



THE SEMANTIC FIELD AND COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF DIRECTIONAL MOTION VERBS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK

Makhmudov Davlatbek Rakhmat O'g'li

Master's Degree Student (Year 2),

Department of Linguistics (English Language)

University of Information Technology and Management, Uzbekistan

Abstract: Directional motion verbs represent an important part of verbal semantics as they express not only movement but also direction, path, source, goal, and deictic orientation. This article examines the semantic field of directional motion verbs in English and Uzbek from a comparative perspective. The study explores how the two languages encode directed movement and identifies their semantic and typological similarities and differences. The analysis shows that English typically expresses direction through verbs combined with particles and prepositions, whereas Uzbek frequently employs lexical verbs, auxiliary constructions, and grammatical markers. Special attention is given to the opposition between come/go and kelmoq/bormoq, as well as verbs denoting entrance, exit, ascent, descent, crossing, and return. The findings demonstrate that directional motion verbs form a structured semantic field shaped by cognitive, grammatical, and typological factors. The results may contribute to comparative linguistics, translation studies, cognitive semantics, and language teaching.

Keywords: directional motion verbs, semantic field, English, Uzbek, comparative analysis, cognitive semantics, motion event, path, deixis.

Introduction: Motion is a fundamental aspect of human experience and is widely reflected in language. Directional motion verbs are particularly significant because they indicate not only movement but also its direction, trajectory, source, goal, and deictic orientation. English verbs such as come, go, enter, leave, and return



correspond to Uzbek verbs like *kelmoq*, *bormoq*, *kirmoq*, *chiqmoq*, and *qaytmoq*, yet their semantic and grammatical properties do not always coincide.

The relevance of this study lies in its contribution to comparative linguistics, cognitive semantics, translation studies, and language teaching. English, generally classified as a satellite-framed language, often expresses path through particles and prepositions, while Uzbek relies more heavily on lexical verbs, auxiliary constructions, and grammatical markers. These structural differences influence the interpretation and translation of motion events.

The aim of this article is to analyze the semantic field of directional motion verbs in English and Uzbek and to identify their comparative features. The study focuses on major semantic groups of directional movement and examines how the two languages encode movement toward, away from, into, out of, upward, downward, across, and back to a reference point.

Literature Review: Research on motion verbs has been strongly influenced by cognitive semantics and linguistic typology, particularly Talmy's theory of motion events. According to this framework, motion events consist of components such as Figure, Ground, Motion, Path, and Manner. English commonly expresses Path through satellites (particles and prepositions), whereas Uzbek frequently encodes direction through lexical verbs and complex verbal constructions.

Uzbek directional meanings are often realized through verbs such as *kelmoq*, *bormoq*, *kirmoq*, *chiqmoq*, and *qaytmoq*, as well as compound constructions like *kirib kelmoq*, *chiqib ketmoq*, and *borib kelmoq*. Comparative studies emphasize that formal translation equivalents do not necessarily reflect semantic equivalence because English and Uzbek employ different mechanisms for expressing direction and deixis.

Materials and Methods: This study applies a qualitative comparative approach supported by semantic field analysis and cognitive interpretation. The material



consists of common directional motion verbs in English and Uzbek, including both simple and compound verb forms.

The analysis is based on four procedures: componential analysis, semantic field analysis, comparative-typological analysis, and cognitive interpretation. Directional motion verbs are classified into semantic groups such as movement toward or away from a deictic center, entrance, exit, ascent, descent, crossing, return, approach, and distancing. The comparison focuses on how English and Uzbek encode path, direction, deixis, and result through lexical and grammatical means.

Results

1. General Structure of the Semantic Field of Directional Motion Verbs

The analysis shows that the semantic field of directional motion verbs in English and Uzbek is organized around several central oppositions. The first and most important opposition is movement toward versus movement away from a deictic or spatial center. In English, this contrast is primarily represented by *come* and *go*. In Uzbek, the corresponding opposition is represented by *kelmoq* and *bormoq*, although the semantic and pragmatic distribution of these verbs is not identical to that of their English counterparts.

The second opposition is entrance versus exit. English expresses this contrast through *enter*, *go in*, *come in* and *exit*, *leave*, *go out*, *come out*. Uzbek expresses it through *kirmoq* and *chiqmoq*, as well as through compound constructions such as *kirib kelmoq* and *chiqib ketmoq*. The Uzbek verbs *kirmoq* and *chiqmoq* are semantically broad: *kirmoq* can mean to enter a physical space, join an institution, become involved in an activity, or move into a state; *chiqmoq* can mean to go out, emerge, appear, be published, rise, or result from a process. This semantic breadth shows that Uzbek directional motion verbs often extend into abstract and event-structural domains.

The third opposition is upward versus downward movement. English uses verbs such as *rise*, *ascend*, *climb*, *go up* and *fall*, *descend*, *go down*. Uzbek uses



ko‘tarilmoq, oshmoq, chiqmoq for upward movement and tushmoq, pasaymoq for downward movement. Although English and Uzbek both conceptualize vertical movement in physical and metaphorical terms, Uzbek chiqmoq is especially multifunctional because it may denote both outward movement and upward movement depending on the spatial configuration. For example, uydan chiqmoq means “to go out of the house,” while tepaga chiqmoq means “to go up.” Thus, in Uzbek, the same verb may be interpreted differently depending on the Ground and the spatial relation expressed in the sentence.

The fourth opposition is crossing or passing through a spatial domain. English expresses this *through cross, pass, go through, move across, and walk over*. Uzbek uses and related constructions. The verb o‘tmoq is particularly broad in Uzbek: it may refer to physical passing, temporal passing, transition from one state to another, successful completion, or transfer. This indicates that Uzbek directional motion verbs often serve as bridges between spatial, temporal, and abstract domains.

The fifth opposition is return versus non-return movement. English uses return, come back, and go back, while Uzbek uses qaytmoq, qaytib kelmoq, qaytib bormoq, and borib kelmoq. Uzbek has a particularly expressive system for distinguishing whether the movement is oriented back toward the speaker, back to a previous place, or involves a completed round trip. For example, borib kelmoq indicates a movement away from the current location followed by return, whereas English often needs a phrase such as “to go and come back” or “to go there and return” to express the same configuration explicitly.

2. Deictic Orientation: Come/Go and Kelmoq/Bormoq

The comparison of come and go with kelmoq and bormoq reveals that deictic orientation is one of the central organizing principles of directional motion verbs. English come typically denotes movement toward the speaker, the hearer, or a location treated as the deictic center. For instance, in He came to my house, the direction of movement is oriented toward the speaker’s location or a place associated



with the speaker. English *go*, by contrast, usually denotes movement away from the speaker or toward a location not treated as the immediate deictic center.

Uzbek *kelmoq* also denotes movement toward the speaker or toward a contextually relevant center. The sentence *U uyga keldi* means “He came home” or “He arrived home,” depending on context. However, Uzbek *kelmoq* often emphasizes arrival more strongly than English *come*. It can also participate in complex predicates such as *yetib kelmoq* “to arrive after reaching,” *kirib kelmoq* “to come in,” and *olib kelmoq* “to bring.” These constructions show that *kelmoq* functions not only as an independent verb of motion, but also as a directional auxiliary-like element contributing the meaning of movement toward the deictic center.

Uzbek *bormoq* corresponds broadly to English *go*, but it is often more explicitly goal-oriented. The sentence *U maktabga bordi* means “He went to school,” with the goal expressed by the dative-marked noun *maktabga*. In English, the goal is usually expressed by a prepositional phrase. In Uzbek, the dative suffix *-ga* plays an important role in marking the endpoint or direction of movement. Therefore, the meaning of *bormoq* is frequently constructed through the interaction of the verb and the case-marked complement. This grammatical difference is crucial: English uses prepositions such as *to*, *into*, *toward*, and *from*, while Uzbek employs case markers and postpositions to express similar relations.

Another important difference concerns the use of *come* and *go* in relation to the hearer. English allows *come* to refer to movement toward the hearer, even if the speaker is not located there: *I will come to your office tomorrow*. Uzbek may also use *kelmoq* in such contexts: *Ertaga ofisingizga kelaman*. However, Uzbek often makes the deictic relation pragmatically clearer through context, politeness, and the social relation between interlocutors. This demonstrates that deictic verbs are not purely spatial; they are also interactional and discourse-sensitive.

3. Entrance and Exit: Boundary-Crossing Verbs



Boundary crossing is a major semantic component of directional motion verbs. English *enter* and Uzbek *kirmoq* both denote movement from outside to inside. However, English frequently alternates between a formal verb and a phrasal construction: *enter the room* and *go into the room* are both possible, but they differ stylistically and syntactically. *Enter* is more formal and transitive, whereas *go into* is more neutral and constructional. Uzbek generally uses *kirmoq* with a locative or directional complement: *xonaga kirmoq* “to enter the room.” The dative suffix *-ga* in *xonaga* marks the direction toward the interior space.

The verb *kirmoq* has a wide semantic range. It may denote physical entrance, institutional membership, participation, beginning, or inclusion. For example, *universitetga kirmoq* may mean “to enter university” or “to be admitted to university,” while *suhbatga kirmoq* can mean “to enter into a conversation.” English uses different verbs depending on the context: *enter university*, *join a conversation*, *become involved*, or *start*. Thus, Uzbek *kirmoq* covers a broad conceptual area that English often distributes among several lexical and constructional options.

Exit verbs show an even more complex pattern. English uses *leave*, *exit*, *go out*, and *come out*, each with its own semantic and pragmatic nuance. *Leave* emphasizes departure from a place or abandonment of a location; *exit* is more formal and often institutional; *go out* emphasizes movement from inside to outside; *come out* may express emergence toward the speaker or into visibility. Uzbek *chiqmoq* can correspond to all of these depending on context. In *U xonadan chiqdi*, it means “He went out of the room.” In *Kitob nashrdan chiqdi*, it means “The book was published.” In *Quyosh chiqdi*, it means “The sun rose.” In *Natija yaxshi chiqdi*, it means “The result turned out well.” This semantic flexibility indicates that *chiqmoq* is one of the most polysemous directional verbs in Uzbek.

The comparison suggests that English often lexicalizes or constructionally separates different types of exit, whereas Uzbek uses a single highly productive verb whose interpretation depends on spatial complement, subject type, and broader



context. This difference has direct implications for translation. Uzbek *chiqmoq* cannot always be translated as *go out*; it may require *come out*, *leave*, *appear*, *emerge*, *rise*, *be published*, or *turn out*. Therefore, dictionary equivalence is insufficient without contextual and semantic analysis.

4. Vertical Direction: Upward and Downward Movement

Verticality is one of the most cognitively salient dimensions of space. Both English and Uzbek distinguish upward and downward movement, but they employ different lexical and constructional resources. English has verbs such as *rise*, *ascend*, *climb*, and phrasal combinations such as *go up*, *move up*, and *come up*. Uzbek uses *ko'tarilmoq*, *oshmoq*, *chiqmoq*, and sometimes *balandlamoq* for upward movement. The verb *ko'tarilmoq* typically means "to rise" or "to be lifted," while *oshmoq* may denote exceeding, increasing, or passing over a boundary. The verb *chiqmoq*, as noted earlier, may also indicate upward movement when the Ground is conceived as a higher location: *tog'ga chiqmoq* "to climb/go up the mountain."

English downward motion is expressed by *fall*, *descend*, *drop*, *go down*, and *come down*. Uzbek uses *tushmoq*, *pasaymoq*, *yiqilmoq*, and related forms. The verb *tushmoq* is semantically broad and may denote descending from a height, getting off a vehicle, falling to a lower level, entering a state, or being understood in a particular way. For example, *avtobusdan tushmoq* means "to get off the bus," *narx tushdi* means "the price fell," and *xayoliga tushmoq* means "to occur to one's mind." English would require different verbs or constructions in each case.

The metaphorical extension of vertical verbs is highly productive in both languages. Upward movement is commonly associated with increase, improvement, success, authority, and emotional elevation. Downward movement is associated with decrease, decline, failure, weakness, or loss of status. English expressions such as *prices rise*, *status rises*, *morale goes up*, and *production falls* correspond to Uzbek expressions such as *narx ko'tarildi*, *mavqe oshdi*, *kayfiyat ko'tarildi*, and *ishlab chiqarish pasaydi*. These parallels suggest that some cognitive metaphors related to



verticality may be broadly shared. However, the lexical realization of these metaphors is language-specific: Uzbek often uses *ko'tarilmoq* and *oshmoq*, whereas English distinguishes *rise*, *increase*, *go up*, and *improve* depending on register and domain.

5. Crossing, Passing, and Transitional Movement

Verbs expressing crossing and passing occupy an intermediate position between spatial movement and temporal or abstract transition. English uses *cross* when a boundary or line is traversed, as in *cross the road*. It uses *pass* for movement beyond a point, through a space, or across time. Uzbek uses *o'tmoq* as a highly general verb for passing, crossing, transferring, elapsing, or moving from one state to another. The expression *yo'ldan o'tmoq* means "to cross the road," while *vaqt o'tdi* means "time passed." The same verb may also occur in expressions such as *imtihondan o'tmoq* "to pass an exam" and *bir holatdan ikkinchi holatga o'tmoq* "to move from one state to another."

The Uzbek verb *o'tmoq* thus demonstrates a strong connection between spatial transition and abstract transition. English also has this connection, but it distributes the meaning across *pass*, *cross*, *go through*, *undergo*, *transfer*, and *move into*. For example, Uzbek *qiyin davrdan o'tmoq* may be translated as "to go through a difficult period," while *imtihondan o'tmoq* is "to pass an exam." This confirms that Uzbek directional verbs often function as semantically expansive units whose interpretation is determined by collocation and conceptual domain.

Crossing verbs also reveal differences in boundary conceptualization. English *cross* typically presupposes a line-like or surface-like boundary: a street, river, border, bridge, or field. Uzbek *kesib o'tmoq* more explicitly conveys the idea of cutting across a spatial domain, while *o'tmoq* alone may simply indicate passing from one side to another. Therefore, English often lexicalizes the act of crossing in the verb *cross*, whereas Uzbek may intensify or specify the crossing relation through compound forms.



6. Return and Cyclic Motion

Return movement is another important component of the semantic field of directional motion verbs. English distinguishes return, come back, and go back. The choice depends on direction, style, and deictic orientation. Return is more formal and neutral, while come back and go back are more conversational and deictically marked. Uzbek uses qaytmoq as the central verb of return, but it also has more specific constructions such as qaytib kelmoq, qaytib bormoq, and borib kelmoq.

The construction borib kelmoq is especially significant because it expresses a complete motion cycle: departure from the current location, movement to another place, and return to the original or deictic center. English does not have a single equivalent verb for this construction and usually translates it analytically as “to go and come back” or contextually as “to visit and return.” For example, Men do‘konga borib keldim may be translated as “I went to the shop and came back,” but in natural English the return component may remain implicit: “I went to the shop.” This difference shows that Uzbek can encode cyclicity more explicitly within the verbal construction.

The distinction between qaytib kelmoq and qaytib bormoq also demonstrates how Uzbek combines return with deictic orientation. Qaytib kelmoq implies return toward the speaker or relevant center, whereas qaytib bormoq implies return to another location away from the speaker. English similarly distinguishes come back and go back, but Uzbek expresses this relation through verbal combination in a highly systematic way.

Discussion

The comparative analysis demonstrates that English and Uzbek share fundamental cognitive categories of directional motion, yet they differ considerably in how these categories are encoded linguistically. Both languages possess verbs for movement toward and away from a center, entrance and exit, ascent and descent, crossing and passing, approach and distancing, departure and return. These



categories reflect universal aspects of embodied spatial experience. Human beings in different linguistic communities perceive movement in relation to sources, goals, paths, boundaries, vertical axes, and deictic centers. Therefore, the semantic field of directional motion verbs in both English and Uzbek is grounded in common cognitive experience.

However, the linguistic organization of this field differs because the two languages employ different grammatical and typological mechanisms. English is highly productive in combining motion verbs with particles and prepositions. A verb such as *go* may form numerous directional constructions: *go in*, *go out*, *go up*, *go down*, *go across*, *go through*, *go back*, *go away*, and *go over*. Similarly, manner verbs can easily combine with path satellites: *run into*, *walk out of*, *swim across*, *crawl under*, and *jump over*. This means that English frequently allows the main verb to encode manner while the satellite encodes direction or path.

Uzbek, in contrast, often expresses direction through lexical verbs, case-marked complements, auxiliary-like verbal elements, and compound predicates. The dative suffix *-ga*, the ablative suffix *-dan*, locative relations, and postpositional structures play an important role in expressing spatial direction. Verbal combinations such as *kirib kelmoq*, *chiqib ketmoq*, *borib kelmoq*, and *olib bormoq* demonstrate that Uzbek directional meaning may be distributed across several verbal components. In these constructions, the first element often specifies a phase or path segment, while the second element provides deictic orientation, completion, departure, arrival, or result.

One of the most important findings is that Uzbek directional motion verbs are frequently more polysemous than their basic English equivalents. Verbs such as *chiqmoq*, *tushmoq*, and *o'tmoq* cover wide semantic domains extending from literal movement to abstract transition, result, emergence, publication, decline, mental occurrence, and completion. English also has polysemous motion verbs, but it often uses separate lexical items or phrasal constructions to express meanings that Uzbek



can derive from one central verb. This does not mean that Uzbek is less precise; rather, precision in Uzbek is often achieved through context, complement structure, auxiliary combination, and pragmatic interpretation.

Another finding concerns the relationship between motion and metaphor. Both languages use directional motion verbs to conceptualize non-spatial domains. Upward movement tends to indicate increase, improvement, success, or elevation; downward movement tends to indicate decrease, decline, or loss. Forward movement may indicate progress, while backward movement may indicate return, regression, or restoration. Entrance may symbolize involvement, inclusion, or beginning; exit may symbolize completion, disappearance, release, or separation. These patterns confirm that directional motion verbs are not restricted to physical movement, but participate in the broader metaphorical structuring of thought.

From the perspective of translation, the study shows that directional motion verbs require contextual rather than mechanical equivalence. Uzbek *chiqmoq* cannot be translated uniformly into English; depending on context, it may correspond to go out, come out, leave, appear, emerge, rise, be published, or turn out. English go up may correspond to *ko'tarilmoq*, *oshmoq*, or *chiqmoq*, depending on whether the movement is physical, quantitative, hierarchical, or metaphorical. English come in may correspond to *kirmoq* or *kirib kelmoq*, depending on whether arrival toward a deictic center is emphasized. Therefore, bilingual dictionaries and language teaching materials should treat these verbs not as isolated equivalents but as semantic networks.

The findings also have implications for lexicography. Dictionary entries for directional motion verbs should include not only translation equivalents, but also semantic components, typical collocations, syntactic patterns, metaphorical extensions, and usage examples. For English verbs, attention should be paid to particle combinations and prepositional patterns. For Uzbek verbs, attention should be paid to case government, compound predicates, auxiliary combinations, and



polysemous extensions. Such an approach would provide a more accurate representation of directional motion verbs and reduce errors in translation and language learning.

Conclusion: Directional motion verbs in English and Uzbek constitute a complex and internally structured semantic field based on the conceptualization of movement in relation to direction, path, boundary, goal, source, verticality, return, and deictic orientation. Although both languages reflect universal spatial categories grounded in human bodily experience, they differ significantly in the linguistic mechanisms through which directed movement is expressed. English frequently relies on particles and prepositions to encode path and direction, while Uzbek tends to employ lexical verbs, case-marked complements, postpositions, auxiliary verb constructions, and compound predicates.

The comparison of English come/go and Uzbek kelmoq/bormoq shows that deictic orientation is central to both languages, but its grammatical and pragmatic realization varies. The analysis of entrance and exit verbs demonstrates that Uzbek verbs such as kirmoq and chiqmoq possess broad semantic potential and may correspond to several English lexical or phrasal constructions. The study of vertical and transitional verbs shows that both languages extend spatial direction into metaphorical domains such as increase, decline, progress, status, emotional change, and completion.

The article has shown that the semantic field of directional motion verbs cannot be adequately described through simple translation pairs. Instead, it must be understood as a network of lexical, grammatical, cognitive, and pragmatic relations. English and Uzbek encode similar spatial experiences through different structural resources, and this difference must be taken into account in comparative linguistics, translation studies, lexicography, and foreign language teaching. Further research may expand the present analysis by examining corpus-based frequency patterns,



dialectal variation, metaphorical usage in literary texts, and the acquisition of English directional motion verbs by Uzbek-speaking learners.

REFERENCES

1. Croft, W., & Cruse, D. A. (2022). *Cognitive Linguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
2. Evans, V., & Green, M. (2018). *Cognitive Linguistics: An Introduction* (2nd ed.). Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
3. Fillmore, C. J. (2023). *Lectures on Deixis*. Stanford: CSLI Publications.
4. Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (2020). *Metaphors We Live By* (Updated Edition). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
5. Langacker, R. W. (2008). *Cognitive Grammar: A Basic Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
6. Levinson, S. C. (2021). *Space in Language and Cognition: Explorations in Cognitive Diversity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
7. Slobin, D. I. (2004). The Many Ways to Search for a Frog: Linguistic Typology and the Expression of Motion Events. In S. Strömquist & L. Verhoeven (Eds.), *Relating Events in Narrative* (Vol. 2, pp. 219–257). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
8. Talmy, L. (2000). *Toward a Cognitive Semantics. Vol. II: Typology and Process in Concept Structuring*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
9. Taylor, J. R. (2021). *Cognitive Grammar*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
10. Tyler, A., & Evans, V. (2003). *The Semantics of English Prepositions: Spatial Scenes, Embodied Meaning and Cognition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
11. Johanson, L., & Csató, É. Á. (Eds.). (2021). *The Turkic Languages* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.
12. Boeschoten, H. (2021). Uzbek. In L. Johanson & É. Á. Csató (Eds.), *The Turkic Languages* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.