



ORIENTAL JOURNAL OF PHILOLOGY

journal homepage:

<http://www.supportscience.uz/index.php/ojp/about>



TACTILE PERCEPTION LEXEMES IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK: SEMANTIC GROUPING, COGNITIVE EXTENSION, AND PRAGMATIC ASYMMETRY

Sherali Ibrohimovich Shokirov

Doctoral Researcher

Uzbekistan State World Languages University

Science ID: DAN-0726-0032

Tashkent, Uzbekistan

ABOUT ARTICLE

Key words: Tactile perception, touch lexemes, symmetry, asymmetry, cognitive extension, English and Uzbek.

Received: 08.03.26

Accepted: 09.03.26

Published: 10.03.26

Abstract: This article investigates tactile perception lexemes in English and Uzbek from structural-semantic, cognitive, pragmatic, and quantitative perspectives. The analysis is based on dictionary material and contextual examples included in the dissertation corpus. The central English units touch, contact, and feel are compared with Uzbek hislamoq, tegmoq, teginmoq, tekizmoq, ushlamoq, and tutmoq. Symmetry is established when the two languages preserve the invariant meaning of physical contact or sensory recognition. Asymmetry emerges when tactile vocabulary develops meanings of influence, emotional response, control, participation, skill, interpersonal proximity, agreement, or the initiation of an activity. The study distinguishes a direct sensory core, a dominant zone of manner and effect, and a peripheral zone of metaphorical and socially conditioned meanings. Quantitative analysis identifies 105 English units, including 86 symmetric and 19 asymmetric items, and 91 Uzbek units, including 67 symmetric and 24 asymmetric items. The findings show that tactile semantics is dynamic and strongly dependent on context, derivation, and pragmatic interpretation.

**INGLIZ VA O‘ZBEK TILLARIDA TEGINISH SEZGISINI IFODALOVCHI
LEKSEMALAR: SEMANTIK GURUHLANISH, KOGNITIV KENGAYISH VA
PRAGMATIK ASIMMETRIYA**

Sherali Ibrohimovich Shokirov

Filologiya fanlari doktori (DSc) izlanuvchisi

O'zbekiston davlat jahon tillari universiteti
Ilmiy identifikatsiya raqami: DAN-0726-0032
Toshkent, O'zbekiston

MAQOLA HAQIDA

Kalit so'zlar: Teginish sezgisi, teginish leksemalari, simmetriya, asimmetriya, kognitiv kengayish, ingliz va o'zbek tillari.

Annotatsiya: Mazkur maqolada ingliz va o'zbek tillarida teginish sezgisini ifodalovchi leksemalar struktur-semantik, kognitiv, pragmatik va statistik nuqtayi nazardan tadqiq qilinadi. Tahlil dissertatsiya korpusiga kiritilgan lug'aviy material va kontekstual misollarga asoslanadi. Ingliz tilidagi touch, contact va feel markaziy birliklari o'zbek tilidagi hislamoq, tegmoq, teginmoq, tekizmoq, ushlamoq va tutmoq leksemalari bilan qiyoslanadi. Jismoniy aloqa yoki sensor idrokning invariant ma'nosi saqlanganda simmetriya yuzaga keladi. Teginish leksikasi ta'sir, hissiy holat, nazorat, ishtirok, mahorat, shaxslararo yaqinlik, kelishuv yoki faoliyatni boshlash ma'nolariga kengayganda asimmetriya kuchayadi. Tadqiqotda bevosita sensor yadro, harakat usuli va ta'sirni ifodalovchi dominanta hamda metaforik va ijtimoiy shartlangan periferik qatlam ajratiladi. Statistik tahlilda ingliz tilida 105 ta birlik, jumladan 86 ta simmetrik va 19 ta asimmetrik leksema; o'zbek tilida 91 ta birlik, jumladan 67 ta simmetrik va 24 ta asimmetrik leksema aniqlangan. Natijalar teginish semantikasi kontekst va pragmatik talqinga bog'liq dinamik tizim ekanini ko'rsatadi.

ЛЕКСЕМЫ ТАКТИЛЬНОГО ВОСПРИЯТИЯ В АНГЛИЙСКОМ И УЗБЕКСКОМ ЯЗЫКАХ: СЕМАНТИЧЕСКАЯ ГРУППИРОВКА, КОГНИТИВНОЕ РАСШИРЕНИЕ И ПРАГМАТИЧЕСКАЯ АСИММЕТРИЯ

Шерали Иброхимович Шокиров

Соискатель степени доктора филологических наук (DSc)
Узбекский государственный университет мировых языков
Научный идентификационный номер: DAN-0726-0032
Ташкент, Узбекистан

О СТАТЬЕ

Ключевые слова: Тактильное восприятие, лексемы осязания, симметрия, асимметрия, когнитивное расширение, английский и узбекский языки.

Аннотация: В статье исследуются лексемы тактильного восприятия английского и узбекского языков в структурно-семантическом, когнитивном, прагматическом и количественном аспектах. Анализ основан на словарном материале и контекстуальных примерах

диссертационного корпуса. Центральные английские единицы touch, contact и feel сопоставляются с узбекскими hislamoq, tegmoq, teginmoq, tekizmoq, ushlamoq и tutmoq. Симметрия устанавливается при сохранении инвариантного значения физического контакта или сенсорного распознавания. Асимметрия возникает при развитии значений воздействия, эмоциональной реакции, контроля, участия, умения, межличностной близости, согласия или начала деятельности. Выделяются непосредственное сенсорное ядро, доминантная зона способа и результата действия и периферия метафорических и социально обусловленных значений. Количественный анализ выявил 105 английских единиц, включая 86 симметричных и 19 асимметричных, и 91 узбекскую единицу, включая 67 симметричных и 24 асимметричных. Результаты показывают динамический характер тактильной семантики и её зависимость от контекста, словообразования и прагматической интерпретации.

Introduction. Tactile perception is based on bodily contact, pressure, temperature, movement, and the recognition of surface or physical proximity. In language, however, tactile vocabulary does not remain within this physiological domain. Words meaning touch, feel, hold, or contact regularly represent emotional influence, social participation, control, ability, agreement, and the beginning of purposeful action. This semantic expansion is especially significant in a comparison of English and Uzbek because both languages use the body as a source of conceptualization but organize the resulting meanings through different lexical and grammatical resources.

The problem addressed in this article is the relation between a universal tactile invariant and language-specific semantic development. Direct contact creates a relatively stable core, yet the field becomes increasingly asymmetric when a lexical item includes manner, intensity, emotional state, social status, or pragmatic intention. The same source concept may be expressed by a single polysemous English verb, an Uzbek derived verb, a noun-plus-verb construction, or a broader contextual phrase.

The aim is to describe the principal semantic groups of tactile lexemes, identify their core-dominant-peripheral organization, explain the transition from physical sensation to abstract

meaning, and interpret the quantitative data presented in the dissertation. Particular attention is given to the role of context because the same unit can realize a symmetric literal meaning in one situation and an asymmetric figurative or evaluative meaning in another.

Conceptual and Methodological Basis

Cognitive linguistics treats tactile experience as an embodied source for the organization of abstract concepts. Physical contact provides a model for psychological influence, interpersonal connection, possession, control, competence, and access. The metaphor KNOWING IS FEELING OR TOUCHING and related mappings demonstrate that tactile recognition can structure mental and social meanings (Lakoff & Johnson, 2004; Sweetser, 1990). Consequently, the semantic field of touch includes both sensory and non-sensory components.

For the present analysis, symmetry is defined as the preservation of the invariant component ‘physical contact or tactile recognition’ together with a comparable communicative function. Asymmetry appears when one language lexicalizes additional components such as intentionality, force, duration, emotional evaluation, social hierarchy, or result. The distinction is gradual rather than absolute. Core units are close equivalents; dominant units specify manner or effect; peripheral units are metaphorical, metonymic, culturally conventional, or strongly context-dependent.

The material consists of English and Uzbek explanatory dictionary units and examples from literary and publicistic texts used in the dissertation. The analysis combines comparison, componential description, semantic grouping, conceptual modeling, pragmatic interpretation, and statistical calculation. Units were classified by part of speech, relation to the tactile invariant, semantic extension, and degree of symmetric or asymmetric correspondence.

Core Tactile Lexemes and Field Organization

The English tactile core is represented by touch, contact, and feel. Uzbek central units include hislamoq, tegmoq, teginmoq, tekizmoq, ushlamoq, and tutmoq. These words denote contact between entities, active or passive sensory recognition, holding, and the effect produced by physical interaction. At this level, the two languages show substantial symmetry because the meanings arise from recurrent bodily operations.

Nevertheless, even central units are not interchangeable in every context. English feel can denote tactile sensation, internal emotion, intuition, opinion, or a general impression. Uzbek his qilmoq or hislamoq covers many of these meanings, but some contexts require sezmoq, tuyulmoq, or an analytic expression. English touch can refer to momentary contact, emotional effect, a small amount, stylistic detail, communication, or involvement. Uzbek tegmoq and teginmoq preserve the contact meaning, whereas abstract uses may be distributed among ta’sir qilmoq, aloqador bo’lmoq, qo’l urmoq, or other constructions.

The field therefore has a layered structure. The core contains neutral contact and sensory recognition. The dominant zone includes holding, pressing, grasping, avoiding contact, reaching, handling, and experiencing temperature or surface quality. The periphery includes influence, skill, control, participation, agreement, reference, emotional response, and social proximity. Movement toward the periphery is accompanied by a reduction in direct sensory content and an increase in pragmatic and evaluative meaning.

Semantic Groups of Tactile Extension

The dissertation material identifies several broad thematic groups. One group represents tactile method or ability. English units such as hand, skill, knack, technique, mastery, and handiwork connect bodily manipulation with competence. Uzbek qobiliyat, mahorat, qo‘l, uslub, yo‘l, and related forms perform comparable functions. The relation is based on the conceptual transition from using the hand to possessing practical ability. Symmetry is functional, but the lexical image and grammatical form may differ.

A second group expresses effect and influence. English affect, impress, move, stir, strike, soften, stimulate, and related combinations represent an external force producing a physical or emotional change. Uzbek ta’sir qilmoq, bezovta qilmoq, yumshatmoq, rag‘batlantirmoq, tortmoq, and taassurot qoldirmoq organize the same general domain. These relations are often asymmetric because a tactile source component is explicit in one language but only historically or metaphorically present in the other.

Further groups concern involvement, reference, agreement, assumption of responsibility, and embrace. Contact with an object is conceptualized as participation in an activity; taking or holding becomes control; joining hands becomes agreement; embracing becomes acceptance or support. English makes extensive use of polysemous verbs and phrasal combinations, while Uzbek frequently employs derived verbs and constructions containing qo‘l. The shared cognitive motivation is clear, but direct lexical substitution is not always possible.

Metaphorical and Metonymic Development

Tactile metaphor connects physical sensation with internal experience. To feel warmth can denote temperature, affection, safety, or emotional closeness. To be touched can mean physical contact or a strong emotional response. Uzbek his qilmoq, ko‘ngliga tegmoq, ta’sir qilmoq, and related constructions likewise represent the movement from the body to emotion. The metaphor is symmetric at the conceptual level, yet its lexical realization depends on conventional collocation and discourse context.

Metonymic development is also productive. A hand can represent the person who acts, practical ability, assistance, control, labor, or authority. Physical touching can stand for the beginning of an activity, as in meanings comparable to ‘to undertake’ or ‘to start working on

something.' Holding can represent possession or domination. Such extensions preserve an internal link with bodily action, but the sensory archiseme becomes less prominent.

This development explains why tactile lexemes are especially sensitive to context. A form may denote actual contact in a descriptive passage but social pressure, emotional impact, or control in another setting. Symmetry cannot therefore be determined from dictionary form alone. It must be evaluated in relation to the activated semantic components and the communicative purpose of the utterance.

Pragmatic Functions and Human States

Tactile vocabulary is closely associated with the representation of a person's physical and psychological state. Contact can indicate vulnerability, protection, intimacy, aggression, authority, hesitation, or refusal. A gentle touch may signal support, while a forceful grasp may express dominance. Avoidance of contact can represent fear, social distance, moral reluctance, or rejection. These meanings show how the tactile field participates in the pragmatic organization of interpersonal relations.

Uzbek literary discourse frequently presents internal emotion through externally visible action. Touching a shoulder, holding a hand, embracing, withdrawing a hand, or refusing to act can function as a sign of excitement, respect, anxiety, affection, or moral restraint. English texts employ comparable strategies, but the lexical choice may emphasize sensation, manner, result, or emotional interpretation differently. The asymmetry is therefore not merely grammatical; it concerns the perspective from which the event is profiled.

The dominant pragmatic feature of tactile lexemes is their capacity to make an internal or social relation observable through bodily action. This feature allows the same field to connect physiology with character, status, intention, and communicative stance. Peripheral meanings remain motivated by contact, yet their interpretation depends on shared cultural knowledge and the local discourse situation.

Quantitative Results

The English material contains 105 tactile lexemes: 35 nouns, 64 verbs, and 6 adjectives. Eighty-six units are classified as symmetric and nineteen as asymmetric, corresponding to 81 and 19 percent. The Uzbek material contains 91 units: 27 nouns, 53 verbs, and 11 adjectives. Sixty-seven are symmetric and twenty-four asymmetric, corresponding to 73 and 27 percent. In both languages, verbs form the largest group, which reflects the dynamic nature of contact, feeling, holding, and influence.

The data show a higher proportion of symmetric tactile units in English, while Uzbek displays a somewhat larger asymmetric share. This difference does not mean that the Uzbek field is less systematic. It indicates that Uzbek distributes tactile and abstract meanings across a wider

range of derived verbs and constructions, some of which do not have single-word English counterparts. Conversely, highly polysemous English verbs may require several Uzbek equivalents according to context.

Language	Part-of-speech distribution	Total	Symmetric	Asymmetric
English	N 35; V 64; Adj 6	105	86 (81%)	19 (19%)
Uzbek	N 27; V 53; Adj 11	91	67 (73%)	24 (27%)

Discussion and Translation Implications

The comparative results confirm that tactile semantics is organized around a universal bodily invariant but develops through language-specific profiling. English often concentrates several meanings in touch, feel, handle, hold, grasp, and related verbs. Uzbek differentiates contact, sensation, manipulation, and metaphorical action through tegmoq, teginmoq, his qilmoq, ushlamoq, tutmoq, qo‘l urmoq, and other constructions. Neither pattern is inherently richer; they represent different strategies of lexicalization.

For translation, the first task is to determine whether the source unit denotes physical contact, sensory recognition, emotional influence, participation, control, skill, or another abstract relation. The second task is to identify evaluation, intensity, and stylistic register. Literal transfer is reliable only in the central sensory zone. Peripheral meanings may require a different verb, a phraseological construction, or an explanatory reformulation. Translating feel uniformly as his qilmoq or touch uniformly as tegmoq would erase important semantic distinctions.

The findings also support a contextual approach to bilingual lexicography. Dictionary entries should separate tactile sensation, voluntary contact, accidental contact, manipulation, emotional impact, social involvement, and control. Typical collocations and grammatical frames are necessary because the semantic range of a unit is partly determined by its syntactic environment. Such representation would make asymmetric relations visible and improve translation and language teaching.

Conclusion. Tactile perception lexemes in English and Uzbek constitute dynamic semantic fields extending from direct physical contact to emotional, social, and cognitive meanings. Core units show substantial symmetry because they are grounded in common bodily experience. Asymmetry increases in the dominant and peripheral zones, where the languages differ in

polysemy, derivation, grammatical construction, evaluative components, and conventional metaphor.

The quantitative distribution confirms the predominance of verbs and the general strength of symmetric relations, while also revealing a meaningful difference in the proportion of asymmetric units. The analysis demonstrates that tactile meaning cannot be described adequately without combining structural, semantic, cognitive, pragmatic, and contextual perspectives. These findings are relevant to comparative linguistics, bilingual lexicography, translation studies, and the teaching of English and Uzbek lexical semantics.

References:

1. Hornby, A. S. (2000). Oxford advanced learner's dictionary of current English (6th ed.). Oxford University Press.
2. Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (2004). *Metafor, kotorymi my zhivem* [Metaphors we live by] (A. N. Baranov & A. V. Morozova, Trans.). URSS. (Original work published 1980)
3. Langacker, R. W. (1987). *Foundations of cognitive grammar: Vol. 1. Theoretical prerequisites*. Stanford University Press.
4. Madvaliyev, A. (Ed.). (2020). *O'zbek tilining izohli lug'ati: 5 jildli* [Explanatory dictionary of the Uzbek language: 5 volumes]. O'zbekiston Milliy Ensiklopediyasi.
5. Mey, J. L. (1993). *Pragmatics: An introduction*. Blackwell.
6. Sweetser, E. (1990). *From etymology to pragmatics: Metaphorical and cultural aspects of semantic structure*. Cambridge University Press.
7. Umakhanova, E. M. (1975). *Strukturno-semanticheskaya kharakteristika glagolov fizicheskogo vospriyatiya* [Structural-semantic characteristics of verbs of physical perception] [Candidate dissertation, Moscow State University].
8. Yelkina, E. V. (1977). *Semantiko-sintaksicheskiy analiz korrelyativnykh par look-see, listen-hear, touch-feel, sniff-smell, try-taste v sovremennom angliyskom yazyke* [Semantic-syntactic analysis of correlational pairs in modern English] [Candidate dissertation, Pyatigorsk State University].