

PHRASEOLOGY AS A BRANCH OF LEXICOLOGY

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.8022244>

Annotation: *This article presents scientific ideas about lexicology, words, word-forming morphemes and word groups.*

Keywords: *Lexicon, lexicology, word, term, dictionary, source, morpheme, phrase.*

The linguists major concern with the treatment of the problems inherent in a course of Lexicology mainly from the synchronic angle. The diachronic approach which is, in the authors' opinion, indispensable in any study of vocabulary occupies its due place in the book too. This is based on the course of lectures in English Lexicology delivered by the authors for a number of years at the Moscow Maurice Thorez State Pedagogical Institute of Foreign Languages. The subject matter corresponds to the programme on English Lexicology issued by the USSR Ministry of Higher and Secondary Special Education.

In preparing this work the authors have tried to take into consideration the latest achievements in linguistic science made in the Soviet Union and elsewhere. The authors' indebtedness to various books and studies will be readily perceived from List of Books Extensively Used as well as from the authors quoted or referred to in the foot-notes. The factual material collected in some of the best graduation papers compiled under the authors' guidance has also been made use of.

It was pointed out above that Lexicology studies various lexical units: morphemes, words, variable word-groups and phraseological units. We proceed from the assumption that the word is the basic unit of language system, the largest on the morphologic and the smallest on the syntactic plane of linguistic analysis. The word is a structural and semantic entity within the language system. It should be pointed out that there is another approach to the concept of the basic language unit. The criticism of this viewpoint cannot be discussed within the framework of the present study. Suffice it to say that here we consistently proceed from the concept of the word as the basic unit in all the branches of Lexicology. Both words and phraseological units are names for things, namely the names of actions, objects, qualities.

Modern English Lexicology aims at giving a systematic description of the word-stock of Modern English. Words, their component parts — morphemes — and various types of word-groups, are subjected to structural and semantic analysis primarily from the synchronic angle. In other words, Modern English Lexicology investigates the problems of word-structure and word-formation in Modern English, the semantic structure of English words, the main principles underlying the classification of vocabulary units into various groupings the laws governing the replenishment of the vocabulary with new vocabulary units.

It also studies the relations existing between various lexical layers of the English vocabulary and the specific laws and regulations that govern its development at the present time. The source and growth of the English vocabulary, the changes it has undergone in its history are also dwelt upon, as the diachronic approach revealing the vocabulary in the making cannot but contribute to the understanding of its workings at the present time.

It has become a tradition to include on a course of Lexicology short section dealing with Lexicography, the science and art of dictionary-compiling, because Lexicography is a practical application of Lexicology so that the dictionary-maker is inevitably guided in his work by the principles laid down by the lexicologist as a result of his investigations. It is common knowledge that in his investigation the lexicologist makes use of various methods. An acquaintance with these methods is an indispensable part of a course of lexicology.

Modern English Lexicology as a subject of study forms part of the Theoretical Course of Modern English and as such is inseparable from its other component parts, i.e. Grammar, Phonetics, Stylistics, on the one hand, and the Course of History of the English Language, on the other.

The language learner will find the Course of Modern English Lexicology of great practical importance. He will obtain much valuable information concerning the English word-stock and the laws and regulations governing the formation and usage of English words and word-groups. Besides, the Course is aimed both at summarising the practical material already familiar to the students from foreign language classes and at helping the students to develop the skills and habits of generalising the linguistic phenomena observed. The knowledge the students gain from the Course of Modern English Lexicology will guide them in all their dealings with the English word-stock and help them apply this information to the solution of practical problems that may face them in class-room teaching. Teachers should always remember that practical command alone does not qualify a person to teach a language.

This textbook treats the following basic problems:

1. Semasiology and semantic classifications of words;
2. Word-groups and phraseological units;
3. Word-structure;
4. Word-formation;
5. Etymological survey of the English word-stock;
6. Various aspects of vocabulary units and replenishment of Modern English word-stock;
7. Variants and dialects of Modern English;
8. Fundamentals of English Lexicography;
9. Methods and Procedures of Lexicological Analysis.

It will be recalled that lexicology deals with words, word-forming morphemes and word-groups.

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