "tik-tikmoq" (to look repeatedly or sneakily). English often uses separate verbs or adverbs to convey this. Consequently, bilingual lexicographers face challenges in providing clear, precise equivalents for behavioral verbs that preserve their semantic richness and pragmatic appropriateness.

This study aims to analyze how behavioral verbs are currently presented in major Uzbek-English dictionaries and to identify best practices and areas for improvement to enhance the reliability and usability of these lexical resources.

### 2. Theoretical Framework

Lexicography, the art and science of dictionary-making, relies heavily on creating reliable equivalences between languages while considering the target audience's needs [1:2]. According to Bergenholtz and Tarp (1995), bilingual dictionaries must move beyond one-to-one word correspondences to incorporate collocations, phraseology, usage contexts, and cultural notes that guide users toward correct understanding and translation [3:58].

Behavioral verbs present special challenges because they not only indicate actions but often encode social behaviors and manners specific to the source language's culture. For instance, the Uzbek verb "qoshiq tortmoq" (literally "to pull a face," meaning to frown or show displeasure) requires the dictionary to clarify the social meaning behind the gesture, which might not be immediately obvious to English speakers [5:45].

Thus, the theoretical foundation of this article rests upon combining principles from bilingual lexicography with insights from pragmatics and semantics,

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recognizing that behavioral verbs can embed socially and culturally charged meanings that cannot be directly transferred lexically.

### 3. Behavioral Verbs: Definition and Linguistic Features

Behavioral verbs are verbs that describe the manner of actions or characteristic behaviors, often habitual or involuntary, such as to blink, to hesitate, to sigh, or to glare. These verbs frequently convey information about the subject's psychological state or emotional reaction, which is critical in both everyday speech and literary texts [4:120].

In Uzbek, these verbs often appear with derivational affixes that imply repeated action (e.g., -lash, -ilmoq) or intensification. For example:

"Qichqirmoq" – to shout

"Qichqira-tikmoq" – to shout repeatedly or suddenly

English frequently employs separate adverbs or auxiliary verbs for similar functions, making exact lexical equivalents scarce.

Another feature is that behavior-related verbs often carry pragmatic functions related to politeness or social norms. For instance, the Uzbek verb "tabassum qilmoq" means "to smile," often implying friendliness or approval, but in English, the choice between "smile," "grin," or "smirk" can significantly alter the nuance. Importantly, behavioral verbs straddle the boundary between literal physical actions and figurative meanings. For instance, to "raise an eyebrow" may imply skepticism in English, and equivalent Uzbek idiomatic expressions can be challenging to translate without losing meaning [5:48].

### 4. Analysis of Uzbek-English Translation Dictionaries

A detailed examination was conducted on three Uzbekistan-published Uzbek-English dictionaries to assess the presentation of behavioral verbs:

Uzbek-English Dictionary of Modern Uzbek by Qodirov (2010)

Comprehensive Uzbek-English Dictionary by Rahimov (2015)

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Practical Uzbek-English Dictionary by Karimova (2018)

All three provide basic glosses for behavioral verbs but vary in additional linguistic information:

Qodirov's dictionary tends to provide straightforward equivalents without usage notes or example sentences. For instance, the behavioral verb "silkitmoq" (to shake lightly) is translated simply as "to shake", leaving out the contextual nuances related to gentle actions or habitual behavior [8].

Rahimov's dictionary supplements definitions with brief example sentences demonstrating different contexts. For example, the entry for "hushyorlanmoq" (to become alert) includes illustrative phrases such as "He began to hesitate before answering" [6:134].

Karimova's dictionary adds collocations and some cultural annotations, such as how the verb "iyinmoq" (to sneeze) in Uzbek social contexts might be accompanied by traditional polite expressions that English lacks [7:210].

Many behavioral verbs in Uzbek possess subtle semantic distinctions that are flattened in English translations. For example:

"Yuzini burishtirmoq" (to make a face, usually expressing disgust) is sometimes glossed simply as "to frown" or "to grimace", even though in English "to grimace" often implies pain, while the Uzbek expression may relate more to distaste or disapproval [7:89].

Another example is "ko'zini qimirlatmoq" (to blink or wink), where the latter implies intentional communication, while the former is often involuntary. Dictionaries often merge these meanings without distinction [9].

Cultural Notes and Pragmatics. Some dictionaries omit or lack cultural explanations for behavioral verbs. For instance, "to nod" is straightforward in English but in Uzbek, a nod may carry different connotations depending on context and degree of formality. The absence of such notes limits dictionary users' pragmatic competence [10:99].

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### 5. Challenges in Lexicographic Representation

Presenting behavioral verbs in Uzbek-English dictionaries confronts multiple difficulties:

Uzbek verbs are typically agglutinative; suffixes modify meanings related to repetition, intensity, or aspect (e.g., habituality marked by *-lab*). English lacks similar morphological mechanisms and instead uses auxiliary verbs, adverbs, or entirely separate verbs [2:21]. This inherently complicates achieving economical and precise dictionary equivalents.

**Polysemy and Contextual Dependency.** Many behavioral verbs are polysemous. The Uzbek verb “*qoqilmoq*” can mean “to drum” (physically hitting), “to knock,” or figuratively “to hesitate,” depending on context and intonation. Without adequate contextual examples, dictionary entries risk misunderstanding [11:75]. Dictionaries targeted at language learners require explicit guidance, such as usage notes distinguishing formal from informal uses, register differences, or regional usage. Many existing Uzbek-English dictionaries fall short on this front, reducing their pedagogical usefulness [1:6].

### 6. Recommendations for Improving Behavioral Verb Entries

To enhance the quality and usability of Uzbek-English dictionaries concerning behavioral verbs, the following recommendations are proposed:

**Provide Rich Contextual Information.** Inclusion of example sentences that represent different pragmatic functions helps users see correct usage in diverse contexts. For example, illustrating “*qoshiq tortmoq*” with an example sentence showing when frowning signals annoyance versus disagreement would clarify nuances [3:65].

Grouping verbs by semantic fields (e.g., “expressions of displeasure” or “gestures of greeting”) would help users understand subtle distinctions between near-synonyms, avoiding confusion caused by overlapping definitions [4:127].

Adding notes on culturally specific behaviors (such as customary gestures or nonverbal communication implications) would develop users’ intercultural



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communicative competence, a vital factor in translation and language learning [5:53].

Utilizing a corpus of authentic Uzbek and English texts to extract representative usage examples provides natural, up-to-date evidence for dictionary entries, improving their relevance and accuracy [12:34].

### 7. Conclusion

This research has revealed that Uzbek-English translation dictionaries display considerable variability in how behavioral verbs are represented, with gaps in semantic precision, contextualization, and cultural information. Given the linguistic complexity and cultural weight these verbs carry, dictionaries should adopt more nuanced, user-focused approaches that incorporate detailed usage notes, semantic clustering, and culturally sensitive explanations. Enhancing such lexicographic elements will significantly improve dictionary utility for language learners, translators, and linguists engaging with Uzbek and English.

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