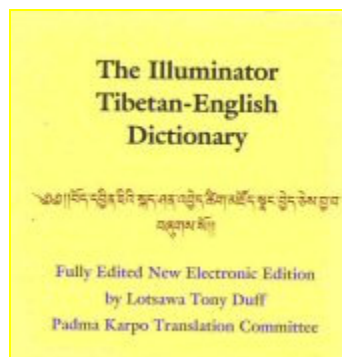


Illuminator Tibetan-English Dictionary



The *Illuminator Tibetan-English Dictionary* is easy-to-use and has many special features, including full hypertext that makes it like an encyclopedia. Many entries have extended commentary and valuable cultural information. This dictionary is meant to be used for translation of Dharma texts, but will be of use to anyone learning the Tibetan language, even beginners. The *Illuminator* integrates with the *TibetDoc* word processor (also available from the *Tibetan Language Institute*), which makes looking up a word as easy as clicking a button. For Windows. **\$50.00** (List price: \$55.00)

The Illuminator Tibetan-English Dictionary

- Very complete verb listings, explanations, and examples using the *Great Tibetan-Chinese Dictionary*
- The entire *House of Cloves (Lishi'i gur khang)* from 1476, giving access to a large listing of old terms and their meanings/new equivalents
- The entire *Dharmasamgraha*, an Indian enumeration of dharmas by the great master Nagarjuna (cross-referenced)
- The entire *A Festival for Intelligent Minds: An Enumeration of Dharmas Taken From Many Sutras, Tantras, and Shastras* (cross-referenced). This excellent *Enumeration of Dharmas* style text by the great Gelugpa lama Konchog Jigmey Wangpo contains five hundred sets of multiple definitions of Buddhist related topics. The various entries have all been provided in Tibetan and English with complete hypertexting
- Many terms and explanations of grammar not available elsewhere, especially from Situ's work on grammar entitled *Great Commentary*
- Many terms from Mahamudra and Maha-Ati
- A wide range of terms concerning secret mantrayana ritual have been incorporated with commentary (where appropriate). Selection derived mainly from the Nyingmapa perspective and many terms not previously available in dictionaries provided
- Many special terms from the Mahamudra and Dzogchen traditions not be found elsewhere
- Many examples given, including sections of Tibetan text and their translations from a wide variety of Tibetan texts --from Tsongkhapa's *Lam Rim Chenmo* (the entire section of dependent related origination is included), from texts of the Drukpa Kagyu, etc.
- The Sanskrit equivalent of terms has been included, wherever possible

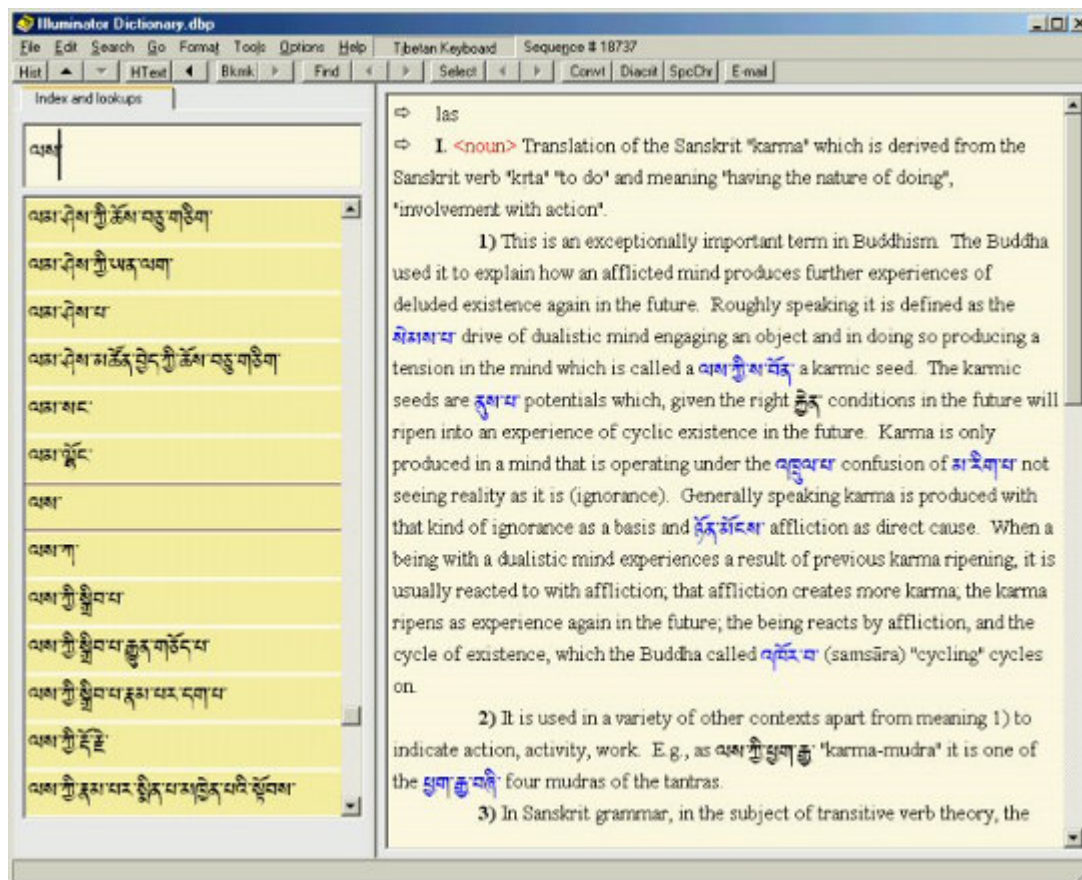
Introduction

The *Illuminator* is one of four electronic dictionaries published by the Padma Karpo Translation Committee. When first published, it had about 4,200 entries, but since then there have been three

updates every year, and it now has 25,020 entries, making it one of the largest Tibetan-English dictionaries available. The entries in this dictionary come from many sources, such as a number of Dharma texts, Tibetan grammar works and the Great Tibetan-Chinese Dictionary. It also includes many basic words, which are very important for the beginning student. Each entry has been thoroughly evaluated by the author to make sure spelling and translation is correct. This is quite important since non-Tibetan dictionaries and grammar works tend to have some spelling errors and incorrect translations. This is due to each author, to some extent, using existing resources without any investigation, and hence the errors get passed on.

The Interface

It is very easy to use this dictionary. As expected from any Windows application, the interface is self-explaining and easy-to-navigate. An extensive help file is available for tutoring or troubleshooting. The working area of the screen is split into three sections, a list of headwords, a detailed description of the currently selected headword, and a box for typing in the word being looked up. There is an alternative layout available, which can be selected from the Option menu. This layout has the same boxes plus a box with the first two lines of the detailed section.



[Small screenshot of Illuminator Dictionary](#)

This dictionary comes in two versions: Tibetan and Wylie transliteration. There are separate icons for each of them but one probably won't run the Wylie version, unless one is a scholar or one of those unusual people who only read Tibetan when it's presented in Wylie transliteration. The Tibetan version has two standard keyboard layouts to choose from; one is arranged according to frequency of the letters in the language, and the other is arranged to facilitate learning.

Looking up an entry is very easy. Simply type a word into the lookup box, and as you do so, the currently selected headword is changed to the first word matching what you have typed in. Therefore you will usually not have to type in all the letters in the word you are looking up.

The Illuminator vs. Printed Dictionaries

The first obvious advantage which the *Illuminator* has over traditional printed dictionaries, is how quick it is to look up words. Typing in a few letters is much faster than searching through the pages of a book.

An electronic dictionary is not limited in physical size like a printed dictionary and the *Illuminator* takes advantage of this, first by a high volume of entries, and second by providing a very detailed description for each entry. Many descriptions go well beyond what you can expect from a printed dictionary, often including detailed information on Tibetan culture and customs. Grammar related entries are translated and described in line with traditional Tibetan grammar, rather than adapting it to Western concepts.

A printed dictionary cannot be changed or updated, except when a new edition is printed. But the *Illuminator* is constantly being updated, and it's growing fast. **Please register with PKTC and they will email the updates to you** (you cannot register with the Tibetan Language Institute). With each update you get several hundred new entries and some of the existing entries will have a more detailed description.

Many verbs are included in this dictionary; in fact, all the verbs from the electronic verb database, which is a separate product from PKTC, can be found here. All forms of irregular verbs are listed as headword. The main entry for verbs shows all tenses and the imperative, in the format Past/ Present/ Future/ Imperative.

Another very good feature of the *Illuminator* is the listing of words that are commonly misspelled.

More on Navigation

In the descriptions, most Tibetan words that are also headwords can be clicked on with the mouse to select the word and show a detailed description of it. Words hyper linked in this way are shown in blue (see images on the left). The software keeps track of entries you access using the hyperlinks so you can easily go back to the entry that you started from.

When the *Illuminator* is started up, it very quickly loads all entries from the database. One can then select a subset of entries with a filter, which can be anything, in either Tibetan or English. For example when filtering using the word *impermanence* the *Illuminator* shows a subset of 18 entries which have this word in its description or as part of the headword. When finished exploring the subset, one mouse click will bring back the entire database. In this way, the user can work with many subsets at the same time and navigate from one to another.

As mentioned above, looking up a word is very easy, but there is also a way to search the database. The search text can be either Tibetan or English, and having started a search one can quickly jump to the next or previous matching entry. Since searching can be done in English, it is possible to use the *Illuminator* as an English-Tibetan dictionary. For example, when searching for the word "yogurt", the Tibetan word comes up. Obviously, since English words are not indexed, it can take several attempts to find the correct Tibetan entry. E.g. searching using the word "read" (without quotes) will take 20 jumps to come to the entry "to read". The trick here is to enclose the word in quotes, and for verbs, to prefix it with "to". If you search for "to read" (including the quotes) it will be the first entry to come up.

Conclusion

Lotsawa Tony Duff and his colleagues at PKTC have done a great job by creating the *Illuminator*. This is one of the bigger contributions to the preservation of the Tibetan language in recent years. But the *Illuminator* is not just a good dictionary, it is a learning tool--one wherein information is found which cannot be located in other Western publications.

The *Illuminator* is of enormous value to those who want to study the Classical Tibetan. The Dharma-related entries are described in detail and that will help with translating. Those who are studying colloquial Tibetan will benefit too, but to a lesser degree: although translations for words like "telephone" or "car" are not found in this dictionary, many other terms are.

In short, two thumbs up, highly recommended!

Tibetan Language Institute
P.O. Box 2037 Hamilton, MT 59840 Tel: 406/ 961-5131 Email: info@tibetanlanguage.org

www.tibetanlanguage.org