

Lexicology in the System of Language Sciences: Subject and Tasks of Lexicology

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ABSTRACT

The article considers about the basic properties of a word, which is a speech unit used for the purpose of communication between people, which has a material embodiment in the form of a group of sounds, has a meaning and is characterized by both formal and semantic unity. This paper explores the role of lexicology within the system of language sciences, focusing on its subject, key objectives, and interdisciplinary connections. Lexicology is the branch of linguistics that studies the vocabulary of a language, including the origin, structure, meaning, and usage of words. It examines how words are formed, how they function in communication, and how they change over time. The study of lexicology is essential for understanding the development of a language, enriching linguistic theory, and supporting practical fields such as language teaching, translation, and lexicography.

KEYWORDS: *lexicology, word, meaning, word-formation, semantics, lexical units, phraseological units, lexical meaning, lexical change, lexical structure, language system, synchronic and diachronic analysis, language communication.*

INTRODUCTION

The term "lexicology" consists of two Greek words: *lexis* - "word, phrase" (respectively, *lexicos* - "relating to the word") and *logos* - "study, science". Thus, lexicology as a term literally means "the science of the word". However, the name gives only a general idea of the goals and subject of this area of linguistic science, because all other sections of the latter also consider the word, but from a different point of view. (For example, phonetics studies the phonetic structure of language, i.e. the system of phonemes and intonation, and examines the external sound form of a word. Grammar, which is inextricably linked with lexicology, studies the grammatical structure of language. It examines various means of expressing grammatical relations between words and the models by which words are combined into phrases and sentences).

Methods of research.

What do we know about a word?

Firstly, a word is a unit of speech and serves the purposes of human communication. Thus, a word can be characterized as a unit of communication.

Secondly, a word can be considered as a set of its constituent sounds, transmitted in writing by a sequence of graphic symbols. Thirdly, if a word is analyzed from a structural point of view, it has a number of characteristics. Linguists traditionally distinguish between the external and internal structure of a word. The external structure of a word means its morphological structure. For example, in the phrase, a

breath-takingly beautiful view, the word *breath-takingly* can be broken down into the following morphemes: two root bases *breath-*, *-take-*, the participle suffix *-ing* and the adverb suffix *-ly*. All these morphemes make up the external structure of the word *breath-takingly*. The external structure of a word and typical word-formation patterns are studied in the section of lexicology called "Word Formation".

The internal structure of a word, or its meaning, is usually called the semantic structure of a word. This is one of the main aspects of a word. Words can serve as a means of communication only thanks to their meaning, each word of a language has a meaning-distinguishing function, naming various denotates (objects, phenomena, properties, actions). This aspect of a word is as important as its external organization. The question of the initial motivation between the meaning of a word and its sound form is complex. Apparently, such motivation existed, but was lost over time, except for those words that are formed on the principle of onomatopoeia (imitate the sounds of the denotates they designate), for example: *clatter*, *rattle*, *croak*.

Another structural property (aspect) of a word is its unity. A word has both external (formal) and internal (semantic) unity. Formal unity of a word is sometimes mistakenly understood to mean its indivisibility. However, how then should we consider the word *breath-takingly*? After all, from a structural point of view, this word can be divided into components. In this case, it is interesting to compare a compound word and a phrase consisting of identical components. The difference between the word *blackbird* and the phrase *a black bird* is best illustrated by the example of their place in the grammatical system of the language. The first (*blackbird*) has unity of form (it is written together), has a single grammatical design (in the plural - *blackbirds*). The first component of the word (*black-*) is not subject to grammatical changes. As for the phrase *a black bird*, each of its components can acquire independent grammatical forms: *the blackest birds I've ever seen*. In addition, other words can be placed between the components of the specified phrase (*black night bird*), which is impossible in the case of the word *blackbird*.

The same example can be used to show what is meant by semantic unity. In the phrase *black bird*, each of the significant words is associated with a separate concept: *bird* is a living creature; *black* is a color. In contrast, the word *blackbird* conveys only one concept - a type of bird. A distinctive feature of each word is that it is associated in a communication situation with one concept (or denotation), regardless of the number of morphemes it may consist of. Another characteristic feature of a word is its ability to take different grammatical forms in speech and convey grammatical meaning.

Analysis of the research.

Words in speech (and text) are connected in phrases and sentences. Many phrases have a figurative meaning, and the meaning of the constituent elements can be greatly obscured, for example, a mare's nest, to beat about the bush, in other cases, individual words can only be used as part of set phrases or clichés: to shrug one's shoulders, hazel eyes, etc. The section of lexicology that studies phrases, set speech patterns and expressions is called phraseology. Having considered the main properties of a word, we can move on to its definition. A word is a speech unit used for the purpose of communication between people, having a material embodiment in the form of a group of sounds, possessing meaning and characterized by both formal and semantic unity. The problem of word formation is associated with the prevailing type of morphological structures and with the process of formation of new words. Semantics studies the meaning of words and phrases. The modern approach to these problems includes two levels of research: syntagmatic and paradigmatic. At the syntagmatic level, the semantic structure of a word is analyzed in its linear relationships with neighboring words in a flow of coherent speech or text. In other words, the semantic characteristics of a word are observed, described, and studied based on typical contexts of use.

At the paradigmatic level, a word is studied in relation to other words in the vocabulary of the language. Thus, a word can be considered in comparison with other words that are similar in meaning (work, n. – labor, n.; to refuse, v. – to reject v. – to decline, v.), opposite in meaning (busy, adj. – idle, adj.; to accept, v. – to reject, v.), have different stylistic uses (man, n. – chap, n. – bloke, n. – guy, n.) or by some other characteristics.

Consequently, the main problems of the paradigmatic level of research are synonymy, antonymy, use in different functional styles of speech. Here we should also add the problem of homonymy (identity of form with different content of words).

Discussion.

Phraseology as a section of lexicology studies groups of words (phrases) characterized by the stability of the structure and the figurative meaning of the whole in relation to its components, i.e. to take the bull by the horns, to see red, birds of a feather, etc. This is a special layer of the language that requires very close attention from the translator. For some phrases it is easy to find an equivalent in the form of one word, for example, lame duck - a loser; others require knowledge of folklore to measure another's corn by one's own bushel beat - to measure with one's own yardstick, there are, however, figurative phrases over which you have to "rack" your brains before you find a good equivalent: a fly on the wheel - a braggart. One of the main goals of lexicology is to study the vocabulary of a language as a system. (A system is a set of interdependent elements, and a structure is the relationship between them). The words of a language can be studied in synchrony, i.e. at the present stage of development, or in diachrony, from the point of view of the evolution of their form and content in the process of historical development.

For clarity of further exposition, it is necessary to consider some basic provisions accepted in linguistics.

1. Language is a social phenomenon of objective reality, associated with thinking, as well as with the social life of

human society. Language is the most basic and important means of communication through linguistic signs in the form of sound combinations.

2. The word is the basic and main unit of the language system, the largest at the morphological and the smallest at the syntactic level of linguistic analysis. The word is a structural and semantic entity in the language system.
3. The word (or any other linguistic sign) is a two-sided unit possessing unity of form and content, or more precisely, sound form and content. Neither of these sides can be thought of in isolation from each other. For example, [ˈtɪmbəl] is a linguistic sign in the English language system, since it has the meaning of a small metal cap ... – thimble. For other languages, this word is not a linguistic sign, it is a meaningless combination of sounds. From the point of view of their structure, words are inseparable lexical units that exist in a certain system of grammatical forms (paradigmatics) and syntactic characteristics (syntagmatics), which distinguishes them from morphemes and phrases. In speech, words occur in various forms, called word forms; thus, a word exists in a language not only as a system of its meanings, but also as a system and unity of word forms. The system in which a word appears in the totality of its word forms is called a paradigm. A word retains its lexical meaning within a paradigm, i.e. all word forms of the same word are lexically (semantically) identical. The grammatical meaning varies from word to word (cf. to take, takes, took, taken, taking or painting, painter, painter's, painters, painters'). Therefore, when we talk about the same word painter (or take), used in everyday speech (for example, His brother is a famous painter or I wonder who has taken my umbrella?), we use this term in a certain sense conditionally, because in real speech this word appears in the entire set of its word forms (or variants), which have different phonetic and grammatical design, belonging to one paradigm (invariant) of the word.
4. There are two approaches to defining the paradigm of a word: a) as a system of forms of the same word, it reveals the differences and relationships between them; b) taken abstractly, without regard to specific words, the paradigm is considered as a model according to which a word belonging to a certain part of speech forms its forms and thus serves to distinguish one part of speech from another. For example, the paradigm of a noun: zero inflection (significant absence of inflection), -'s, -s, -s' differs from the paradigm of a regular verb: zero inflection, -s, -ed (I), -ed (II), -ing, etc.
4. The relationship between language and speech is the relationship between the general and the particular. Language exists in speech and only through speech. It is in constant interaction with speech, and this is a necessary condition for the development of language. One of the many examples is the formation of so-called occasional words, or occasionalisms, i.e. words that are not regularly reproduced but are formed spontaneously according to structural patterns and from the material available in the language. (Productive word-formation suffixes often serve as the basis for occasionalisms, for example, investigatable, marriageable, burglarable (cf. dependable). It is clear that the root morphemes and

word-formation suffixes that make up these words are taken from the arsenal of the language, while the words themselves are an attribute of speech.

5. In linguistics, there are two fundamental approaches to the study of language material, namely: synchrony and diachrony. In lexicology, the synchronic approach means considering the vocabulary of the language in the state in which it is presented at a given time (i.e., at the current level of development). The diachronic approach deals with changes and development of the vocabulary in historical terms, over time. These two approaches are closely interconnected and interdependent. The synchronic state of a language is the result of a long process of historical development. For example:
 - A. diachronically, the words country, bacon and fellow are borrowings, but at the synchronic level they are considered English, in no way not different from other native words, such as child, foot, stone;
 - B. words such as childhood, freedom, friendship were once considered complex, the suffixes -hood, -dom and -ship had the status of independent root morphemes. Thus, from a diachronic point of view, these words are complex, but in the course of the historical development of language and speech they turned into derivatives;
 - C. at the present time (synchronically), the words to beg and beggar are related and are related to each other as a simple and derivative word, while the noun beggar is thought of as formed from the verb to beg. This correspondence seems to be the same as in the pair to sing - singer, to teach - teacher, etc. But from a diachronic point of view, it turns out that the noun beggar was borrowed from Old French and only later began to be related to the shorter native verb to beg (as an action and a performer of an action with the suffix -er).

Conclusion

Lexicology, as a vital branch of linguistics, focuses on the study of the vocabulary of a language, its structure, development, and use. Positioned within the broader system of language sciences, it serves as a foundational discipline

that interacts with phonetics, grammar, semantics, stylistics, and sociolinguistics. The main subject of lexicology is the word, its meaning, origin, form, and functional properties.

The core tasks of lexicology include analyzing word formation, exploring the semantic structure of words, studying word combinations and phraseological units, as well as understanding the processes of lexical change and borrowing. Lexicology contributes not only to theoretical linguistic knowledge but also plays a practical role in language teaching, translation, lexicography, and intercultural communication.

In summary, lexicology enables deeper insights into how vocabulary shapes and reflects a language's evolution, structure, and communicative potential.

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