

A LEXICOGRAPHIC STUDY OF MODAL WORDS IN THE UZBEK LANGUAGE

Maftuna B. Mustafayeva

Karshi State Technical University

Department of Foreign Languages

Doctor of Philosophy in Philology (PhD)

Abstract. This paper examines the lexicographic representation of modal words in the Uzbek language from both microstructural and macrostructural perspectives. Modal units constitute an important component of linguistic expression because they convey the speaker's attitude toward the content of an utterance, including certainty, doubt, agreement, and probability. However, the analysis of existing explanatory dictionaries reveals that modal words are often described briefly and their semantic, grammatical, and pragmatic properties are not fully reflected. The aim of this study is to investigate the representation of modal words in Uzbek explanatory dictionaries and to propose a systematic lexicographic model for their description. The research employs descriptive, comparative, and structural methods. The findings demonstrate that although modal words are included in explanatory dictionaries, their lexicographic treatment remains incomplete. The study proposes a micro- and macrostructural model for the systematic description of modal units. The proposed approach may contribute to improving Uzbek lexicography and creating specialized electronic dictionaries.

Keywords: modal words, modality, lexicography, explanatory dictionary, microstructure, macrostructure, Uzbek language.

Introduction.

Lexicography represents one of the important applied branches of linguistics that focuses on compiling dictionaries and describing lexical units. Dictionaries provide systematic information about the meanings, grammatical characteristics, and usage of words. In modern linguistics dictionaries are regarded not only as linguistic reference tools but also as cultural and historical sources reflecting the worldview of a society.

Numerous linguists have contributed to the development of lexicographic theory. For instance, the English scholar **Samuel Johnson** emphasized that dictionaries play a crucial role in standardizing language and explaining the meanings of lexical units. His approach to dictionary compilation significantly influenced the development of English lexicography [1].

French linguist **Jean Dubois** considered lexicography as a field that combines linguistic description with educational objectives. According to Dubois, dictionary entries should include not only semantic explanations but also grammatical information and examples illustrating the usage of lexical units in speech [2].

Another influential scholar, Yakov Malkiel, investigated the typology of dictionaries and emphasized that their structure depends on their purpose and target audience. He argued that the organization of dictionary entries must be carefully designed through macrostructural and microstructural principles [3].

In Uzbek linguistics, issues related to lexicography have also been studied by several researchers. B. Mengliyev highlighted the importance of describing lexical units in connection with their semantic structure and communicative functions. He noted that modalized elements should be clearly distinguished and adequately represented in explanatory dictionaries [4].

Similarly, B. Bahridinova examined the theoretical foundations of educational lexicography and stressed the necessity of developing user-oriented dictionaries. According to her research, modern lexicography increasingly adopts an anthropocentric approach that focuses on the needs of dictionary users [5].



Another Uzbek linguist, P. Pinkhasov, emphasized that the richness of a language is reflected in the diversity and semantic complexity of its vocabulary. Therefore, dictionaries must represent lexical units with their semantic variations and contextual meanings [6].

Despite these contributions, the lexicographic description of modal words in the Uzbek language has not been sufficiently investigated. Modal units play a significant role in communication because they express the speaker's evaluation, assumption, or attitude toward the statement. Consequently, studying their representation in explanatory dictionaries is an important task for modern Uzbek linguistics.

The aim of this research is to analyze the micro- and macrostructural description of modal words in Uzbek lexicography and to propose a model for their systematic representation.

Methods. This study applies several linguistic research methods to investigate the lexicographic description of modal words.

First, the descriptive method is employed to analyze the semantic and functional characteristics of modal words in the Uzbek language. This approach allows identifying how modal units express the speaker's attitude and how they function in discourse.

Second, a comparative and analytical method is used to examine the representation of modal words in existing explanatory dictionaries. The analysis focuses on dictionary entries, definitions, grammatical labels, and examples provided for modal units.

Third, structural analysis is applied to explore the microstructure and macrostructure of dictionary entries. The microstructural analysis investigates the internal organization of dictionary articles, including headwords, definitions, grammatical information, and examples. The macrostructural analysis examines the general organization of dictionaries, including the arrangement of entries and classification principles.

Finally, a lexicographic modeling method is applied to propose a systematic model for describing modal words in dictionaries. This model aims to improve the representation of modal units in future lexicographic works.

Results. The analysis demonstrates that although modal words are included in Uzbek explanatory dictionaries, their lexicographic description remains limited. Many dictionary entries provide only brief definitions without detailed grammatical or pragmatic explanations.

For instance, the modal word "*mayli*" is usually defined as a word expressing agreement or acceptance. However, its broader pragmatic functions in communication, such as expressing compromise or indifference, are not always clearly described.

The study also shows that modal words are represented unevenly across dictionaries. Some modal units appear only in certain editions, while others are omitted despite their frequent use in spoken language.

Another important finding concerns the microstructure of dictionary entries. Many entries include only the headword and a short definition, while important information such as grammatical description, etymology, and usage examples is often missing [7].

The macrostructural analysis reveals that Uzbek explanatory dictionaries are generally organized according to the alphabetical principle, which facilitates quick access to lexical information. However, specialized dictionaries focusing on modal words or modality are currently absent.

Furthermore, modal words in Uzbek can express various semantic categories, including certainty, probability, approval, doubt, obligation, and emotional evaluation [8]. These semantic groups indicate that modal units form a complex system within the Uzbek lexical structure.

Discussion. The findings suggest that the lexicographic description of modal words in Uzbek dictionaries requires further improvement. Although modal units are included in



explanatory dictionaries, their semantic and pragmatic characteristics are not always fully represented.

Modal words play a crucial role in communication because they convey the speaker's attitude toward the statement. Therefore, dictionary entries describing modal units should provide detailed explanations, grammatical information, and contextual examples.

Another issue concerns modalized lexical units. Many words that acquire modal meanings in discourse are not identified as modal elements in dictionaries. As a result, the representation of modality in Uzbek lexicography remains incomplete.

Modern lexicographic practices emphasize the importance of comprehensive dictionary structures. A well-developed dictionary entry should include phonetic information, grammatical characteristics, semantic definitions, usage examples, and cross-references.

In addition, the development of electronic dictionaries has become an important direction in modern lexicography. Digital dictionaries allow users to access lexical information quickly and to explore semantic relations between words more effectively.

Therefore, creating a specialized dictionary of Uzbek modal words could significantly contribute to the development of Uzbek lexicography and linguistic research.

Conclusion. The study demonstrates that modal words represent an important component of the Uzbek lexical system but their lexicographic description in explanatory dictionaries remains incomplete. Existing dictionaries often provide only short definitions and do not fully reflect the semantic, grammatical, and pragmatic features of modal units.

The research highlights the need for a systematic approach to describing modal words in lexicography. The proposed micro- and macrostructural model offers a framework for improving the representation of modal units in future dictionaries.

Developing specialized dictionaries of modal words and creating electronic lexicographic resources may significantly enhance the study and documentation of modality in the Uzbek language. Such initiatives will contribute not only to lexicographic theory but also to practical language research and education.

REFERENCES

1. Jonson S. The Plan of a Dictionary of the English Language. – London, 1747. – P. 5.
2. Dubois J. Dictionnaire et discours didactique. – Paris: Languages, 1970. – P. 42.
3. Malkiel J. “Distinctive features in lexicography: A typological approach to dictionaries.” *Romance Philology*, vol. XIII, no. 2, 1959. – P. 1551.
4. Mengliyev B. O‘zbek tilining ideografik lug‘ati. – Toshkent: Akademnashr, 2010.
5. Бахриддинова Б.М. Ўзбекистонда ўқув луғатчилиги: лингвистик асослари, тарихи ва истиқболлари: Филол. фан. ... доктори (DSc) дисс. – Самарқанд, 2020. – Б. 21.
6. Пинхасов П. Ҳозирги ўзбек адабий тили, Лексикография ва фразеология. – Тошкент: Ўқитувчи, 1969. – Б. 43.
7. Mustafayeva M.B. Ingliz va o‘zbek tillaridagi modal so‘zlarning izohli lug‘atlarda berilishi: muammo va tahlil. Xorijiy ilmiy-amaliy konferensiya. – Turkiya, 2025. – B.
8. Mustafayeva M.B. Ingliz tilidagi modal so‘zlarning semantik xususiyatlari // *Xorazm Ma‘mun Akademiyasi Axborotnomasi*. – Xiva, 2024. ISSN 2091-573 X. UO‘K 808.5 №6/4. – B. 224-226.

