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# **Лексикология**

**(на английском языке)**

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# Lecture 1 Introduction to the Course

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The **term** *lexicology* is composed of two Greek morphemes: “lexis” (word) and “logos” (learning). Thus, the literal meaning of the term “lexicology” is “the study of words”.

## **I Sub-branches of lexicology.**

There is *general lexicology* and *special lexicology*. General lexicology studies vocabulary in different languages of the world. Special lexicology studies the vocabulary of one language.

There is also *historical lexicology* and *descriptive lexicology*. Historical lexicology studies the changes of the vocabulary in the course of time. Descriptive lexicology studies the vocabulary at a given stage of its development. Historical lexicology uses the diachronic approach to the vocabulary, it focuses on the regularities of the development of the vocabulary. Descriptive lexicology uses the synchronic approach to the vocabulary; it describes the principles of the organization of the vocabulary as a system.

There also exist *comparative lexicology*, which studies the lexical systems of closely related languages aiming at their typological identity or differentiation; *contrastive lexicology*, which studies similarities and differences of related and non-related languages; and *applied lexicology*, which includes terminology and lexicography, translation, linguodidactics and pragmatics of speech.

## **II The connection of the lexicology with the other branches of linguistics.**

Lexicology is connected with other subjects such as phonetics, grammar, stylistics and history of the language. All these subjects study the word, but from different angles. Phonetics studies the sounds that make up a word. Grammar studies the use of words in speech. Stylistics studies the use of words in different situations: formal and informal. The history of the language tells about the development of words in different periods of their history: how the words changed – lost their endings, began to sound differently; it tells about the change of the phonetical and grammatical structure of the language.

Thus, in studying the word “information” the *phonetician* will investigate the phonemes that make up the phonetic shape of the word and the distribution of the stress (in-for-ma-tion – 4 syllables).

The *grammarian* will point out the part of speech to which the word “information” belongs (the noun) and the fact that this noun has no plural and genitive case forms and is followed by a verb in the singular (*The information is important*).

The *lexicologist* will state that the word consists of two morphemes: one root and one affixational morpheme, that it is built by affixation (the suffix “tion” is added to the stem “inform”), that it is a borrowing – the morphemes are of Romanic origin, that it is polysemantic, having (at least) 5 meanings: 1) communication of knowledge; 2) knowledge; 3) the act of informing against a person; 4) (a term in jurisdiction) a formal accusation of a crime; 5) a numerical

quantity that measures the uncertainty in the outcome of the experiment to be performed. The first meaning is the primary meaning, the rest are secondary meanings. In the second meaning – knowledge obtained from investigation, study or instruction – it has synonyms: intelligence, news, facts, data.

The *stylist* will state the fact that the word is referred to the neutral layer of words, and is distinguished from its synonyms – “knowledge”, “learning”, “science”.

### **III Lexicology consists of the following parts, or branches:**

1. *Etymology*, which studies the origin of words and the connections of the vocabulary of the given language with the vocabularies of other languages.

2. *Word-structure* (word-building), which studies the elements the word consists of (morphemes: roots, affixes) and the patterns according to which words are built: affixation, composition, conversion, shortening, sound imitation, etc.

3. *Semasiology*, which studies the meaning of words, its types, paradigmatic classifications of words according to meaning (into homonyms, synonyms, antonyms) and types of the change of meaning.

4. *Phraseology*, which studies phraseological units (set expressions) and their classifications.

5. *Lexicography*, which deals with creation of dictionaries, their types and application.

Lexicology also studies the stylistic differentiation (stratification) of the vocabulary and variants and dialects of the language.

**IV The methods** used in lexicological research are componential analysis, transformational analysis, the contextual method, analysis of dictionary definitions, the statistical method and others. The componential analysis method is concerned with the components the meaning of the word comprises. The method of transformation consists in using one word for another in order to see the likeness or the difference. The contextual method reveals the meaning the word is used in a certain context. But the main method is that of observation of linguistic facts, of the word functioning in written and oral speech.

**V The basic unit** of lexicology is the *word*. There are many definitions of the word, yet none of them is totally satisfactory. Despite the achievements of modern science, certain aspects of the nature of the word are still not clear to us. We know almost nothing about the mechanism by which a thought is converted into sound groups called words, or about the reverse process when the listener’s brain converts the sounds into thoughts.

The word should be and can be defined, and the definition should be based on the most important characteristics of the word which are as follows:

1. The word is a unit of speech which serves the purposes of human communication. So the word can be defined as a unit of communication.

2. The word is the total of the sounds which compose it.

3. The word possesses both external and internal characteristics.

a) By external structure of the word we mean its morphological structure. For example, in the word “post-impressionists” the following morphemes can be

distinguished: the prefixes post-, im-, the root “press”, the noun-forming suffixes –ion, -ist, and the grammatical suffix of plurality –s.

b) By the internal structure is understood the semantic structure of the word, or its meaning. Meaning is the word’s main aspect and it is only due to their meanings that words can serve the purposes of human communication.

c) The word possesses both external, formal and internal, semantic unity.

Formal unity implies that no other elements can be inserted between the component morphemes of the word which are permanently linked together (*a blackbird* vs *a black bird* – a black night bird).

The word’s semantic unity consists in the fact that it conveys only one concept. For example, the word “blackbird” conveys only one concept: the type of bird. The word-group “a black bird” conveys two concepts: a colour and a type of animal.

4. The word can be used in different grammatical forms.

All that has been said about the word can be summed up as follows: the word is a unit used for purposes of human communication, materially representing a group of sounds, possessing a meaning, characterized by formal and semantic unity and a capacity for grammatical employment.

# Lecture 2 Word Structure

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Words are divisible into smaller meaningful units which are called **morphemes**. All morphemes fall into two large classes: *roots* and *affixes*. Affixes, in their turn, are subdivided into prefixes, which precede the root (as in *re-read*), and suffixes, which follow the root (as in *teach-er*). There also exist infixes (as *n* in *stand*), but they are not productive in English.

Root morphemes carry the lexical meaning of the word. Affixational (non-root) morphemes fall into *derivational* morphemes, which carry the lexico-grammatical meaning and serve to form new words, and *functional* morphemes having grammatical meaning (inflexions). Lexicology deals only with roots and derivational affixes, while inflexions are studied in grammar. Root and derivational morphemes constitute the *stem* of the word.

Roots are usually free morphemes: they often coincide with independently functioning words: *pen*, *walk*, *good*. Some roots may be bound as well: they may not coincide with separate word-forms as in *possible*, *forty*. All affixes are bound morphemes. There are also semi-affixes (semi-bound morphemes) which stand between roots and derivational morphemes: *fireproof*, *waterproof*, *kissproof*, *ladylike*, *businesslike*, *starlike*, etc.; *-worthy*, *-man*, *-ful*, etc.).

Morphemes may have different phonemic shapes. For example, the root morpheme in the words *please*, *pleasant*, *pleasure* is [pli:z], [plez], [plež]. Different phonemic representations of one morpheme are called **allomorphs**.

As far as the morphemic composition of words is concerned, words are classified into *monomorph* and *polymorph*. Monomorph words consist of one morpheme – the root morpheme only. These words are called simple: *dog*, *cat*, *boy*, *girl*, etc. Polymorph words consist of a root and one or several affixes or of two or several root morphemes. Accordingly, polymorph words fall into **three subgroups**:

1) derived words, which contain a root and one or several affixes: *hardship*, *unbelievable*.

2) compound words, which consist of at least two root morphemes: *handbag*, *merry-go-round*.

3) compound derivatives, or derivational compounds, which are constituted by two or more roots modified by an affix: *old-maidish*, *long-nosed*.

Simple words are the most frequent lexical units in English. The most widely used words, such as pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, articles, are simple words. The least frequent in usage are compound words, though their number is steadily growing.

Some words that were compound in Old English are known as simple words in Modern English: *woman* – OE *wif+man*, *window* – OE *wind+eage*, etc. This process is named the simplification of the stem (упрощение морфологической структуры слова).

There are **three levels of analysis of the morphological structure of the word**.

1. Morphemic analysis, which states the number of morphemes in a word and their types. At this level, the word *friendliness*, for instance, is characterized as a word

containing three morphemes: one root morpheme (*friend*) and two derivational morphemes (*ly, ness*).

2. Derivational analysis, which reveals the pattern according to which the word is built. Thus, the word *friendliness* is built by adding to the stem *friendly* the suffix *ness* (not *friend + liness* as there is no suffix *liness* in English). Derivational analysis shows the structural correlation of the word with other words: *friendly vs friendliness = happy vs happiness = easy vs easiness*, etc.

3. Analysis into Immediate Constituents (непосредственные составляющие), which reveals the history of the word, the stages of the process of its formation. The analysis is binary: at each stage we split the word into two constituents. Thus, the word *friendliness* is first divided into *friendly* and *ness*, then the part *friendly* is further subdivided into *friend* and *ly*. So, the Ultimate Constituents (конечные составляющие) look this way: *friend+ly+ness*. The results of the analysis coincide with the result of the morphemic analysis of the same word.

# Lecture 3 Word-building

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The most productive **ways of word-building** in Modern English are:

- affixation
- conversion
- composition
- shortening
- back-formation
- blending

The types of word-building that are less productive are sound imitation and reduplication. The ways of word-formation that are non-productive are sound and stress interchange.

**Affixation** is building new words by adding affixes to the stem of the word. The two main types of affixation are prefixation and suffixation.

Affixes can be classified according to different principles.

They can be divided into convertive and non-convertive according to their ability to convert the word into another part of speech. For example, the prefix *be* is convertible since it is used to build verbs from nouns: *head* → *behead*; the prefix *re* is inconvertible: *arrange* → *rearrange*. The majority of prefixes are non-convertible. The majority of suffixes are convertible, as, for instance, the suffix *en*: *hard* → *harden*.

According to the part of speech formed affixes (suffixes, to be exact) are divided into noun-forming (*-er*, *-ness*, *-ship*, *-hood*, *-ance*, *-ist*, etc.), adjective-forming (*-ful*, *-less*, *-ic*, *-al*, *-able*, *-ate*, *-ish*, *-ous*, etc.), verb-forming (*-en*, *-ate*, *-fy*, *-ize*, etc.), adverb-forming (*-ly*, *-wide*, etc.).

According to their origin affixes are classified into native and borrowed. The native suffixes are *-er*, *-ed*, *-dom*, *-en*, *-ful*, *-less*, *-hood*, *-let*, *-ly*, *-ness*, *-ship*, *-some*, *-teen*, *-th*, *-y*, *ward*, *-wise*, *-lock*. Prefixes: *un-*, *mis-*, *up-*, *under-*, *over-*, *out-*.

Borrowed affixes are by their origin Latin (*-or*, *-ant*, *-able*), French (*-ard*, *-ance*, *-ate*), or Greek (*-ist*, *-ism*, *-oid*). There exist numerous prefixes of Latin and Greek origin used to form new words in English: *anti-*, *contra-*, *sub-*, *super-*, *post-*, *vice-*, etc.

Affixes may be classified according to their lexico-grammatical meaning. Prefixes possess the following main meanings: 1) negation (*un-*, *mis-*, *dis-*, *in-*), 2) repetition or reversal of the action (*re-*), 3) excessiveness or insufficiency (*over-*, *under-*), 4) time and order (*pre-*, *post-*, *after-*), 5) place (*super-*, *sub-*, *trans-*, *in-*), 6) counter activity (*anti-*, *counter-*). Suffixes may point to: 1) the doer of the action (*-er*), 2) female sex (*-ess*, *-ine*, *-ette*), 3) quality (*-ness*), 4) the presence or absence of quality (*-full*, *-less*), 5) collectivity (*-dom*, *-ery*, *-hood*, *-ship*, *-ry*).

According to their productivity (the ability to form new words) affixes may be divided into productive (*-er*, *-ish*, *-less*, etc.) and non-productive (*-ard*, *-ive*, *-th*, *-ous*, *fore-*, etc.). Productive affixes are always frequent, but not every frequent affix is productive (*-ous*, for example, is a very frequent affix as it is found in many words, but it is not productive).

According to their connotational characteristics affixes may be emotionally coloured (*stinkard, drunkard, gangster, youngster*, etc. – derogatory emotional charge) and neutral (-er, -able, -ing); stylistically marked (*ultra-, -oid, -eme, -tron*, etc. – bookish) and neutral (-er, -able, -ing).

**Conversion** is making a new word by changing the part of speech characteristics of the word without changing its morphemic shape. The word, which is converted into another part of speech, changes its paradigm (*nurse, n – s, 's → to nurse, v – -s, -ed, -ing*).

Conversion appeared in the 13<sup>th</sup> century when the loss of inflexions made nouns and verbs look similar in form. The most productive pattern of conversion (конверсионная модель) is N→V: *honeymoon→to honeymoon*. Less productive is the pattern Adj→N: *slow→to slow* (us. *to slow down* – сбавлять скорость). The pattern V→N is much less frequent than the pattern N→V: *to fall – a fall*. Conversion is predominant in the sphere of verb formation.

The semantic relations between the members of converted pairs are various.

Verbs formed from nouns acquire such meanings as: 1) to fulfil the action characteristic of the noun (*father→to father, ape→to ape*); 2) to act with the instrument denoted by the noun (*hammer→to hammer*); 3) to provide with the thing denoted by the noun (*cuff→to cuff*); 4) to deprive of the thing (*skin→to skin*) 5) to put in the place denoted by the noun (*bottle→to bottle, blacklist→to blacklist*) and some other meanings.

Nouns formed from verbs may possess the following meanings: 1) a singular action (*to jump→a jump*), 2) the doer of the action (*help→a help*), 3) the place of the action (*to dump→a dump*), 4) the object or result of the action (*to find→a find, to peel→a peel*), 5) the distance covered by the action (*to pace→a pace* (величина шага)), etc.

It is often difficult to identify the direction of derivation in converted pairs. The following criteria may help to do this. A derived word usually a) is less frequent in usage (*author→to author*), b) has fewer meanings than the word it is derived from (*book→to book*). Besides, irregular verbs and nouns with noun-forming suffixes can't be derived: *to catch→a catch, caution→to caution*.

**Composition** consists in making new words by combining two or more stems which occur in the language as free forms. It is mostly a characteristic of adjectives and nouns. Compound words may be divided into several groups.

According to the type of composition compounds are divided into those formed by juxtaposition without linking elements (*skyblue*), into compounds with a linking vowel or consonant (*Anglo-saxon, saleswoman*) and compounds with a linking element represented by a preposition or conjunction (*up-to-date, bread-and-butter*). Compounds may also be formed by lexicalized phrases: *forget-me-not, stick-in-the-mud* (отсталый, безынициативный). Such words are called syntactic compounds. There also exist derivational compounds (compound derivatives) which represent the structural integrity of two free stems with a suffix referring to the combination as a whole: *honey-mooner, teen-ager, kind-hearted*.

According to the structure of their ICs compounds are classified into those containing:

- 1) two simple stems: *pen-knife, bookcase*;
- 2) one derived stem: *chainsmoker, cinema-going*;
- 3) one clipped stem: *B-girl, H-bomb*;
- 4) one compound stem: *wastepaper-basket*.

There is a problem of differentiation of compounds and homonymous word combinations. There are five criteria which help to solve this problem:

- 1) graphical criterion: the majority of English words are spelled either solidly or are hyphenated;
- 2) phonological criterion: compounds usually have a heavy stress on the first syllable (cf.: *`blackbird* vs *`black `bird*);
- 3) semantic criterion: the meaning of a compound word is not a total sum of the meanings of its components but something different. There are compound words the semantic motivation of which is quite clear (*table-cloth, shipwreck*, etc.), but many compounds are idiomatic (non-motivated): *butterfinger* (a person who can't do things well), *blue-stockings* (a pedantic woman);
- 4) morphological criterion (criterion of formal integrity (A. I. Smirnitsky)): a compound word has a paradigm of its own: inflexions are added not to each component but to the whole compound (*handbags, handbag's*);
- 5) syntactic criterion: the whole compound but not its components fulfils a certain syntactic function. Nothing can be inserted between the components of a compound word.

It should be noted that a single criterion is not sufficient to state whether we deal with a compound word or a combination of words.

More than 1/3 of neologisms in English are compound words, so it's a highly productive way of word-building.

**Shortening (Clipping or Curtailment)** is building new words by subtraction (отнятие, удаление) of a part of the original word. Shortenings are produced in two main ways: a) by clipping some part of the word; b) by making a new word from the initial letters of a word group.

According to the position of the omitted part, shortenings are classified into those formed by:

- 1) clipping the final part of the word (apocope): *lab←laboratory*;
- 2) clipping the initial part of the word (aphaeresis): *phone←telephone*;
- 3) clipping the middle part of the word (syncope): *specs←spectacles*;
- 4) clipping both the initial and the final part of the word: *flue←influenza*.

A lot of neologisms are formed by clipping: *detox* (клиника для лечения алкоголиков и наркоманов) ←*detoxification*, *lib*←*liberation*, *scrip*←*prescription*. A clipped word differs from its prototype in meaning, style and usage.

According to their reading, initial shortenings, or abbreviations are classified into:

- 1) abbreviations which are pronounced as a series of letters: *FBI, CIA, NBA* (National Basketball Association), etc.

2) abbreviations which are read as ordinary English words (acronyms): *UNO*, *NATO*, *radar* (radio detection and ranging), etc.

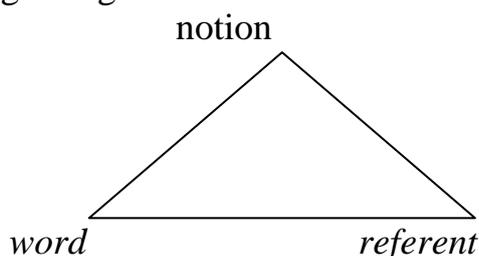
A special group is represented by graphical abbreviations used in written speech: *N.Y.*, *X-mas*, *PhD*, etc. A number of Latin abbreviations are used in writing: *e.g.*, *p.m.*, *i.e.*, *P.S.*, etc.

**Back-formation (Reversion)** is a way of word-building by which a new word is formed by cutting off a real or supposed suffix: *burglar*→*to burgle*, *enthusiasm*→*to enthuse*. It is called back-formation, because the process of derivation is opposite to the traditional one. Usually, a derived word is longer (*work*→*worker*), in back-formation the derived word is shorter than the one from which it was derived. By way of back-formation verbs may be derived from nouns (*beggar*→*to beg*, *television*→*to televise*) and adjectives (*peevish* (сварливый) →*to peeve*), nouns from adjectives (*greedy*→*greed*). A very productive type of back-formation in present-day English is derivation of verbs from compounds in *-er* and *-ing* as final elements: *to baby-sit* (from *baby-sitter*), *to air-condition* (from *air-conditioner*), *to house-clean* (from *house-cleaner*).

# Lecture 4 Word Meaning

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**Word meaning** is studied by the branch of lexicology called semasiology. Among the word's various characteristics meaning is the most important. There are different theories of the nature of meaning. Usually meaning is defined as the realization of a notion (or concept, in other terms) by means of a definite language system. It is usually said that a word denotes objects, qualities, actions, phenomena, or expresses corresponding notions. The complex relationships between referent (object, denoted by the word), notion (concept, thought) and word (symbol, sound-form) are traditionally represented by the following triangle:



Word meaning is made up of various components which are usually described as types of meaning. The two main types of meaning are grammatical and lexical meanings.

**Grammatical meaning** unites words into parts of speech. Such words as *goes*, *stops*, *works* have different lexical meanings, but are united by a common grammatical meaning: they are characterized by a common system of forms in which their grammatical categories are expressed.

**Lexical meaning** is individual for every word: grammatically identical words have individual lexical meanings (cf.: *went*, *kissed*, *looked*), which are common for all forms of one and the same word. *Go*, *went*, *going* – all these forms denote the process of movement.

Lexical meaning includes two components: denotational and connotational.

Denotational component is present in every word and makes communication possible. It expresses the notional content of the word, shows what the word refers to.

Connotational component expresses additional meanings of the word which may be of different types: stylistic, evaluative and emotional, etc.

Evaluative connotation expresses positive or negative attitude to the object or phenomenon denoted by the word. It may be rational and emotional. In the latter case we speak of emotive-evaluative connotation. The words *brain* (“a clever man”), for example, is evaluated as positive, while the word *brock* (“a scoundrel”), *to cheat* – have negative connotations. Cf. also: *notorious* – *celebrated*.

Emotional, or emotive connotation of the word is its capacity to evoke and express emotion (*duckling*, *darling* (diminutive emotive value)).

Stylistic connotation shows the stylistic status of a word: neutral, bookish, colloquial, slang, etc.

It should be noted that connotation is not an obligatory component of word meaning. Many words, for instance, *give*, *take*, *walk*, *book*, *table*, etc., used in their direct meaning, denote but not connote anything.

The meaning of a word is studied with the help of *Componential Analysis*. It consists in decomposition of the word meaning into semes – minimal components of meaning, or elementary units of sense. One and the same seme may be found in the meaning of different related words. Thus, such words as *boy* and *man* have the common seme “the male sex”, and the words *girl* and *woman* – the seme “the female sex”. Different semes may have different statuses in the system of semes in the word meaning. Lexicologists usually distinguish archisemes which express the generic meaning and differential semes which modify or qualify the idea expressed by the archiseme. Thus, the word *spinster* may be split into the following semes: 1) human being (archiseme); 2) female, unmarried; elderly (differential semes). Componential analysis is one of the modern methods of semantic research which provides a deeper insight into semantic aspects of the language.

All words can be classified into **motivated** and **non-motivated**. There are cases when there exists a direct connection between the structural pattern of the word and its meaning. This relationship between structure and meaning is termed morphological motivation. All one-morpheme words are non-motivated. Words, containing derivational morphemes, are motivated. Thus, for instance, the word *leader* is morphologically motivated: its morphological structure suggests the idea of “leading” + “the doer of the action”. The degree of motivation may be different: the word *cranberry* is partially motivated, because of the absence of the lexical meaning in the morpheme *cran-*.

There may be a direct connection between the phonetical structure of the word and its meaning. This type of motivation is called phonetical motivation. It is observed in words formed by sound-imitation and occurs even in one-morpheme words: *splash*, *boom*, etc. Some linguists think that speech sounds may suggest spatial and visual dimensions, size, shape: for instance, that back open vowels suggest big size, heavy weight, dark colour, etc. Experiments showed that the non-existent word *chung* was associated by speakers of English with the words *heavy* and *large*, while the word *ching* – with the words *light* and *small*. But not all linguists share the view.

A connection between the direct meaning of the word and its figurative meanings is called semantic motivation. It is based on the co-existence of different meanings of the word. Knowing the meaning of the word *chain* (“a series of usually metal links or rings”), one may guess the meaning of such units as *chain store*, *chain hotel*, *chain smoker*, etc. In such cases we deal with a metaphorical extension of the central meaning of the word.

There also exists the notion of **folk etymology** which is referred to the cases when the origin of the word, its motivation is misinterpreted. Thus, the Latin word *asparagus* (спаржа) was turned into *sparrow grass* (спаржа); in the Russian language the words *поликлиника* in the speech of uneducated people was transformed into *полуклиника*, *пиджак* – into *стинжак*, etc.

The majority of English words have more than one meaning, so they are **polysemantic**. Words that are used most often have the greatest number of meanings: *do*, *go*, *see*, etc. Various meanings of the word represent lexico-semantic variants of the word (LSVs) and constitute its semantic structure. One of the meanings in the semantic structure of the word is primary, the others are secondary. For example, the word *table* has the primary meaning “a piece of furniture” and a number of secondary meanings: “a

supply of food”, “an act of assembling to eat”, “a group of people assembled at a table”, etc. Meanings can also be direct and figurative, concrete and abstract, central and peripheral, general and special.

There are two main types of the organization of the semantic structure of a polysemantic word: the radial and the chain one.

Radial polysemy is observed when all the secondary meanings of the word are connected with the primary meaning and motivated by it, as the meanings of the word *field*, for example («поле» → «пространство», «участок», «место сражения», «месторождение», «сфера деятельности»).

An example of chain polysemy is the word *bleak*: «незащищенный от ветра» (bleak hillside) → «холодный, суровый» (*bleak wind*) → «унылый, печальный, мрачный» (*bleak prospects*).

As a rule both the types of polysemy are combined: *glass* («стекло» → «стеклянная посуда» → «стакан» → «стакан как мера емкости»; «стекло» → «парниковая рама» → «парник»; «стекло» → «зеркало»; «стекло» → «линза» → «микроскоп»).

Various meanings of a word are united by the existence of a common semantic component, even though they are different in their denotational and sometimes also connotational meanings.

In the course of historical development word meanings undergo various changes. Lexicology investigates causes of **semantic changes**, the nature of semantic change and the results of semantic change.

The causes of semantic change are traditionally divided into historical, or extralinguistic, and linguistic.

Extralinguistic causes are connected with changes in the life of the nation, its industry, culture, science which bring about changes in word meaning. The word *mill* can be taken as an example: when the first factories appeared there was no other word to denote them, so the word *mill* developed a new meaning – “текстильная фабрика”, “сталелитейный завод”, etc. Other examples are: *villain* («деревенский житель» → «негодяй»), *Tory* «ирландский разбойник» → «член партии Тори», *lord* «хранитель хлеба» → «господин, владелец, etc.», etc.

Linguistic causes of semantic change are factors acting within the language system. One of these factors is the differentiation of synonyms which is connected with borrowing. For example, the OE word *deer* meant “any animal”; when *beast* was borrowed from French, it ousted the word *deer* in this meaning and *deer* began to denote a concrete species (олень). Then the Latin *animal* ousted [au] *beast* in the meaning “any animal” and the word *beast* now has the meaning “mammal” (млекопитающее животное, зверь). Other linguistic causes are ellipsis [li] (in a phrase made up of two words one of these is omitted and its meaning is transferred to its partner: *daily newspaper* → *daily* («ежедневная газета»)) and analogy (when one of the synonyms develops a new meaning, other synonyms acquire a new meaning too: e.g. when *catch* developed the meaning “understand”, its synonyms *grasp*, *get* developed this meaning too).

The nature of semantic change. All cases of change of meaning are based on some association. The process of change of meaning is termed transference. There are two

types of transference: 1) transference based on similarity and 2) transference based on contiguity (real connection between the two objects). The first type of transference is called linguistic metaphor: *neck* (of a human being) → *neck* (of a bottle). The second type is known as linguistic metonymy: *hands* (“limbs of a human body”) → *hands* (“a worker”).

Semantic change may result in the change of the range of meaning. In the process of vocabulary development some words develop narrower or broader meanings than those they used to have. The first process is called narrowing (specialization) of meaning. Thus, OE *fugol* (“any bird”) came to denote a domestic bird (*fowl* [*au*]), the word *girl* meant “a child of either sex”, but gradually developed the meaning “a female child”. The second process is termed widening (generalization) of meaning. The word *ready* (OE *ræde*) originally meant “prepared for a ride”, *picture* meant “something painted”, the word *uncle* meant “mother’s brother”, etc.

Semantic change also results in the change of the connotational structure of the word. The thing denoted by a word may acquire certain positive or negative characteristics, which are reflected first in the denotational, then in the connotational component of word meaning.

The process when the object to which the word refers acquires negative characteristics, and the meaning develops a negative evaluative connotation, is termed *degradation* (*pejoration*) of meaning. The OE word *cnafa* (MnE *knave*) meant “a boy”, then a “boy servant” and finally– “a swindler, a scoundrel”. The MnE word *boor* (“хам, грубиян, невежа”) originally meant “peasant”. So, the words acquired a negative connotation.

The development of a positive evaluative connotation is called *elevation* (*amelioration*) of meaning. Thus, in OE *cwen* (MnE *queen*) meant “woman”, *cniht* (MnE *knight*) – “a young servant”, so the meanings of the words have been “elevated”.

# Lecture 5 Phraseology. Phraseological Units

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**Phraseology** is a branch of lexicology studying **phraseological units** (set expressions, phraseologisms, or idioms (in foreign linguistics)). Phraseological units differ from free word-groups semantically and structurally: 1) they convey a single concept and their meaning is idiomatic, i.e. it is not a mere total of the meanings of their components; 2) they are characterized by structural invariability (no word can be substituted for any component of a phraseological unit without destroying its sense (*to have a bee in one's bonnet* (not *cap* or *hat*)); 3) they are not created in speech but used as ready-made units. Unlike a word, a phraseological unit can be divided into separately structured elements and transformed syntactically (*On the instant he was thinking how natural and unaffected her manner was now that the ice between them had been broken.* (Th. Dreiser, 'An American Tragedy'). *I... found this man in a kind of seizure, and went for help. This broke the ice between us, and we grew quite chatty, without either of us knowing the other's name.* (H. Pollitt, 'Serving My Time').

Phraseological units are **classified** in accordance with several criteria.

In the classification proposed by **acad. Vinogradov** phraseological units are classified according to the semantic principle, and namely to the degree of motivation of meaning, i.e. the relationship between the meaning of the whole unit and the meaning of its components. Three groups are distinguished: *phraseological fusions* (сращения), *phraseological unities* (единства), *phraseological combinations* (сочетания).

1. Phraseological fusions are non-motivated. The meaning of the whole is not deduced from the meanings of the components: *to kiss the hare's foot* (опаздывать), *to kick the bucket* (сыграть в ящик), *the king's picture* (фальшивая монета).

2. Phraseological unities are motivated through the image expressed in the whole construction, the metaphors on which they are based are transparent: *to turn over a new leaf*, *to dance on a tight rope*.

3. Phraseological combinations are motivated; one of their components is used in its direct meaning while the other can be used figuratively: *bosom friend*, *to get in touch with*.

**Prof. Smirnitsky** classifies phraseological units according to the functional principle. Two groups are distinguished: *phraseological units* and *idioms*.

Phraseological units are neutral, non-metaphorical when compared to idioms: *get up*, *fall asleep*, *to take to drinking*. Idioms are metaphoric, stylistically coloured: *to take the bull by the horns*, *to beat about the bush*, *to bark up the wrong tree*.

Structurally prof. Smirnitsky distinguishes one-summit (one-member) and many-summit (two-member, three-member, etc.) phraseological units, depending on the number of notional words: *against the grain* (не по душе), *to carry the day* (выйти победителем), *to have all one's eggs in one basket*.

**Prof. Amosova** classifies phraseological units according to the type of context. Phraseological units are marked by fixed (permanent) context, which can't be changed: French leave (but not Spanish or Russian). Two groups are singled out: *phrasemes* and *idioms*.

1. Phrasemes consist of two components one of which is phraseologically bound, the second serves as the determining context: *green eye* (ревнивый взгляд), *green hand* (неопытный работник), *green years* (юные годы), *green wound* (незажившая рана), etc.

2. Idioms are characterized by idiomaticity: their meaning is created by the whole group and is not a mere combination of the meanings of its components: *red tape* (бюрократическая волокита), *mare's nest* (нонсенс), *to pin one's heart on one's sleeve* (не скрывать своих чувств).

**Prof. Koonin's** classification is based on the function of the phraseological unit in communication. Phraseological units are classified into: *nominative*, *nominative-communicative*, *interjectional*, *communicative*.

1. Nominative phraseological units are units denoting objects, phenomena, actions, states, qualities. They can be:

a) substantive – *a snake in the grass* (змея подколотная), *a bitter pill to swallow*;

b) adjectival – *long in the tooth* (старый);

c) adverbial – *out of a blue sky*, *as quick as a flash*;

d) prepositional – *with an eye to* (с намерением), *at the head of*.

2. Nominative-communicative units contain a verb: *to dance on a volcano*, *to set the Thames on fire* (сделать что-то необычное), *to know which side one's bread is buttered*, *to make (someone) turn (over) in his grave*, *to put the hat on smb's misery* (в довершение всех его бед).

3. Interjectional phraseological units express the speaker's emotions and attitude to things: *A pretty kettle of fish!* (хорошенькое дельце), *Good God! God damn it! Like hell!*

4. Communicative phraseological units are represented by proverbs (*An hour in the morning is worth two in the evening*; *Never say "never"*) and sayings. Sayings, unlike proverbs, are not evaluative and didactic: *That's another pair of shoes! It's a small world*.

Some linguists (N.N. Amosova, J. Casares) don't include proverbs and sayings into their classifications. Others (I.V. Arnold, A.V. Koonin, V.V. Vinogradov) do, on the grounds that 1) like in phraseological units their components are never changed 2) phraseological units are often formed on the basis of proverbs and sayings (*A drowning man will clutch at a straw* → *to clutch at a straw*).

In dictionaries of idioms the traditional and oldest principle for classifying phraseological units – the thematic principle – is used.

### **The etymological classification of phraseological units**

According to their origin phraseological units are divided into native and borrowed.

**Native** phraseological units are connected with British realia, traditions, history:

*By bell book and candle* (jocular) – бесповоротно. This unit originates from the text of the form of excommunication (отлучение от церкви) which ends with the following words: *Doe to the book, quench the candle, ring the book!*

*To carry coal to Newcastle* (parallels: Ехать в Тулу со своим самоваром, везти сов в Афины, везти пряности в Иран)

*According to Cocker* – по всем правилам, точно. E. Cocker is the author of a well-known book on arithmetics.

To native phraseological units also belong familiar quotations came from works of English literature. A lot of them were borrowed from works by Shakespeare: *a fool's paradise* (“Romeo and Juliet”), *the green-eyed monster* (“Othello”), *murder will out* – шила в мешке не утаишь (“Macbeth”), etc.

A great number of native phraseological units originate from professional terminologies or jargons: *one's last card, the game is up/over lay one's cards on the table hold all the aces* (terms of gambling).

**Borrowed** phraseological units come from several sources.

A number of units were borrowed from the Bible and were fully assimilated: *to cast pearl before swine, the root of all evil, a wolf in sheep's clothing, to beat swords into plough-shares*.

A great amount of units were taken from ancient mythology and literature: *the apple of discord, the golden age, the thread of Ariadne, at the greek calends* ( до греческих календ, никогда), etc, They are international in their character.

A lot of phraseologisms were borrowed from different languages – *let's return to our muttons* (revenons à nos moutons), *blood and iron* (принцип политики Бисмарка – Blut und Eisen), *blue blood, to lose face* (кит. тiu lien) and from the other variants of the English language (AmE) – *a green light, bark up the wrong tree, to look like a million dollars, time is money* (B. Franklin “Advice to a Young Tradesman”).

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