



## Perceptual verbs in English and Uzbek

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### ABSTRACT

This article explores perceptual verbs in English and Uzbek, focusing on their semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic features. Drawing on prior scholarly works, including those by Uzbek researchers, the study investigates how perception is expressed through verbs such as see, hear, smell, taste, and feel in English and their equivalents in Uzbek (e.g., ko'rmq, eshitmoq, hidlamoq, tatib ko'rmq, sezmoq). Using a comparative and corpus-based approach, this research aims to identify convergences and divergences in the perception verb systems of two languages. Findings reveal that while English and Uzbek share many universal properties, particularly in terms of semantic roles and core perceptual concepts, there are notable differences in how these roles interact with grammatical categories such as tense, aspect, and modality. These distinctions have important implications for translation studies, language teaching, and theoretical linguistics as they underscore the interplay between language-specific structures and universal perceptual processes.

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## Ingliz va o'zbek tillaridagi idrok fe'llari

### ANNOTATSIYA

#### Kalit so'zlar:

idrok fe'llari,  
ingliz tili,  
o'zbek tili,  
semantika,  
sintaksis,  
pragmatika,  
qiyosiy tahlil,  
korpusga asoslangan  
tadqiqot.

Mazkur maqolada ingliz va o'zbek tillaridagi idrok fe'llari ularning semantik, sintaktik hamda pragmatik xususiyatlarini o'rganish asosida tahlil qilinadi. Ushbu tadqiqotda, jumladan, o'zbek olimlarining ishlariga tayangan holda, ingliz tilidagi see, hear, smell, taste, feel fe'llari va ularning o'zbekcha ekvivalentlari (ko'rmq, eshitmoq, hidlamoq, tatib ko'rmq, sezmoq) yordamida qanday idrok ifodalanishi o'rganiladi. Qiyosiy va korpusga asoslangan usuldan foydalangan holda, maqolada ikki

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tilning idrok fe'llari tizimidagi o'xshash va farqli jihatlar aniqlanadi. Natijalar shuni ko'rsatadiki, ingliz va o'zbek tillarida semantik rollar hamda asosiy idrok tushunchalarida ko'plab umumiyliklar mavjud bo'lsa-da, mazkur rollarning zamon, aspekt va modal kabi grammatik kategoriyalar bilan o'zaro aloqadorligi borasida muhim farqlar mavjud. Ushbu farqlar tarjimashunoslik, til o'qitish metodikasi va nazariy tilshunoslik sohalari uchun muhim ahamiyat kasb etadi, chunki ular tilga xos xususiyatlar va universal idrok jarayonlari o'rtasidagi o'zaro bog'liqlikni ko'rsatadi.

## Глаголы восприятия в английском и узбекском языках

### АННОТАЦИЯ

#### Ключевые слова:

глаголы восприятия,  
английский язык,  
узбекский язык,  
семантика,  
синтаксис,  
прагматика,  
сравнительный анализ,  
корпусное исследование.

В данной статье исследуются глаголы восприятия в английском и узбекском языках с акцентом на их семантические, синтаксические и прагматические особенности. Основываясь на предыдущих научных работах, включая труды узбекских исследователей, в исследовании рассматривается, как восприятие выражается с помощью глаголов see, hear, smell, taste, feel в английском языке и их узбекских эквивалентов (например, ko'gmoq, eshitmoq, hidlamoq, tatib ko'gmoq, sezmoq). Используя сравнительный и корпусный подход, автор ставит целью выявить сходства и различия в системе глаголов восприятия двух языков. Результаты показывают, что английский и узбекский языки демонстрируют многие универсальные черты, особенно в отношении семантических ролей и ключевых концепций восприятия, однако существуют заметные отличия в том, как эти роли взаимодействуют с грамматическими категориями, такими как время, вид и модальность. Эти различия имеют важное значение для переводоведения, методики преподавания языков и теоретической лингвистики, поскольку подчеркивают взаимодействие между языковыми структурами и универсальными процессами восприятия.

### INTRODUCTION

Verbs of perception represent a crucial category in natural languages, encapsulating how humans experience the external and internal world through the senses. In both English and Uzbek, verbs denoting sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch/feeling are central to everyday communication, enabling speakers to describe sensory experiences and interpret environmental stimuli [1; 129]. As fundamental components of linguistic typology, perceptual verbs exhibit rich semantic and syntactic properties that reflect universal cognitive structures while simultaneously showcasing language-specific idiosyncrasies.

English, a widely studied Indo-European language, has a well-documented system of perceptual verbs. This system has been examined from multiple perspectives: semantic (the variety of senses each verb can express), syntactic (the argument structure and

complementation patterns), and pragmatic (the contexts in which these verbs are employed) [2; 150]. Uzbek, on the other hand, is a Turkic language with its own unique morphological and syntactic features, including agglutination and the use of postpositions, which shape how perceptual verbs function in context [3; 20]. Despite increased scholarly interest in Uzbek grammar and lexicology, comparative studies that specifically focus on perceptual verbs in Uzbek and English remain limited [4; 15].

This article, therefore, aims to fill a notable gap by presenting a comprehensive, comparative investigation of perceptual verbs in English and Uzbek. Drawing on a range of scholarly works, including those by Uzbek researchers (e.g., Corpus studies of Rakhimova and work on semantic features of Uzbek verbs of Tadjibayeva), this research addresses theoretical and applied concerns. Theoretically, the study contributes to our understanding of how perception is linguistically encoded in typologically distinct languages [1; 131]. From an applied perspective, the findings carry significance for translation studies, language pedagogy, and cross-cultural communication.

### METHODOLOGY

This study relies on both qualitative and quantitative data. The primary source for English perceptual verbs includes samples from the British National Corpus (BNC) and the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), covering a range of texts from academic, journalistic, and spoken registers [5; 47]. For Uzbek, a custom-compiled corpus was utilized, consisting of online news articles, fiction, and academic texts in Uzbek, supplemented by the National Corpus of the Uzbek Language where available [4; 26]. To ensure a robust dataset, the selection of texts was diversified to represent different registers, ranging from formal academic writing to more colloquial sources, such as blog posts and dialogues.

In parallel, this research draws on existing scholarly discussions of perceptual verbs, particularly studies in semantic typology [1; 130], pragmatic usage [2; 155], and comparative linguistics [3; 21]. Uzbek-specific sources – such as Rakhimova’s (2017) corpus-based analyses and Tadjibayeva’s (2012) investigations into the semantics of Uzbek verbs – provided essential insights into the local usage patterns of perceptual verbs [4; 15] [3; 18].

Five core perceptual verbs in English – *see*, *hear*, *smell*, *taste*, and *feel* – were chosen to represent the main sensory modalities [1; 129]. Their direct Uzbek counterparts are typically rendered as *ko’rmoq* (see), *eshitmoq* (hear), *hidlamoq* (smell), *tatib ko’rmoq* or *tatimoq* (taste), and *sezmoq* or *his qilmoq* (feel). However, due to semantic overlaps and variations in usage, additional verbs were also considered, such as *qaramoq* (to look at), *tinglamoq* (to listen), and *tuymoq* (to feel, sense) [4; 17]. This broader range helped capture subtle differences in lexical meaning and grammatical behavior.

1. The semantic properties of the selected perceptual verbs were assessed by examining sense distinctions, metaphorical extensions, and argument structures. For instance, *see* in English can refer to both physical vision and mental understanding (“I see what you mean”); similarly, Uzbek *ko’rmoq* can extend to certain idiomatic usages (“*ko’rib chiqmoq*” meaning “to consider”) [1; 133] [3; 22].

2. The syntactic dimension was explored by investigating verb valency, complementation patterns, and morphological markers. In English, perceptual verbs often take an object (direct or indirect), or complement clauses introduced by *that*, *-ing*, or bare infinitives (“I saw him running” vs. “I saw that he was running”), whereas in Uzbek, agglutinative suffixes and postpositions interact with these verbs to create meaning distinctions [3; 25] [4; 19].

3. Pragmatic contexts for the usage of perceptual verbs were identified through discourse examples, paying attention to speech acts and implicatures. For example, using *hear* in the imperative (“Hear me out!”) signals a request for attention or respect in English, while Uzbek might employ *eshit*, *eshit-chi*, or other forms to soften or intensify the directive [4; 21].

Through these three levels of analysis – semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic – this research aims to provide a holistic understanding of how perceptual verbs function and compare across English and Uzbek.

## RESULTS

Both English and Uzbek share a core set of meanings for perceptual verbs, corresponding to the five primary senses: vision, hearing, smell, taste, and touch/feeling [1; 129] [7; 278]. Across both languages, these verbs typically denote the direct experience of external stimuli. For instance, *see* (“to perceive visually”) and *ko’rmoq* converge in their prototypical sense (“Men qushni ko’rdim” = “I saw the bird”) [3; 23].

Despite these fundamental parallels, each language displays language-specific nuances. In English, *taste* can function as both a transitive verb (“I tasted the soup”) and a linking verb to describe the flavor (“The soup tastes salty”). Uzbek, in contrast, more commonly employs a construction like “*sho’r ekan*” (“it is salty”) after tasting, though *tatib ko’rmoq* or *tatimoq* can be used transitively to describe the act of tasting [3; 24]. Such distinctions underscore how perception can be linguistically shaped by grammatical and lexical structures.

Perceptual verbs in English frequently undergo metaphorical extension. *See* may denote understanding (“I see your point”), while *hear* can imply acceptance or compliance (“I hear you,” meaning “I acknowledge what you’re saying”). *Feel* often extends to emotional contexts (“I feel sad,” “I feel your pain”) [2; 157].

In Uzbek, metaphorical extensions also appear, but sometimes with different nuances. *Ko’rmoq* can imply consideration or evaluation (“Masalani ko’rib chiqishimiz kerak” = “We need to look into the issue”), while *sezmoq* can mean both physical sensation and intuition (“Men bu narsani sezdim” = “I sensed this thing/ I had a feeling about it”) [4; 18]. Such expansions point to overlapping cognitive metaphors, though the particular patterns of usage reflect cultural and linguistic specificity.

English perceptual verbs often allow for multiple complement structures. For instance, *see* can be followed by a direct object (“I see the car”), an object + bare infinitive (“I saw him leave”), or an object + -ing form (“I saw him leaving”) [8; 112]. Each pattern conveys subtle differences in aspect and speaker perspective. Similarly, *hear* supports constructions like “I heard her sing” vs. “I heard her singing,” highlighting different vantage points on the event [5; 58].

In Uzbek, passive constructions (*-il-*, *-in-*, etc.) are also possible, but their usage with perceptual verbs is relatively restricted. For example, “U ko’rildi” might literally translate to “He was seen,” but more idiomatic expressions tend to avoid passivizing the act of seeing unless a particular stylistic or rhetorical effect is desired [4; 27]. Causative forms (*ko’rsatmoq* = “to show,” *eshittirmoq* = “to make someone hear something”) are more frequent, reflecting a broader morphological system that allows nuanced control over who initiates or experiences the perception.

In spoken discourse, English speakers often use perceptual verbs to frame interactions politely or to manage conversation. “Do you see what I mean?” or “I hear you” function as checks for comprehension or empathy [2; 159]. In Uzbek, parallel constructions



exist – *Tushundingizmi?* (“Did you understand?”) or *Eshitdingizmi?* (“Did you hear me?”) – although the verbs of perception might be replaced or supplemented by explicit verbs of understanding or paying attention (e.g., *tushunmoq* or *diqqat qilmoq*) [4; 30].

In many languages, perceptual verbs are central to evidentiality, indicating how the speaker came to know certain information. English sometimes uses phrases like “I see that...” or “I hear that...” to signal hearsay or direct observation [6; 180]. Uzbek can also mark information source, though it typically relies on specific suffixes or particles. For instance, *-gan ekan* or *-gan edi* might indicate inferred or reported information, sometimes in tandem with a perceptual verb to clarify the basis of knowledge: “*Eshitdimki, u kelgan ekan*” = “I heard that he had arrived” [4; 30].

These examples reveal that while both English and Uzbek speakers utilize perceptual verbs to frame their certainty and source of knowledge, the morphological marking in Uzbek offers a more systematic way to encode evidential nuances.

## DISCUSSION

The results support the view that perceptual verbs, despite reflecting universal cognitive processes, are nonetheless shaped by each language’s typological features [1; 129]. The parallels observed – such as the five-sense structure – align with cross-linguistic research on perceptual universals [7; 280]. At the same time, morphological differences in Uzbek (agglutinative structure, causative suffixes) and the availability of multiple complement types in English reveal the interplay between universal concepts and language-specific grammar [2; 153].

From a cognitive perspective, the presence of metaphorical extensions in both English and Uzbek underscores how perception is intricately linked to understanding and emotion in human thought [1; 133]. The fact that each language extends these concepts somewhat differently (e.g., *see* → “understand” in English, *koʻrmoq* → “to consider” in Uzbek) suggests that universal metaphors (such as “knowing is seeing”) can manifest through distinct linguistic realizations [2; 165]. This resonates with typological claims that while conceptual metaphors may be widespread, each language’s lexicon and grammatical system channels metaphorical usage in unique ways.

Translators dealing with English-Uzbek texts face a challenge in rendering perceptual verbs accurately when constructions do not map one-to-one. For instance, translating “I could smell something burning” into Uzbek often requires reconfiguring the sentence structure to indicate the source of perception and the nature of the event: “*Men nimadir yonayotganini sezdim/his qildim*” or “*yonayotgan hidni sezdim*” [4; 33]. Such shifts highlight the need for a deep understanding of both languages’ syntactic and semantic nuances.

Perception is not only a biological process but also a cultural and social phenomenon. When discussing sensory experiences, English speakers often adopt an individual-centric perspective (“I feel,” “I think,” “I see”), whereas Uzbek discourse may place a stronger emphasis on context or collective experience. For example, in certain contexts, Uzbek speakers might use inclusive or impersonal constructions reflecting community or situational awareness [9; 211]. Such differences can lead to nuanced misunderstandings if not appreciated in cross-cultural settings.

## CONCLUSION

This comparative study has demonstrated that perceptual verbs in English and Uzbek exhibit both universal and language-specific features. On the one hand, the shared semantic core – rooted in the five principal senses – reflects commonalities in human

cognition, aligning with cross-linguistic research on perception. On the other hand, each language encodes these experiences in unique ways, shaped by distinct grammatical, morphological, and pragmatic conventions. English employs a flexible system of complementation (infinitive vs. gerund) and a range of pragmatic uses (“I hear you,” “I see what you mean”), while Uzbek relies more heavily on agglutinative suffixes, postpositions, and nuanced evidential markers (“Eshitdimki, ...,” “Men uni koʻrdim”).

By highlighting these convergences and divergences, the study contributes to theoretical debates on linguistic relativity and universals, suggesting that while perception as a cognitive domain is broadly universal, languages carve out different pathways for its linguistic expression [1; 134]. Practically, the findings underscore important implications for translation, language teaching, and cross-cultural communication, where misunderstandings may arise from divergent syntactic and semantic structures.

Further inquiry can benefit from larger corpora, more diverse text types, and experimental methods to investigate how speakers of English and Uzbek mentally process and conceptualize perception. Such research not only refines our understanding of how language and cognition intersect but also provides invaluable resources for educators, translators, and linguists seeking to navigate and explicate the intricate realm of human perception as expressed in language.

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