English Lexicology

Compiled by Associate Professor
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(lectures are mainly compiled from the book **"English Lexicology", by Antrushina, 1999** – pp. 6-11; 129-131; 131-142; 147- 164; 209-224; 166-183; 209-230; 44-65; 225-259; 78-91; 91-127)

Lecture 1

Lexicology as a branch of Linguistics. The problem of the definition of the word as a linguistic phenomenon. External and Internal structure of a word. The problem of formal unity and semantic unity of a word. Syntagmatic and paradigmatic levels of the study of semantic structure of a word.

1.Лексикология английского языка – Г.Б. Антрушина, 1999. (Antrushina G.B.,, English Lexicology, 1999) იხ.გვერდები 6 – 11; 129 – 131.
2.Semantics, Cowie A.P., Oxford, 2009

Lecture 2

Semantic structure of a word. Polysemy. Componential analysis of a word. Types of semantic componenets.

1.Лексикология английского языка – Г.Б. Антрушина, 1999. (Antrushina G.B.,, English Lexicology, 1999) იხ.გვერდები 131 – 142.
2.Semantics, Cowie A.P., Oxford, 2009

3.http://grammar.about.com/od/words/a/connotations.htm

4.http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Denotation

5.http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Denotation_and_connotation

6.http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Componential_analysis

Lecture 3

Development of New Meanings; Causes of development of new meanings; the process of development and change of meaning; transference based on resemblance (similarity); transference based on contiguity

1.Лексикология английского языка – Г.Б. Антрушина, 1999. (Antrushina G.B.,, English Lexicology, 1999) იხ.გვერდები 147 – 164.
2. http://www.infohub.com/FORUMS/showthread.php?t=4015

3. http://grammar.about.com/od/ab/g/broadenterm.htm

4. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Language_change#Types_of_language_change

Lecture 4

Synonyms; Criteria of Synonymy

1.Лексикология английского языка – Г.Б. Антрушина, 1999. (Antrushina G.B.,, English Lexicology, 1999) იხ.გვერდები 184 - 198.

2.Semantics, Cowie A.P., Oxford, 2009

3. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Synonym

4. www.brusov.am/docs/Eng_Phon_Gram.../Lecture-Margaryan.doc

Lecture 5

The Dominant Synonymy; Euphemism; Antonyms

1.Лексикология английского языка – Г.Б. Антрушина, 1999. (Antrushina G.B.,, English Lexicology, 1999) იხ.გვერდები 209 – 224.

2. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Euphemism

3.http://grammar.about.com/od/e/g/euphemismterm.htm

4.http://www.polseguera.com/colaboracion/english/6en.htm

Lecture 6

Homonyms:

Words of the Same Form

1.Лексикология английского языка – Г.Б. Антрушина, 1999. (Antrushina G.B.,, English Lexicology, 1999) იხ.გვერდები 166 – 183.

2.Semantics, Cowie A.P., Oxford, 2009

3. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homonym

4.http://a4esl.org/q/h/homonyms.html

5. http://www.enchantedlearning.com/english/homonyms/

6. http://www.manythings.org/fq/1/9994.html

Lecture 7

Test

Lecture 8

The Etymology of English Words

The first century B.C.

The fifth century A.D.

The Seventh Century A.D.

From the end of the 8th century to the middle of the 11th century.

1066

The Renaissance Period

French and Latin affixes

1.Лексикология английского языка – Г.Б. Антрушина, 1999. (Antrushina G.B.,, English Lexicology, 1999) იხ. გვერდები 44 – 75.
2.Prentice Hall Literature, Cambridge University Press, 1999. ix.gvedebi 4 – 10.

3. http://ancienthistory.about.com/od/etymology/a/021810aaetymologyprefixes.htm

4. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Etymology

5.http://www.wordsources.info/

Lecture 9

Phraseology: Word-Groups with Transferred Meanings

How to Distinguish Phraseological Units from Free Word-Groups

Proverbs

1.Лексикология английского языка – Г.Б. Антрушина, 1999. (Antrushina G.B.,, English Lexicology, 1999) იხ. გვერდები 225 – 241.
2.Semantics, Cowie A.P., Oxford, 2009

3. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phraseology

4. http://www.idiomsite.com/

5. http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/

6. www.jlls.org/Issues/Volume%203/No.1/amdumitrascu.pdf

7. http://www.world-english.org/englishidiomstest.htm

8. http://www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/proverbs.html

Lecture 10.

Phraseology: Principles of Classification

1.Лексикология английского языка – Г.Б. Антрушина, 1999. (Antrushina G.B.,, English Lexicology, 1999) იხ. გვერდები 241 – 259.
2.Semantics, Cowie A.P., Oxford, 2009

3. www.jlls.org/Issues/Volume%203/No.1/amdumitrascu.pdf

4. http://www.world-english.org/englishidiomstest.htm

Lecture 11 Test

Lecture 12

Word- Building (how English words are made)

Affixation - Native affixes; Productive and Nonproductive Affixes

Conversion

1.Лексикология английского языка – Г.Б. Антрушина, 1999. (Antrushina G.B.,, English Lexicology, 1999) იხ. გვერდები 78 - 91.
2. http://www.sil.org/linguistics/GlossaryOfLinguisticTerms/WhatIsAffixation.htm

3. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Affix

4. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conversion_(linguistics)

Lecture 13.

Word-Building (How English words are made); conversion, composition

1.Лексикология английского языка – Г.Б. Антрушина, 1999. (Antrushina G.B.,, English Lexicology, 1999) იხ. გვერდები 91 - 113
2. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conversion_(linguistics)

3. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Compound_(linguistics)

4. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Word

5. http://pandora.cii.wwu.edu/vajda/ling201/test1materials/Morphologyoverhead.htm

Lecture 14.

Composition. Shortening (Contraction). Sound-Imitation (Onomatopoeia). Reduplication. Back-formation (Reversion*)*

1.Лексикология английского языка – Г.Б. Антрушина, 1999. (Antrushina G.B.,, English Lexicology, 1999) იხ. გვერდები 113 – 127.
2. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reduplication
3.http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Back-formation

Lecture 15

Revision

English Lexicology

Lecture I

Lexicology as a branch of Linguistics. The problem of the definition of the word as a linguistic phenomenon. External and Internal structure of a word. The problem of formal unity and semantic unity of a word. Syntagmatic and paradigmatic levels of the study of semantic structure of a word. . (Antrushina G.B.,, English Lexicology, 1999 pp. 6 – 11; 129 – 131.)

Lexicology is a Greek term. 'Lexis' means a word; 'lexicos' having to do with words and 'logos' a department of knowledge. Thus, if we ask a question: ''what does lexicology deal with?' – the answer can be simple: lexicology, a branch of linguistics, is the study of words. But such a simple answer doesn't embrace all the problems that come within its realm.

Major goal of today's lecture is to answer the following questions: 'What is a word?' 'What is Lexicology?

Let us remember the famous words of Juliet from 'Romeo and Juliet':

What's in a name? That which we call a rose

By any other name would smell as sweet... (W.Shakespeare. Romeo and Juliet, Act II, sc.2).

These famous lines reflect one of the fundamental problems of linguistic research in general: what is in a name, in a word? Is there any direct connection between a word and the object it represents? Could a rose have been called by ”any other name”?

These and similar questions are answered by lexicological research.

We can once again repeat the above statement that **lexicology is the study of words.**

It is significant that many scholars have attempted to define the word as a linguistic phenomenon. Yet none of the definitions can be considered totally satisfactory in all aspects. It is equally surprising that, despite all the achievements of modern science, certain essential aspects of the nature of word still escape us. Nor do we fully understand the phenomenon called “language”, of which the word is a fundamental unit.

We do not know much about the origin of language, and, consequently, of the origin of words. It is true that there are several hypothesis, some of them no less fantastic than the theory of the divine origin of language and so many languages that humankind has.

Probably, all of us heard what the Bible says in Genesis:

“And the whole earth was one language, and of one speech ... And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let go down and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth” (Genesis 11).

We know nothing - it would be more precise to say – almost nothing about the mechanism by which a speaker’s mental process is converted into sound groups called “word” nor about the reverse process whereby a listener’s brain converts the acoustic phenomena into concepts and ideas, thus establishing a two-way process of communication.

We know very little about the nature of relations between the word and the referent (i.e.object, phenomenon, quality, action, etc. denoted by the word). If we assume that there is a direct relation between the word and the referent - which seems logical – it gives rise to another question: how should we explain the fact that the same referent is designated by quite different sound groups in different languages.

However, we are not likely to be desperate not to know so many things. One thing is clear – there is nothing accidental about the vocabulary of the language (as well as there is nothing accidental in life). By the vocabulary of language is understood the total stock of words; that each word is a small unit within a vast, efficient and perfectly balanced system.

The list of unknowns can be extended, but it is probably high time to look at the brighter side and register some of the things we do know about the nature of the word.

First, we do know that the word is a unit of speech which, as such, serves the purpose of communication. Thus the word can be defined as a unit of communication.

Secondly, the word can be perceived as the total of the sounds which comprise it.

Third, the word, viewed structurally, possesses several characteristics.

The modern approach to word studies is based on distinguishing between the **external** and **internal** structures of the word.

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*. All these morphemes constitute the external structure of the word *post-impressionists*.

The *internal structure* of word, or its meaning, is nowadays commonly referred to as the word's semantic structure. This is certainly the word's main aspect, hence words serve the purposes of human communication solely due to their meanings. The area of lexicology specializing in the semantic studies of the word is called **semantics**. More than hundred years ago, in 1883 the French philologist Michel Breal published an article where he argued that alongside of phonetics and morphology, the study of the formal elements of human speech, there ought also to be a science of meaning, which he proposed to call "la semantique," by a word derived from the Greek "sign." The branch

of study advocated in this article was not entirely new, but it was the first time when semantics as a discipline in its own right was established. Semantics is the study of meanings.

Another structural aspect of the word is its **unity.** The word possesses both external (formal) unity and semantic unity. Formal unity of the word is sometimes inaccurately interpreted as indivisibility. The example of post-impressionists has already shown that the word is not, strictly speaking, indivisible. Yet, its component morphemes are permanently linked together in opposition to word-groups, both free and with fixed contexts, whose components possess a certain structural freedom, e.g. bright light, to take for granted.

The formal unity of a word can be best illustrated by comparing a word and a word group comprising identical constituents. The difference between a *blackbird* and a *black bird* is best explained by their relationship with grammatical system of the language. The word *blackbird,* which is characterized by unity, possesses a single grammatical framing: *backbird**s.* The first constituent black is not subject to any grammatical changes. In the word-group *a black bird* each constituent can acquire grammatical forms of its own: *the blackest bird I've ever seen*. Other words can be inserted between the components which is impossible so far as the word is concerned as it would violate its unity: a black night bird.

Now let us explain what can be meant by **semantic unity.** The same example may be used to illustrate what we mean by semantic unity.

In the word-group a black bird each of the meaningful words conveys a separate concept: bird – a kind of living creature; black – a colour.

The word blackbird conveys only one concept: the type of bird. This is one of the main features of any word: it always conveys one concept, no matter how many component morphemes it may have in its external structure.

A further structural feature of the word is its **susceptibility to grammatical employment.** In speech most words can be used in different grammatical forms in which their interrelations are realized.

So far we have only underlined the word's major peculiarities. All that we have said about the word can be summed up as follows:

The word is a speech unit used for the purposes of human communication, materially representing a group of sounds, possessing a meaning, susceptible to grammatical employment and characterized by formal and semantic unity.

Modern approaches to the problem of studying the meaning are characterized by two different levels of study: **syntagmatic** and **paradigmatic**.

On the *syntagmatic level*, the semantic structure of the word is analyzed in its linear relationships with neighbouring words in connected speech. In other words, the semantic characteristics of the word are observed, described and studied on the basis of its typical contexts.

On the *paradigmatic level*, the word is studied in its relationships with other words in the vocabulary system. So, a word may be studied in comparison with other words of similar meaning (e.g. work, n. – labour, n.; to refuse,v. – to reject, v. – to decline, v.) of opposite meaning (e.g. busy, adj. – idle, adj.; to accept, v. – to to reject, v.), of different stylistic characteristics (e.g. man, n. – chap, n. – bloke, n. – guy, n.). Consequently, the main problems of paradigmatic studies are for instance, synonymy and antonymy.

One further important objective of lexicological studies is the study of the vocabulary of a language as a system. The vocabulary can be studied *synchronically*, that is, at a given stage of its development, or *diachronically*, that is, in the context of the processes through which it grew, developed and acquired its modern form. The opposition of the two approaches accepted in modern linguistics is nevertheless disputable as the vocabulary, as well as the word, which is its fundamental unit, is not only what it is now, at this particular stage of the language's development, but, also, what it was centuries ago and has been throughout its history.

We have already mentioned that the internal structure of word, or its meaning, is nowadays commonly referred to as the word's semantic structure. This is certainly the word's main aspect, hence words serve the purposes of human communication solely due to their meanings. The area of lexicology specializing in the semantic studies of the word, as we have mentioned is called **semantics**.

Today we are going to answer, from a certain point of view, a very simple question: "what is meaning? " The question posed by us is one of those questions which are

easier to ask than answer. The linguistic science at present is not able to put forward a definition of meaning which is conclusive.

However, there are certain facts of which we can be reasonably sure, and one of them is that the very function of the word as a unit of communication is made possible by its possessing a meaning. Therefore, among the word's various characteristics, meaning is certainly the most important.

Generally speaking, meaning can be more or less described as a component of the word through which a concept is communicated, in this way endowing the word with the ability of denoting real objects, qualities, actions and abstract notions. The complex and somewhat mysterious relationships between **referent** (object, phenomenon, etc. denoted by the word), **concept** and **word** are traditionally represented by the following triangle:

Thought or Reference

Symbol ---------- Referent

By the symbol here is meant the word; thought or reference is concept. There is no immediate relation between word and referent: it is established only through the concept.

On the other hand there is hypothesis that concepts can only find their realization through words. It seems that thought is dormant till the word wakens it up. It is only when we hear a spoken word or read a printed word that the corresponding concept springs into mind.

The mechanism by which concepts (i.e. mental phenomena) are converted into words (i.e. linguistic phenomena) and the reverse process by which a heard or a printed word is converted into a kind of mental picture are not yet understood or described. Probably that is the reason why the process of communication through words, if one

gives it some thought, seems nothing short of miracle. It's really amazing that the mere vibrations of a speaker's vocal chords should be taken up by a listener's brain and converted into vivid pictures. It is truly miracle, but we are so used to this miracle that we do not realize its almost supernatural qualities.

As we have already mentioned the branch of linguistics specializing in the study of meaning is called semantics. As with many terms, the term "semantics" is ambiguous for it can stand, as well, for the expressive aspect of language in general and for the meaning of one particular word in all its varied aspects and nuances.

As Mario Pei puts it in the *Study of language*, "Semantics is "language" in its broadest, most inclusive aspect. Sounds, words, grammatical forms, syntactical constructions are the tools of language. Semantics is language's avowed purpose".

The modern approach to semantics is based on the assumption that the inner form of the word (i.e. its meaning) presents a structure which is called the **semantic structure of a word.**

Yet, before going deeper into the problem, it is necessary to make a brief survey of another semantic phenomenon which is closely connected with it. It is the problem of polysemy, about which we are going to speak.

The semantic structure of a word does not present an indissoluble unity (that is, actually, why it is referred to as "structure"), nor does it necessarily stand for one concept. It is generally known that most words convey several concepts and thus possess the corresponding number of meanings. A word having several meanings is called **polysemantic**, and the ability of words to have more than one meaning is described by the term ***polysemy***.

Two somewhat naïve but at the same time frequently asked questions may arise in connection with polysemy:

1. Is polysemy an anomaly or a general rule in English vocabulary?
2. Is polysemy an advantage or disadvantage so far as communication is concerned?

Let us deal with both these questions together.

Polysemy is certainly not an anomaly. Most English words are polysemantic. It should be noted that the wealth of expressive resources of a language largely depends

on the degree to which polysemy has developed in the language. Sometimes people who are not very well informed in linguistic matters claim that a language is lacking in words if the need arises for the same word to be applied to several different phenomena. In actual fact, it is exactly the opposite: if each word is found to be capable of conveying, let us say, at least two concepts instead of one, the expressive potential of the whole vocabulary increases twofold. Therefore, a well-developed polysemy is not a drawback but a great advantage for a language.

On the other hand, it should be pointed that the number of sound combinations that human speech organs produce is limited. Therefore at a certain stage of language development the production of new words by morphological means becomes limited, and polysemy becomes increasingly important in providing the means for enriching the vocabulary. From this, it should be clear that the process of enriching the vocabulary does not consist merely in adding new words to it, but, also, in the constant development of polysemy.

The system of meanings of any polysemantic word develops gradually, mostly over centuries, as more and more new meanings are either added to the old ones, or oust some of them. So the complicated processes of development involve both the appearance of new meanings and the loss of old ones. Yet, the general tendency with English vocabulary at the modern stage of its history is to increase the total number of its meanings and in this way to provide for a quantitative and qualitative growth of the language's expressive resources.

Without polysemy the alternative is unthinkable: it would mean that we would have to store in our brains a tremendous stock of words, with separate names for any possible subject we might wish to talk about; it would also mean that there would be no metaphors and the language would thus be robbed of much of its expressiveness and flexibility.

The frequency of polysemy in different languages is a variable depending on a number of factors. The progress of civilization will make it necessary not only to form new words but to add fresh meanings to old ones. It would be interesting to explore over a wider field the relation between polysemy and cultural progress. Meanwhile, the frequency of polysemy also depends on purely linguistic factors. It is worth mentioning

that Languages where derivation and composition are sparingly used will tend to fill gaps in vocabulary by adding new meanings to existing terms. Similarly, polysemy will arise more often in generic words whose meaning varies according to context, than in specific terms whose sense is less subject to variation.

1.Лексикология английского языка – Г.Б. Антрушина, 1999. (Antrushina G.B.,, English Lexicology, 1999) იხ.გვერდები 6 – 11; 129 – 131.

2.Readings in Modern English Lexicology – С.С. Хидекель, 1969.

3. 1. Arnold, I. 1986. The English Word. Moscow.

4.http://grad.cau.edu.cn/train/courseman/English/hongsheng_liu/ An Introduction to Modern English .Lexicology.ppt.

5.http://refu.ru/refs/29/38032/1.html

6.www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G1-178634669.html

7.http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lexicology

Lecture I

Exercises for Seminars and Independent Work

I. Consider your answers to the following

1. What is lexicology? What does the term “lexicology” stand for? What are the main problems of lexicology?
2. Speak about the problem of the definition of the word as a linguistic phenomenon.
3. What are the structural aspects of a word?
4.What is the external structure of the word irresistible? What is the internal structure of this word?
5.Speak about the formal unity of a word. Why is it not quite correct to say that a word is indivisible?
6.Explain why the word blackboard can be considered a unity and why the combination of words a black board does not possess such a unity.

7.What is understood by the semantic unity of a word? Which of the following possesses semantic unity – a bluebell or a blue bell.

8. Give a brief account of the main characteristics of a word.

9. What are the main differences between studying words syntagmatically and paradigmatically?

10. What is understood by “semantics”?

11.Explain the term “polysemy”.

12.Define polysemy as a linguistic phenomenon. Illustrate your answer with your own examples.

II. Define the meanings of the words in the following sentences. Say how many meanings of the same word are associated one with another.

1. I walked into Hyde Park, ***fell*** flat upon the grass and almost immediately ***fell*** asleep.

2.a) ‘Hello”, I said, and thrust my hand through the ***bars***, whereon the dog became silent and licked me.

b)At the end of the long bar, leaning against the long counter was a slim, pale individual wearing a red bow-tie.

3.a) I began to search the flat, looking in boxes to see if I could find a ***key***.

b)I tumbled with a sort of splash upon the ***keys*** of a ghostly piano.

c)Now the orchestra is playing yellow cocktail music and the opera of voices pitches a ***key*** higher.

d)The authority of his voice set the ***key*** for the newspaper report next morning.

4.a) Her ***mouth*** opened crookedly and she shot a few words at one like pebbles.

b)Would you like me to come to the ***mouth*** of the river with you?

5.a)I sat down fer a few minutes with my head in my ***hands***, until I heard the phone taken up inside.

b)The minute ***hand*** of the electric clock jumped on to figure twelve.

6.a)My ***head*** felt as if it were on a string and someone were trying to pull it off.

b)He possessed more power than many ***heads*** of the state.

III. Explain the different meanings and different usages, giving reasons for your answers.

smart, adj.

smart clothes, a smart answer, a smart house, a smart garden, a smart officer, a smart blow, a smart punishment

stubborn, adj.

a stubborn child, a stubborn look, a stubborn horse, a stubborn resistance, a stubborn fighting, a stubborn cough, stubborn depression

sound, adj

sound lungs, a sound scholar, a sound tennis-player, sound views, sound advice, sound criticism, a sound whipping

root, n.

edible roots, the root of the tooth, the root of the matter, the root of all evil

perform, v.

to perform one's duty to perform an operation, to perform a dance, to perform a play

kick, v.

to kick the ball, to kick the dog, to kick off one's slippers, to kick smb downstairs

Exercises are compiled from the book -.Лексикология английского языка – Г.Б. Антрушина, 1999.

Lecture II

.Semantic structure of a word. Polysemy. Componential analysis of a word. Types of semantic componenets (Antrushina G.B.,, English Lexicology, 1999 pp. 131 – 142)

When analyzing the semantic structure of a polysemantic (polysemic) word, it is necessary to distinguish between two levels of analysis.

On the first level, the semantic structure of a word is treated as a system of meanings. For example, the semantic structure of the noun *fire* could be roughly presented by the following scheme:

Fire,n

I Flame			
II An instance of destructive burning; e.g. a forest fire	III Burning material in a stove, fireplace etc.; e.g. There is a fire in the next room; a camp	IV The shouting of guns, etc. e.g. to open fire, to cease fire	V Strong feeling, passion; e.g. a speech lacking fire

The above scheme suggests that meaning I holds a kind of dominance over the other meanings conveying the concept in the most general way whereas meanings II – V are associated with special circumstances, aspects and instances of the same phenomenon.

Meaning I (generally referred to as the main meaning) presents the centre of the semantic structure of the word holding it together. It is mainly through meaning I that meaning II – V (called secondary meanings) can be associated with one another, some of them exclusively through meaning I, as, for example, meanings IV and V.

However, we can have different cases. Below we shall give a fragment of the semantic structure of a word *bar*, so as to illustrate the point. It would hardly be possible

to establish any logical associations between some of the meanings of the noun bar through the main meaning

I I
The profession of barrister, lawyer; e.g. go to the Bar

III
(In a public house or hotel) a counter or room where drinks are served; e.g. They went to the bar for a drink

I
Any kind of barrier to prevent people from passing

As you can see meanings II and III have no logical links with one another whereas each separately is easily associated with meaning I: meaning II through the traditional barrier dividing a court-room into two parts; meaning III through the counter serving as a kind of barrier between the customers of a pub and the barman.

Yet, it is not in every polysemantic word that such a centre can be found. Some semanitic structures are arranged on a different principle. In the following list of meanings of the adjective *dull* one can hardly hope to find a generelized meaning covering and holding together the rest of the semanitic structure.

Dull, adj.

1.Uninteresting, monotonous, boring; e.g. a dull book, a dull film.

2.Slow in understanding, stupid; e.g. a dull student.

3.Not clear or bright; e.g. dull weather, a dull day, a dull colour.

4.Not loud or distinct; e.g. a dull sound.

5.Not sharp; e.g. a dull knife.

6.Not active; e.g. Trade is dull.

7.Seeing badly; e.g. dull eyes (arch).

8.Hearing badly; e.g/ dull ears (arch).

Yet, one distinctly feels that there is something that all these seemingly miscellaneous meanings have in common, and that is the implication of deficiency, be it colour (3), wits (2), interest (1), sharpness (5), etc. The implication of insufficient quality, of something lacking, can be clearly distinguished in each separate meaning.

In fact, each meaning definition in the given scheme can be subjected to a transformational operation to prove the point

Dull, adj.

1. Uninteresting ---------- deficient in interest or excitement

2.Stupid ---------- deficient in intellect.

3.Not bright ---------- deficient in light or colour.

4.Not loud ---------- deficient in sound.

5.Not sharp ----------deficient in sharpness.

6.Not active ---------- deficient in activity.

7.Seeing badly ---------- deficient in eyesight.

8.Hearing badly ---------- deficient in hearing.

The transformed scheme of the semantic structure of dull clearly shows that the centre holding together the complex semantic structure of this word is not one of the meanings but a certain *component* that can be easily singled out within each separate meaning.

This brings us to the second level of analysis of the semantic structure of a word. The transformational operation with the meaning definitions of *dull* reveals something very significant: the semantic structure of the word is “divisible”, as it were, not only at the level of different meanings, but, also, at a deeper level.

Each separate meaning seems to be subject to structural analysis in which it may be represented as sets of semantic components. This is called the componential analysis, which is one of the modern methods of semantic research. In terms of componential analysis, the meaning of a word is defined as a set of elements of meaning which are not part of the vocabulary of the language itself, but rather theoretical elements,

postulated in order to describe the semantic relations between the lexical elements of a given language.

The scheme of the semantic structure of dull shows that the semantic structure of a word is not a mere system of meanings, for each separate meaning is subject to further subdivision and possesses an inner structure of its own.

Therefore, the semantic structure of a word should be investigated at both these levels: a)of different meanings, b)of semantic components within each separate meaning. For a monosemantic word (i.e. a word with one meaning) the first level is naturally excluded.

Types of Semantic Components

The leading semantic component in the semantic structure of a word is usually termed **denotative componenet** (also, the **referential component**). The denotative component expresses the conceptual content of a word.

The following list presents denotative components of some English adjectives and verbs:

Denotative components

lonely ---------- alone, without company
notorious ---------- widely known
celebrated ---------- widely known
to glare ---------- to look
to glance ---------- to look
to shiver ---------- to tremble
to shudder ---------- to tremble

It is quite obvious that the definitions given in the right column only partially and incompletely describe the meanings of their corresponding words. To give a more or less full picture of the meaning of a word, it is necessary to include in the scheme of analysis additional semantic components which are termed **connotations** or **connotative components**.

Let us complete the semantic structures of the words given above introducing connotative components into the schemes of their semantic structures.

	Denotative components		Connotative components
lonely ----------	alone, without company	+	melancholy, sad (Emotive connotation)
notorious ---------	widely known	+	for criminal acts or bad traits of character (Evaluative connotation, negative)
celebrated ----------	widely known	+	for special achievements in science, art, etc. (Evaluative connotation, positive)
to glare ----------	to look	+	1steadily, lastingly;2 in anger, rage (1.Connotation of duration; emotive)
to glance ----------to look		+	briefly, passingly (Connotation of duration)
to shiver ----------to tremble		+	1.lastingly; 2.usu. with cold (1.Connotation of duration; connotation of cause)
to shudder ---------- to tremble		+	1.briefly; 2.with horror, disgust,etc. (1Connotation of duration; 2.connotation of cause; 3.emotive connotation)

The above examples show how by singling out denotative and connotative components one can get a sufficiently clear picture of what the word really means. The schemes presenting the semantic structures of glare, shiver, shudder also show that a meaning can have two or more connotative components.

The given examples do not exhaust all the types of connotations but present only a few: emotive, evaluative, of duration and of cause. For a more detailed classification of connotative components of a meaning, we shall be dealing with during our coming meetings.

Meaning and context

When we were speaking about such a linguistic phenomenon as polysemy, we discussed advantages and disadvantages of it. One of the most important “drawbacks” of polysemantic words is that there is sometimes a chance of misunderstanding when a word is used in a certain meaning but accepted by a listener or reader or another. It is

only natural that such cases provide stuff of which jokes are made, such as the ones that follow:

Customer: I would like a book, please.

Bookseller: Something light?

Customer: That doesn't matter. I have my car with me.

In this conversation the customer is honestly misled by the polysemy of the adjective *light* taking it in the literal sense whereas the bookseller uses the word in its figurative meaning "not serious"; "entertaining".

In the following joke one of the speakers pretends to misunderstand his interlocutor basing his angry retort on the polysemy of the noun kick:

The critic started to leave in the middle of the second play.

"Don't go," said the manager. "I promise there's a terrific kick in the next act."

"Fine", was the retort, " give it to the author''.

(Kick – 1.thrill, pleasurable excitement (informal); 2.a blow with the foot.)

Generally speaking, it is common knowledge that context is a powerful preventative against any misunderstanding of meanings. For instance, the adjective *dull*, if used out of context, would mean different things to different people or nothing at all. It is only in combination with other words that it reveals its actual meaning: *a dull pupil, a dull play, a dull razor-blade, dull weather*, etc. sometimes, however, such a minimum context fails to reveal the meaning of the word, and it may be correctly interpreted as a so called **"second-degree context",** as in the following example: *The man was large, but his wife was even fatter.* The word *fatter* here serves as kind of indicator pointing that large describes a stout man and not a big one.

Current research in semantics is largely based on the assumption that one of the more promising methods of investigating the semantic structure of a word is by studying the word's linear relationships with other words in typical contexts, i.e. its **combinability** or **collocability.**

Scholars have established that the semantics of words characterized by common occurrences (i.e. words which regularly appear in common contexts) are correlated and, therefore, one of the words within such a pair can be studied through the other.

Thus, if one intends to investigate the semantic structure of an adjective, one would best consider the adjective in its most typical syntactical patterns A+N (adjective + noun) and N + l + A (Noun + link verb + adjective) and make a thorough study of the meanings of nouns with which the adjective is frequently used.

For instance, a study of typical contexts of the adjective bright in the first pattern will give us the following sets: a)bright colour (flower, dress, silk, etc), b) bright matal (gold, jewels, armour, etc.), c) bright student (pupil, boy, fellow, etc.), d)bright face (smile, eyes, etc.) and some others. These sets will lead us to singling out the meanings of the adjective related to each set of combinations: a) intensive in colour, b)shining, c)capable, d)gay, etc.

For a transitive verb, on the other hand, the recommended pattern would be V + N (verb = direct object expressed by a noun). If, for instance, our object of investigation are the verbs to produce, to create, to compose, the correct procedure would be to consider the semantics of the nouns that are used in the pattern with each of these verbs: what is it that is produced? created? composed?

There is an interesting hypothesis that the semantics of words regularly used in common contexts (e.g. bright colours, to build a house, to create a work of art, etc.) are so intimately correlated that each of them casts, as it were, a kind of permanent reflection on the meaning of its neighbour. If the verb to compose is frequently used with the object music, isn't it natural to expect that certain musical associations linger in the meaning of the verb to compose?

Note, also, how closely the negative evaluative connotation of the adjective notorious is linked with the negative connotation of the nouns with which it is regularly associated: a notorious criminal, thief, gangster, gambler, liar, miser, etc.

All this leads us to the conclusion that context is a good and reliable key to the meaning of the word. Yet, even the jokes given above show how misleading this key can prove in some cases.

And here we are faced with two dangers:

The first is that of sheer misunderstanding, when the speaker means one thing and the listener takes the word in its other meaning;

The second danger has nothing to do with the process of communication but with research work in the field of semantics. A common error with the inexperienced research worker is to see a different meaning in every new set of combinations. Here is a puzzling question to illustrate what we mean. Let us take two examples: an angry letter and an angry man. Is the adjective angry used in the same meaning in both these contexts or in two different meanings? Some people will say ‘two” and argue that, on the one hand, the combinability is different (man – name of person; letter – name of object) and, on the other hand, a letter cannot experience anger. True, it cannot; but it can very well convey the anger of the person who wrote it. As to the combinability, the main point is that a word can realize the same meaning in different sets of combinability. For instance, in the pairs *merry children, merry laughter, merry faces, merry songs* the adjective *merry* conveys the same concept of high spirits whether they are directly experienced by the children (in the first phrase) or indirectly expressed through the merry faces, the laughter and the songs of the other word groups.

The task of distinguishing between the different meanings of a word and the different variations of combinability (or, in a traditional terminology, different usages of the word) is actually a question of singling out the different denotations within the semantic structure of the word.

1.a sad woman

2.a sad voice

3.a sad story

4.a sad scoundrel (= an incorrigible scoundrel)

5.a sad night (= a dark, black night, arch. poet.)

How many meanings of *sad* can you identify in these contexts? Obviously the first three contexts have the same denotation of sorrow whereas in the fourth and fifth contexts the denotations are different. So, in these five contexts we can identify three meanings of sad.

All this leads us to the conclusion that context is not the ultimate criterion for meaning and it should be used in combination with other criteria. Nowadays, different methods of componential analysis are widely used in semantic research: definitional analysis, transformational analysis, distributional analysis. Yet, contextual analysis

remains one of the main investigative methods for determining the semantic structure of a word.

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http://grammar.about.com/od/words/a/connotations.htm
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Lecture II

Exercises for Seminars and Independent Work
I. Consider your answers to the following

1.What are the two levels of analysis in investigating the semantic structure of a word?
2.What types of semantic components can be distinguished within the meaning of a word?
3.What is one of the most promising methods for investigating the semantic structure of a word? What is understood by collocability (combinability)?
4. How can one distinguish between the different meanings of a word and the different variations of combinability?

III. The verb “to take” is highly polysemantic. On which meanings of the verb are the following jokes based? Give your own examples to illustrate the other meanings of the word.

1.”Where have you been for the last four years?”
“At college taking medicine.”
“And did you finally get well?”

2.” so you confess that this unfortunate freshman was carried to this frog pond and drenched. Now what part did you take in this disgraceful affair?”
“ The right leg, sir.

IV. Explain the basis for the following jokes.

1.”I wonder if I can see your mother, little boy, is she engaged?”
“Engaged! She is married.”

2.”You’ll have to change twice before you get to York.”
“ Goodness me! And I have only brought the clothes I’m wearing.”

3. Professor: You missed my class yesterday, didn’t you?
Student: Not in the least, sir, not in the least.

V. Choose any polysemantic word that is well-known to you and illustrate its meanings with examples of your own.

VI. Analyse the collocability of the italicized words and state its relationship with the meaning.

1.Lady (at party): Where is that pretty maid who was passing our cocktails a while ago?
Hostess: Oh, you are ***looking for*** a drink?
Lady: no, I’m ***looking for*** my husband.

2. Peggy: I want to help you Dad. I shall get the dress-maker to teach me to ***cut out*** gowns.
Dad: I don't want you to go that far, peg, but you might ***cut out*** cigarettes, and taxi bills.

VII. Write simple definitions to illustrate as many meanings as possible for the following polysemantic words.

Face, heart, nose, smart, to lose

VIII. Identify the denotative and connotative elements of the meanings in the folowing pairs of words.

a)To conceal – to disguise, to choose – to select, to draw – to paint, money – cash, photograph – picture, odd – queer.

Exercises are compiled from the book -.Лексикология английского языка – Г.Б. Антрушина, 1999.

Lecture III

Development of New Meanings; Causes of development of new meanings; the process of development and change of meaning; transference based on resemblance (similarity); transference based on contiguity (Antrushina G.B.,, English Lexicology, 1999, pp.147 – 164).

We have already mentioned that the systems of meaning of polysemantic words evolve gradually. The older a word is, the better developed is its semantic structure. The normal pattern of a word's semantic development is from monosemy to a simple semantic structure with a further movement to an increasingly more complex semantic structure.

Today we shall have a closer look at the complicated processes by which words acquire new meanings.

There are two aspects to this problem, which can be generally described in the following way: a) Why should new meanings appear at all? What circumstances cause and stimulate their development? b)How does it happen? What is the nature of the very process of development of new meanings? Let us deal with these questions in turn.

Causes of Development of New Meanings

The first group of causes is traditionally termed historical or extra-linguistic.

Different kinds of changes in a nation's social life, in its culture, knowledge, technology, arts, lead to gaps appearing in the vocabulary which beg to be filled. Newly created objects, new concepts and phenomena must be named. We know two well-known ways for providing new names for created concepts: making new words (word-building) and borrowing foreign words (we shall deal with this problem later). One more way is by applying some old word to a new object or notion.

When the first textile factories appeared in England, the old word mill was applied to these early industrial enterprises. In this way, mill (A Latin borrowing of the first century

B.C.) added a new meaning to its former meaning “a building in which corn is ground into flour”. The new meaning was “textile factory”.

A similar case is the word carriage which had (and still has) the meaning “a vehicle drawn by horses”, but, with the first appearance of railways in England, it received a new meaning, that of “a railway car”.

The history of English nouns describing different parts of a theatre may also serve as a good illustration of how well-established words can be used to denote newly-created objects and phenomena. The words stalls, box, pit, circle had existed for a long time before the first theatres appeared in England. With their appearance, the gaps in the vocabulary were easily filled by these widely used words which, as a result, developed new meanings.

New meanings can also be developed due to linguistic factors.

The development of new meanings, and also a complete change of meaning, may be caused through the influence of other words, mostly of synonyms. (Most scholars distinguish between the terms development of meaning (when a new meaning and the one on the basis of which it is formed coexist in the semantic structure of the word, as in mill, carriage, etc.) and change of meaning (when the old meaning is completely replaced by the new one, as in the noun meat which in O.E. had the general meaning of ‘food’ but in Modern English is no longer used in that sense and has instead developed the meaning “flesh of animals used as a food product”.)

Let us consider some examples.

The O.E. verb steorfan meant “to perish”. When the verb “to die” was borrowed from Scandinavian, these two synonyms, which were very close in their meaning, collided, and. as a result, to starve gradually changed into its present meaning: “to die (or suffer) from hunger”.

The history of the noun deer is essentially the same. In O.E. (deor) it had a general meaning denoting any beast. In that meaning it collided with the borrowed word animal and changed its meaning to the modern one – “a certain kind of anomal”.

The noun knave (O.E. knafa) suffered an even more striking change of meaning as a result of collision with its synonym boy. Now it has a pronounced negative evaluative connotation and means “swindler, scoundrel”.

The Process of Development and Change of Meaning

The second question we must answer now is how the new meanings develop. To find the answer to this question we must investigate the inner mechanism of this process, or at least its essential features.

Why was it that the word mill – and not some other word – was selected to denote the first textile factories? There must have been some connection between the former sense of mill and the new phenomenon to which it was applied. And there was apparently such a connection. Mills, which produced flour, were mainly driven by water. The textile factories also firstly used water power. So, in general terms, the meanings of mill, both the old and new one, could be defined as “an establishment using water power to produce certain goods”. Thus, the first textile factories were easily associated with mills producing flour, and the new meaning of mill appeared due to this association. In actual fact, all cases of development or change of meaning are based on some association. In the history of word carriage, the new travelling conveyance was also naturally associated in people’s minds with the old one: horse-drawn vehicle > part of railway train. Both these objects were related to the idea of travelling. The job of both, horse-drawn carriage and the railway carriage, is the same: to carry passangers on a journey. So the association was logically well-founded.

Stalls and box formed their meanings in which they denoted parts of the theatre on the basis of a different type of association. The meaning of the word box “a small separate enclosure forming a part of a theatre” developed on the basis of its former meaning “a rectengular container used for packing or storing things”. The two objects became associated in the speakers’ minds because boxes in the earliest English theatres really resembled packing cases. They were enclosed on all sides and heavily curtained even on the side facing the audience so as to conceal the privileged spectators occupying them from curious or insolent stares.

The association on which the theatrical meaning of stalls was based is even more curious. The original meaning was “compartments in stables or sheds for accommodation of animals (cows, horses, etc.). There does not seem to be much in

common between the privileged and expensive part of a theatre and stables intended for cows and horses, unless we take into consideration the fact that theatres in olden time greatly differed from what they are now. What is now known as the stalls was, at that time, standing space divided by barriers into sections so as to prevent the enthusiastic crowd from knocking one another down and hurting themselves. So, there must have been a certain outward resemblance between theatre stalls and cattle stalls. It is also possible that the word was first used humorously or satirically in this new sense.

The process of development of a new meaning (or a change of meaning) is traditionally termed transference.

Some scholars mistakenly use the term “transference of meaning” which is a serious mistake. It is very important to note that in any case of semantic change it is not the meaning but the word that is being transferred from one referent onto another (e.g. from a horse-drawn vehicle onto a railway car).

Two types of transference are distinguishable depending on the two types of logical associations underlying the semantic process.

Transference Based on Resemblance (Similarity)

This type of transference is also referred to as linguistic metaphor. A new meaning appears as a result of associating two objects (phenomena, qualities, etc.) due to their outward similarity. Box and stall, as should be clear from the explanations above, are examples of this type of transference.

Other examples can be given in which transference is also based on the association of two physical objects. The noun eye, for instance, has for one of its meanings “hole in the end of a needle”, which also developed through transference based on resemblance. A similar case is represented by the neck of the bottle.

The noun drop (mostly in the plural form) has, in addition to its main meaning “a small particle of water or other liquid”, the meanings: “ear-rings shaped as drops of water” (e.g. diamond drops) and “candy of the same shape” (e.g. mint drops). It is quite obvious that both these meanings are based on resemblance. in the compound word

snowdrop the meaning of the second constituent underwent the same shift of meaning. In general, metaphorical change of meaning is often observed in idiomatic compounds.

The main meaning of the noun branch is “limb or subdivision of a tree or bush”. on the basis of this meaning it developed several more. One of them is “a special field of science or art” (branch of linguistics). This meaning brings us into the sphere of the abstract, and shows that in transference based on resemblance an association may be built not only between two physical objects, but also between a concrete object and an abstract concept.

The noun bar from the original meaning barrier developed a figurative meaning realized in such contexts as social bars, colour bars, racial bar. Here, again, as in the abstract meaning of branch, a concrete object is associated with the abstract concept.

The noun star on the basis of the meaning “heavenly body” developed the meaning “famous actor or actress”. Nowadays the meaning has considerably widened its range, and the word is applied not only to screen idols, but, also, to popular sportsmen, pop-singers, etc. The first use of the word star to denote popular actor or actress must have been humorous or ironical: the mental picture created by the use of the word in this new meaning was a kind of semi-god surrounded by the bright rays of his glory. Yet, soon the ironical colouring was lost.

The meanings formed through this type of transference are frequently found in the informal strata of the vocabulary, especially in slang. A red-headed boy is almost certain to be nicknamed carrot or ginger by his schoolmates, and the one who is given to spying and sneaking gets the derogatory nickname of rat. Both these meanings are metaphorical, though, of course, the children using them are quite unconscious of this fact.

The slang meanings of words such as nut, onion (= head), (eyes), hoofs (= feet) and very many others were all formed by transference based on resemblance.

Transference Based on Contiguity

Another term for this type of transference is linguistic metonymy. The association is based upon subtle psychological links between different objects and phenomena,

sometimes traced and identified with much difficulty. The two objects may be associated together because they often appear in common situations, and so the image of one is easily accompanied by the image of the other; or they may be associated on the principle of cause and effect, of common function, of some material and an object which is made of it.

Cases of the transference based on contiguity are of different kind.

The O.E. adjective glad meant “bright, shining” (it was applied to the sun, to gold and precious stones, to shining armour, etc.). The later (and more modern) meaning “joyful” developed on the basis of the usual association of light with joy.

The meaning of the adjective sad in O.E. was “satisfied with food”. Later this meaning developed connotation of a greater intensity of quality and came to mean “oversatisfied with food; having eaten too much”. Thus, the meaning of the adjective sad developed a negative evaluative connotation and now described not a happy state of satisfaction but, on the contrary, the physical unease and discomfort of a person who has had too much to eat. The next shift of meaning was to transform the description of physical discomfort into one of spiritual discontent because these two states often go together. Now the adjective describes purely emotional state: “sorrowful, melancholy”. The two previous meanings were ousted from the semantic structure of the word long ago.

The foot of bed is the place where the feet rest when one lies in the bed, but the foot of a mountain got its name by another association: the foot of a mountain is its lowest part, so that the association here is founded on common position.

By the arms of an arm-chair we mean the place where the arms lie when one is sitting in the chair, so that the type of association here is the same as in the foot of a bed. The leg of a bed (table, chair, etc.), though, is the part which serves as a support, the original meaning being “the leg of a man or animal”. The association that lies behind this development meaning is the common function: a piece of furniture is supported by its legs just as living beings are supported by theirs.

The meaning of the noun hand realized in the context hand of a clock (watch) originates from the main meaning of this noun “part of human body”. It also developed due to the association of the common function: the hand of a clock points to the figures

on the face of the clock, and one of the functions of human hand is also that of pointing to things.

Another meaning of hand realized in such contexts as factory hands, farm hands is based on another kind of association: strong, skillful hands are the most important feature that is required of a person engaged in physical labour.

The adjective dull developed its meaning “not clear or bright” (as in a dull green colour; dull light; dull shapes) on the basis of the former meaning “deficient in eyesight”, and its meaning “not loud or distinct” (as in dull sounds) on the basis of the older meaning “deficient in hearing”. The association here was obviously that of cause and effect: to a person with weak eyesight all colours appear pale, and all shapes blurred; to a person with deficient hearing all sounds are indistinct.

The main (and oldest registered) meaning of the noun board was “a flat and thin piece of wood; a wooden plank”. On the basis of this meaning developed the meaning “table” which is now archaic. The association which underlay this semantic shift was that of the material and the object made from it: a wooden plank (or several planks) is an essential part of any table. This type of association is often found with nouns denoting clothes: a mink (“mink coat”) a jersy (“knitted shirt or sweater”).

Meanings produced through transference based on contiguity sometimes originate from geographical or proper names. China in the sense of “dishes made of porcelain” originated from the name of the country which was believed to be the birthplace of porcelain. The name of a painter is frequently transferred onto one of his pictures: A Matisse = a painting by Matisse.

Broadening (or Generalization) of Meaning.
Narrowing (or Specialization) of Meaning

Sometimes, the process of transference may result in a considerable change in range of meaning. For instance, the verb to arrive (French borrowing) began its life in English in the narrow meaning “to come to shore, to land”. In Modern English it has greatly widened its combinability and developed the general meaning “to come” (e.g. to arrive in Londen, at a hotel, etc.). The meaning developed through transference based on

contiguity (the concept of coming somewhere is the same for both meanings), but the range of the second meaning is much broader.

Another example of the broadening of meaning is pipe. Its earliest recorded meaning was “a musical wind instrument”. Nowadays it can denote any hollow oblong cylindrical body (water pipes). This meaning developed through transference based on similarity of shape (pipe as a musical instrument is also a hollow. oblong cylindrical object) which finally led to a considerable broadening of the range of meaning.

The word bird changed its meaning from “ the young of a bird” to its modern meaning through transference based on contiguity. The second meaning is broader and more general.

It is interesting to trace the history of the word girl as an example of the changes in the range of meaning in the course of the semantic development of a word.

In Middle English it had the meaning of “ a small child of either sex”. Then the word underwent the process of transference based on contiguity and developed the meaning of “a small child of the female sex”, so that the range of meaning was somewhat narrowed. In its further semantic development the word gradually broadened its range of meaning. At first it came to denote not only a female child but, also, a young unmarried woman, later, any young woman, and in modern colloquial English it is practically synonymous to the noun woman (e.g. the old girl must be at least seventy), so that its range of meaning is quite broad.

The history of the noun lady somewhat resembles that of girl. In O.E. the word denoted the mistress of the house, i.e. any married woman. Later, a new meaning developed which was much narrower in range: “the wife or daughter of a baronet”. In Modern English the word lady can be applied to any woman, so that its range of meaning is even broader. In Modern English the difference between girl and lady in the meaning woman is that the first is used in colloquial stylewhereas the second is more formal and polite. Here are some more examples of narrowing of meaning:

Deer: any beast > a certain kind of animal
Meat: any food > a certain food product

It should be pointed out that in all these words the second meaning developed through transference based on contiguity, and that when we speak of them as examples of narrowing of meaning we simply imply that the range of the second meaning is more narrow than that of the original meaning.

The So-Called “Degeneration” (“Degradation”) and “Elevation” of Meaning

These terms are open to question because they seem to imply that meanings can become “better” or “worse” which is neither logical nor plausible. But, as a matter-of-fact, scholars using these terms do not actually mean the degeneration or elevation of meaning itself, but of the referent onto which a word is transferred, so that the term is inaccurate.

Now let us see what stands behind the examples of change of meaning which are traditionally given to illustrate the degeneration or elevation of meaning.

I.’’ Degeneration” of meaning

knave: boy > swindler, scoundrel
Villain: farm-servant > base, vile person
Gossip: god parent > the one who talks scandals, etc.

Semantically speaking the second meaning developed a negative evaluative connotation which was absent in the first meaning.

Such cases can be observed in other parts of speech:

E.g. Silly: happy > foolish

II.”Elevation” of meaning.
Fond: foolish > loving, affectionate
Nice: foolish > fine, good.

In these two cases the situation is reversed: the first meaning has a negative evalutive connotation, and the second meaning has not. It is difficult to see what is actually "elevated" here. Certainly, not the meaning of the word. Here are two more examples:

Tory: brigand, highwayman > member of the Tories
Knight: manservant > noble, courageous man

In the case of Tories, the first meaning has a negative connotation which is absent in the second one. But why 'elevation"? Semantically speaking the first meaning is just as good as the second, and the difference lies only in the connotative structure.

The case of knight, if treated linguistically, is quite opposite to Tory: the second meaning acquired a positive evaluative connotation that was absent in the first meaning. So, here, once more, we are faced with a mere readjustment of the connotative components of the word.

There are also some traditional examples of "elevation":

Marshal: manservant attending horses > the highest rank in the army
Lord: master of the house, head of the family > baronet
Lady: mistress of the house, married woman > wife or daughter of baronet.

In these three words the second meaning developed due to the process of transference based on contiguity. Lord and lady are also examples of narrowing of meaning if we compare the range of the original and of the resultant meanings. No connotations of evaluation can be observed in either of the meanings. The fact that in all these three cases the original meaning denoted a humble ordinary person and the second denotes a person of high rank is absolutely extralinguistic.

All that has been said and the examples that have been given show that the terms "degradation" and "elevation" of meaning are imprecise and do not seem to be an objective reflection of the semantic phenomena they describe.

1.Лексикология английского языка – Г.Б. Антрушина, 1999. (Antrushina G.B.,, English Lexicology, 1999) იხ.გვერდები 147 – 164.

2. http://www.infohub.com/FORUMS/showthread.php?t=4015

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Seminar III

Exercises

I. Consider your answers to the following

1. What causes the development of new meanings? Give examples.
2. What is the basis of development or change of meaning? Explain what we mean by the term transference.
3. What types of transference can you name?
4. What is meant by widening and the narrowing of meaning?
5. Give examples of the so-called “degradation” and “elevation” of meaning.

II. Explain the semantic processes by which the italicized words acquired their meanings

1.”***Bureau***”, a desk, was borrowed from French in the 17th century. In Modern French (and English) it means not only desk but also the office itself and the authority exercised by the office. Hence the familiar bureaucracy is likely to become increasingly familiar. The desk was called so because bureau, a thick coarse cloth of a brown russet.
2.Formally **barn** meant “ a storehouse for barley”; today it has widened to mean “any kind of storehouse” for animals or equipment as well as any kind of grain.

III. Analyze the process of development of new meanings in the italicized words
1.I put the letter well into the ***mouth*** of the box.
2.Those who had been the ***head*** of the line paused momentarily and looked around.

3.A cheerful-looking girl in blue ***jeans*** came up to the stairs whistling.

4.I read ***a Dickens*** the other day. It was funny. They sat on the rug before the fireplace, watching the rising ***tongues*** of flame.

5. They were already carrying the Renoirs.

IV. Identify the cases of widening and narrowing of meaning.

1.While the others waited the elderly executive filled his pipe and lit it.

2.Finn was watching the birds.

3. The two girls took hold of one another, one acting gentleman, the other lady;

V. Comment on the history of the words. Do they have evaluative connotations in their meanings?

1.The directors now assembling were admirals and field ***marshals*** of commerce.

2.For a businessman to be invited to serve on a top-flight ***bank*** board is roughly equivalent to being ***knighted*** by the British Queen.

3.I had a nice newsy ***gossip*** with Mrs. Needham before you turned up last night.

4.The little half-starved guy looked more a victim than a ***villain***.

5.Meanwhile I nodded my head and directed a happy smile in the direction of the two ***ladies***.

6.I shook hand with Tom; It seemed ***silly*** not to.

Exercises are compiled from the book -.Лексикология английского языка – Г.Б. Антрушина, 1999.

Lecture IV

Synonyms; Criteria of Synonymy (Antrushina G.B. English Lexicology, 1999, pp. 184 - 198.**)**

"The difference between the right word and just the right word is the difference between the lightning and the lightning-bug" (Mark Twain).

Synonymy is one of the modern linguistics' most controversial problems. The very existence of words traditionally called synonyms is disputed by some linguists; the nature and essence of the relationships of these words is hotly debated and treated in quite different ways by the representatives of different linguistic schools.

Even though one may accept that synonyms in the traditional meaning of the term are somewhat elusive and, to some extent, fictitious it is certain that there are words in any vocabulary which clearly develop regular and distinct relationships when used in speech.

In the following extract, in which a young woman rejects a proposal of marriage, the verbs like, admire and love, all describe feelings of attraction, approbation, fondness:

"I have always *liked* you very much, I *admire* your talent, but, forgive me, - I could never *love* you as a wife should love her husband."

(From The Shivering Sands by V.Holt)

Yet, each of the three verbs, though they all describe more or less the same feeling of liking, describes it in its own way: "I like you, i.e. I have certain warm feelings towards you, but they are not strong enough for me to describe them as "love", - so that like and love are in a way opposed to each other.

The duality of synonyms is, probably, their most confusing feature: they are somewhat the same, and yet they are most obviously different. Both aspects of their dual characteristics are essential for them to perform their function in speech: revealing different aspects, shades and variations of the same phenomenon.

"- Was she a pretty girl?

- I would certainly have called her attractive''.

The second speaker in this short dialogue does his best to choose the word which would describe the girl most precisely: she was good-looking, but pretty is probably too good a word for her, so that attractive is again in a way opposed to pretty (not pretty, only attractive), but this opposition is, at the same time, firmly fixed on the sameness of pretty and attractive: essentially they describe a pleasant appearance.

Here are some extracts which confirm that synonyms add precision to each detail of description and show the correct choice of a word from a group of synonyms may colour the whole text.

The first extract depicts a domestic quarrel. The infuriated husband shouts and glares at his wife, but “his glare suddenly softened into a gaze as he turned his eyes on the little girl” (i.e. he had been looking furiously at his wife, but when he turned his eyes on the child, he looked at her with tenderness).

The second extract depicts a young father taking his child for a Sunday walk.

“Neighbours were apt to smile at the long-legged bare-headed young man leisurely strolling along the street and his small companion demurely trotting by his side.”

(From Some Men and Women by B. Lowdes)

The synonyms stroll and trot vividly describe two different styles of walking, the long slow paces of the young man and the gait between a walk and a run of the short-legged child.

In the following extract an irritated producer is talking to an ambitious young actor:

“Think you can play Romeo? Romeo should smile, not grin, walk, not swagger, speak his lines, not mumble them.”

(Ibid)

Here the second synonym in each pair is quite obviously and intentionally contrasted and opposed to the first: “ ...smile, not grin.” Yet, to grin means more or less the same as to smile, only, perhaps, denoting a broader and a rather foolish smile. In the same way, to swagger means ‘to walk”, but to walk in a defiant or insolent manner. Mumbling is also a way of speaking, but of speaking indistinctly or unintelligibly.

As you can see, synonyms are one of the language’s most important expressive means. The above examples convincingly demonstrate that the principal function of synonyms is to represent the same phenomenon in different aspects, shades and variations.

And here is an example of how a great writer may use synonyms for stylistic purposes. In this extract the author describes a group of survivors painfully retreating after a defeat in a battle:

" ... The Frontshiers [the name of battalion] staggered rather than walked down the bumpy trench ... about fifty men, the flotsam of the wrecked battalion, stumbled past them ... They shambled heavily along, not keeping step or attempting to, bent wearily forward under the weight of their equipment, their unseeing eyes turned to the muddy ground."

(From Death of Hero by R. Aldington)

In this extract the verb to walk is used with its three synonyms, each of which describes the process of walking in its own way. In its contrast to walk the other three words do not merely convey the bare idea of going on foot but connote the manner of walking as well. Stagger means "to sway while walking" and, also, implies a considerable, sometimes painful, effort. Stumble means "to walk pripping over uneven ground and nearly falling." Shamble implies dragging one's feet while walking; a physical effort is also connoted by the word.

The use of all these synonyms in the extract creates a vivid picture of exhausted, broken men marching from the battle-field and enhances the general atmosphere of defeat and hopelessness.

A carefully chosen word from a group of synonyms is a great asset not only on the printed page but also in a speaker's utterance. We started our lecture by *Mark Twain's famous words that "the difference between the right word and just the right word is the difference between the lightning and the lightning-bug".*

The skill to choose the most suitable word in every context and every situation is an essential part of the language learning process. WE should know both to discern the various connotations in the meanings of synonyms and to choose the word appropriate to each context.

Criteria of Synonymy

Synonymy is associated with some theoretical problems, which at present are still an object of controversy. Probably, the most controversial among these is the problem of criteria of synonymy. To put it in simpler words, we are still not certain which words should correctly be considered as synonyms, nor are we agreed as to the characteristic features which qualify two or more words as synonyms.

Traditional linguistics solved the problem with the ***conceptual criterion*** and defined synonyms as words of the same category of parts of speech conveying the same concept but different either in shades of meaning or in stylistic characteristics.

Some aspects of this definition have been criticized. It has been pointed out that linguistic phenomena should be defined in linguistic terms and that the use of term concept makes this an extralinguistic definition. The term “shades of meaning” has been condemned for its vagueness and lack of precision.

In contemporary research on synonymy semantic criterion is frequently used. In terms of componential analysis synonyms may be defined as words with the same denotation, or the same denotative component, but differing in connotations, or in connotative components.

Though not beyond criticism, this approach has its advantages and suggests certain methods of analysing synonyms.

A group of synonyms may be studied with help of their dictionary definitions (definitional analysis). In this work the data from various dictionaries are analysed comparatively. After that the definitions are subjected to transformational operations (transformational analysis). In this way, the semantic components of each analysed word are singled out.

Here are the results of the definitional and transformational analysis of some of the numerous synonyms for the verb to look.

to stare ------- to look + steadily, lastingly + in surprise, curiosity, etc
to glare -------- to look + steadily, lastingly + in anger,rage, fury
to gaze ---------to look + steadily, lastingly + in tenderness, admiration, wonder
to glance ------ to look + briefly, in passing

to peer --------- to look + steadily, lastingly + by stealth; through an opening or from a concealed location

to peer --------- to look + steadily, lastingly + with difficulty or strain

The common denotation convincingly shows that, according to semantic criterion, the words grouped in the above table are synonyms. The connotative components represented on the right side of the table highlight their differentiations.

In modern research of synonyms the criterion of **interchangeability** is sometimes applied. According to this, synonyms are defined as words which are interchangeable at least in some contexts without any considerable alteration in denotational meaning.

This criterion of interchangeability has been much criticized. Every or almost every attempt to apply it to this or that group of synonyms seems to lead one to the inevitable conclusion that either there are very few synonyms or, else, that they are not interchangeable.

It is sufficient to choose any set of synonyms placing them in a simple context to demonstrate the point. Let us take, for example, the synonyms from the above table

He glared at her (i.e. he looked at her in anger, rage, fury)

He gazed at her (i.e. he looked at her steadily and attentively; probably with admiration or interest).

He glanced at her (i.e. He looked at her briefly and turned away)

He peered at her (i.e. He tried to see her better, but something prevented: darkness, fog, weak eyesight).

These few examples are sufficient to show that each of the synonyms creates an entirely new situation which so sharply differs form the rest that any attempt at ‘’interchanging” anything can only destroy the utterance devoiding it of any sense at all. In a related contexts, all these words (I like you, but I cannot love you; the young man was strolling, and his child was trotting by his side; Romeo should smile, not grin, etc.) clearly demonstrate that substitution of one word for another is impossible: it is not simply the context that formally binds them in their proper places, but the peculiar individual connotative structure of each individual word.

Consequently, it is difficult to accept interchangeability as a criterion of synonymy because the specific characteristic of synonyms, and the one justifying their very existence, is that they **are not, cannot, and should not** be interchangeable, in which case they would simply become useless ballast in the vocabulary.

Synonyms are frequently said to be the vocabulary's colours, tints and hues. Attempts at ascribing to synonyms the quality of interchangeability are equal to stating that subtle tints in a painting can be exchanged without destroying the picture's effect.

All this does not mean that no synonyms are interchangeable. One can find whole group of words with half-erased connotations which can readily be substituted one for another. The same girl can be described as pretty, good-looking, handsome or beautiful. Yet, even these words are far from being **totally** interchangeable. Each of the creates its own picture of human beauty. Here is an extract in which a young girl addresses an old woman:

"I wouldn't say you'd been exactly pretty as a girl - handsome is what I'd say. You've got such strong features''.

So, handsome is not pretty and pretty is not necessarily handsome. Perhaps they are not even synonyms? Of course they are. Both, the criterion of common denotation (''good-looking, of pleasing appearance'') and even the dubious criterion of interchangeability seem to indicate that.

In conclusion let us stress that even if there are some synonyms which are interchangeable, it is quite certain that there are also others which are not. A criterion, if it is a criterion at all, should be applicable to all synonyms and not just to some of them. Otherwise it is not acceptable as a valid criterion.

Types of Synonyms

The only existing classification system for synonyms was established by Academician V.V. Vinogradov, the famous Russian scholar. In his classification system there are three types of synonyms: ideographic (which is defined as words conveying

the same concept by differing in shades of meaning), stylistic (differing in stylistic characteristics) and absolute (coinciding in all their shades of meaning and in all their stylistic characteristics.

However, the following aspects are rare in the vocabulary and, on the diachronic level, the phenomenon of absolute synonymy is anomalous and consequently temporary: the vocabulary system invariably tends to abolish it either by rejecting one of the absolute synonyms or by developing differentiation characteristics in one or both (or all) of them. Therefore, it does not seem necessary to include absolute synonyms, which are a temporary exception, in the system of classification.

The vagueness of the term “shades of meaning” has already been mentioned. Furthermore there seems to be rigid demarcation line between synonyms differing in their shades of meaning and stylistic characteristics, as will be shown later on. There are numerous synonyms which are distinguished by both shades of meaning and stylistic colouring. Therefore, even the subdivision of synonyms into ideographic and stylistic is open to question.

A more modern and more effective approach to the classification of synonyms may be based on the definition describing synonyms as words differing in connotations. It seems convenient to classify connotations by which synonyms differ rather than synonyms themselves. It opens up possibilities for tracing much subtler features within their semantic structures.

Types of Connotations

I. **The connotation of degree of intensity** can be traced in such groups of synonyms as to surprise – to astonish – to amaze – to astound; to satisfy – to please – to content – to gratify – to delight – to exalt; to shout – to yell – to bellow – to roar; to like – to admire – to love – to adore – to worship.

As we have seen above, some words have two or even more connotative components in their semantic structures. In the above list the synonymic groups headed by to satisfy and to like contain words which can be differentiated not only by the connotation of intensity but by other types which will be described later.

II. In the group of synonyms to stare – to glare – to to gaze – to glance – to peep – to peer, all the synonyms except to glance denote a lasting act of looking at somebody or something, whereas to glance describes a brief, passing look. These synonyms may be said to have **a connotation of duration** in their semantic structure.

Other examples are : to flash (brief) – to blaze (lasting); to shudder (brief) – to shiver (lasting); to say (brief) – to speak, to talk (lasting).

All these synonyms have other connotations besides that of duration.

III. The synonyms to strare – to glare – to gaze are differntiated from the other words of the group by **emotive connotations**, and from each other by the nature of the emotion they imply.

In the group alone – single – lonely – solitary, the adjective lonely also has an emotive connotation. she was alone implies simply the absence of company, she was lonely stresses the feeling of melancholy and desolation resulting from being alone. A single tree on the plain states plainly that there is only one tree, not two or more, but also creates an emotionally coloured picture.

In the group to tremble – to shiver – to shudder – to shake, the verb to shudder is frequently associated with the emotion of fear, horror, or disgust, etc. (e.g. to shudder with horror) and therefore can be said to have an emotive connotation in addition to the two others.

one should be warned against confusing words with emotive connotations and words emotive denotative meanings, e.g. to love – to admire – to adore – to worship; angry – furious – enraged; fear – terror – horror. In the latter, emotion is expressed by the leading semantic component whereas in the former it is an accompanying, subsidiary characteristic.

IV. **The evaluative connotation** conveys the speaker's attitude towards the referent, labelling it as good or bad. So in the group well-known – famous – notorious – celebrated, the adjective notorious bears a negative evaluative connotation and celebrated a positive one. A notorios murderer, robber, swindler, coward, lady-killer, flirt, but a celebrated scholar, artist, singer, man-of-letters.

In the group to produce – to create – to manufacture – to fabricate, the verb to create characterizes the process as inspired and noble. To manufacture means to "produce in a mechanical way without inspiration or originality". So, to create can be said to have a positive evaluative connotation, and to manufacture a negative one.

The verbs to sparkle and to glitter are close synonyms na dmight well be favoured by supporters of the interchangeability criterion. Yet, it would be interesting to compare the following sets of examples:

A. His (her) eyes sparkled with amusement, merriment, good humour, high spirits, happiness, etc. (positive emotions)
B. His (her) eyes glittered with anger, rage, hatred, malice, etc. (negative emotions)

The combinability of both verbs shows that, at least, when they are used to describe the expression of human eyes, they have both emotive and evaluative connotations, and, also, one further characteristic, which will be described later.

V. **The causative connotation** can be illustrated by the examples to sparkle and to glitter given above: one's eyes sparkle with positive emotions and glitter with negative emotions. However, this connotation of to sparkle and to glitter seems to appear only in the model " Eyes + Sparkle\Glitter''.

The causative connotation is also typical of the verbs to shiver and to shudder, in whose semantic structures the cause of the act or process of trembling is encoded: to shiver with cold, from a chill, because of the frost; to shudder with fear, horror, etc.

To blush and to redden represent similar cases: people mostly blush from modesty, shame or embarrassment, but usually redden from anger or indignation. Emotive connotation can easily be traced in both these verbs.

VI. **The connotation of manner** can be singled out in some groups of verbal synonyms. The verbs to stroll – to stride – to trot – to pace – to swagger – to stagger – to stumble all denote ways and types of walking, encoding in their semantic structures the length of pace, tempo, gait and carriage, purpusefulness or lack of purpose.

the verbs to peep and to peer also have this connotation in their semantic structures: to peep = to look at smb\smth. furtively, by stealth; to peer = to look at smb\smth. with difficulty or strain.

The verbs to like – to admire – to love – to adore – to worship, as has been mentioned, are differentiated not only by the connotation of manner. Each of them describes a feeling of a different type, and not only of different intensity.

VII. the verbs to peep and to peer are differentiated by connotations of duration and manner. But there is some other curious peculiarity in their semantic structures. Let us consider their typical contexts.

One peeps at smb.\smth. through a whole, crack or openening, from behind a screen, a half-closed door, a newspaper, a fan, a curtain, etc. It seems as if a whole set of scenery were built within the word's meaning. Of course, it is not quite so, because " the set of scenery'' is actually built in the context, but, as with all regular contexts, it is intimately reflected in the word's semantic structure. We shall call this **the connotation of attending circumstances**.

This connotation is also characteristic of to peer. One peers at smb.\smth. in darkness, through the fog, through dimmed glasses or windows, from a great distance; a short-sighted person may also peer at things. So, in the semantic sturcture of to peer are encoded circumstances preventing one from seeing clearly.

VIII. The synonyms pretty, handsome, beautiful have been mentioned as the ones which are more or less interchangeable. Yet, each of them describes a special type of human beauty: beautiful is mostly associated with classical features and a perfect figure, handsome with a tall stature, a certain robustness and fine proportions, pretty with small delicate features and a fresh complexion. This connotation may be defined as **the connotation of attendant features.**

IX. **Stylistic connotations** stand somewhat apart for two reasons. Firstly, some scholars do not regard the word's stylistic characteristic as a connotative component of its semantic structure. Secondly, stylistic connotations are subject to further classification, namely: colloquial, slang, dialect, learned,

poetic, terminological, archaic. Here we are dealing with **stylistically marked** words.

Here are some examples of synonyms which are differentiated by stylistic connotations. The word in brackets starting each group shows the denotation of synonyms.

(Meal). Snack, bite (coll.), snap (dial.), repast, refreshment, feast (formal).

These synonyms, besides stylistic connotations, have connotations of attendant features.

Snack, bite, snap all denote a frugal meal taken in a hurry; refreshment is also a light meal; feast is a rich or abundant meal.

(Girl). Girlie (coll.), lass, lassie (dial.), bird, birdie,jane, fluff, skirt (sl.), maiden (poet.), damsel (arch.).

(To leave). To be off, to clear out (coll.), to beat it, to hoof it, to take the air (sl.), to depart, to retire, to withdraw (formal).

1.Лексикология английского языка – Г.Б. Антрушина, 1999. (Antrushina G.B.,, English Lexicology, 1999) იხ.გვერდები 184 - 198.

2. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Synonym

3. www.brusov.am/docs/Eng_Phon_Gram.../Lecture-Margaryan.doc

Lecture IV

Exercises for Seminars and Independent Work

I.Consider your answers to the following:

1.Say why synonyms are one of the language's most important expressive means. Illustrate your answer with examples.

2.The meanings of two apparent synonyms may be in a way opposed to each other. Why are such words still regarded as synonyms? Give examples.
3.How are synonyms traditionally defined? On what criterion is this definition based? Which aspects of this definition are open to criticism?
4. How can synonyms be defined in terms of componential analysis? On what criterion is this definition based?
5. Why is the definition of synonyms based on the criterion of interchangeability open to question? Illustrate your answer with examples.
6.Which aspects of the classification of synonyms are open to question?
7. What is the modern approach to classifying synonyms? Illustrate this classification with examples.
8.Synonyms are sometimes described as words with “dual” charateristics. What is meant by this?

II. The sentences given below contain synonyms. Write them out in groups and explain the difference where the words are familiar.

1.a)While Kitty chatted gaily with her neighbours she watched Walter.
b)She knew that he hadn’t been sent to talk about weather.
c)As he spoke he rose from the bed.
d)He is said to be honest.
e)He’ll tell you all about himself.
f)If you want to converse with me define your terms.
2.a)She felt on a sudden a cold chill pass through her limbs and she shivered.
b)Her lips trembled so that she could hardly frame the words.
c)I was shaking like a leaf when I came here.
d)He shuddered with disgust.
3.a) He gave his wrist-watch a glance.
b)Tommy gave her a look out of the corner of his eye.
c)But her abstract gaze scarcely noticed the blue sea.
d)Let me have just one peep at the letter.

4. a)Bessie gets up and walks towards the window.
b)He did nothing from morning till night but wander at random.
c)I saw a man strolling along.
d)The men sauntered over to the next room.
5.a)I began to meditate upon writer's life.
b)You had better reflect a little
c)The more he thought of it the less he liked the idea.
d)I'm sure that a little walk will keep you from breeding
6.a)The witness was a thin, middle-aged man.
b)She had a slender figure.
c)The girl was slim and dark.
7.a) She was a fat woman, who gasped when she talked.
b)She came like a ship at full sail, an impossible creature, tall and stout.
c)She was twenty-seven perhaps, plump, and in a coarse fashion pretty.
d)He was person of perhaps forty, red-faced, cheerful, thick.
8.a)She was a strange, unstable woman.
b)It was a life that perhaps formed queer characters.
c)I thought it was odd that he should allow her to dance.

III. Give as many synonyms for the italicized words in the following jokes as you can.

1."I hear there's a new ***baby*** over at your house, William", said the teacher. "I don't think he's new," ***replied*** William. "The way he cries shows he's had lots of experience".
2. A little boy who had been used to receiving his old brother's old toys and clothes remarked: "Ma, will I have to marry his widow when he ***dies***?"
3. A ***celebrated*** lawyer once said that the three most troublesome clients he ever had were a young lady who ***wanted*** to be married, a married woman who wanted a divorce, and an old ***maid*** who didn't know what she wanted.
4.boss: You are twenty minutes late again. don't you know what time we ***start*** to work here? New Employee: No, sir, they are always at it when I ***get*** here.

5.”Oh, Mummy, I hurt my toe!’ ***cried*** small Janey, who was playing in the garden. “Which toe, dear?” I ***inquired***, as I examined her foot. “My youngest one,” ***sobbed*** Janey.

IV.Carry out definitional and transformational analysis on the following synonyms. Define the types of connotations found in them.

1.Old, elderly, aged, ancient
2.To create, to manufacture, to produce
3.To break, to shatter, to smash
4.To cry, to sob, to weep
5.Battle, combat, fight

V.Prove that synonyms possess a dual nature.

1.to shake – to tremble- to shiver – to shudder.
2. smell – scent – odour – aroma.
3.to walk – to stroll – to saunter – to wander
4.to want – to wish – to desire.
5.weak – feeble – frail – fragile.
6.large – big – great.
7.to jump – to leap – to spring – to skip – to hop.
8. pain – ache – pang – twinge.
9.to discuss – to argue – to debate – to dispute
10.dim – dusky – obscure.

VI.Single out the denotative and connotative components of meanings of the synonyms in the examples given below.

1.a)At the little lady’s command they all three ***smiled.***
b)George, on hearing the story, ***grinned***.

2.a)Forsyte – the best palate in London. The palate that in a sense had made his fortune – the fortunes of the ***celebrated*** tea men...

b)Though not nineteen, she was ***notorious***.

3.a)Noticing that they were no longer ***alone***, he turned and again began examinig the lustre.

b)June had gone. James had said he would be ***lonely***.

4.a)The child was ***shivering*** with cold.

b)The man ***shuddered*** with disgust.

5.a)I'm ***surprised*** at you.

b)He was ***astonished*** at the woman's determination.

6.a)It's impolite to ***stare*** at people like that.

b)The little boys stood ***glaring*** at each other ready to start a fight.

c)The lovers stood ***gazing*** into each other's eyes.

7.a)They produce great amounts of wine but this is not all they ***produce*** in that part.

b)The story was ***fabricated*** from beginning to end.

8.a)He had grown white with ***anger***.

b)"It's a damned shame," forgetting himself in a sudden rush of ***indignation***.

9.a) He was an ***aged*** man, but not yet ***old.***

b).He was an ***elderly*** man at the time of his marriage.

VII.Use the semantic criterion.

1.To shout – to yell – to roar.

2. angry – furious – enraged.

3.alone – solitary – lonely.

4.to shudder – to shiver – to tremble.

5.fear – terror – horror.

6.to cry – to weep – to sob.

7.to walk – to trot – to stroll.

8. to stare – to glare – to gaze.

9. to desire – to wish – to want.

10.to like – to admire – to worship.

VIII. Say why the following synonyms are not interchangeable.

1.a) The little boys stood ***glaring*** at each other ready to start a fight.
b0 the Greek myth runs that Narcissus ***gazed*** at his own reflection in the water until fell in love with it and died.
2.a)She was a ***pretty*** girl of twenty-five, with fair hair and blue eyes.
b)She was a tall, blonde woman, slender, and ***beautiful***.
3.a)I had been brooding over it ever since till I was afraid I should go mad.
b)She'd evidently had time to reflect because when I came again she asked me calmly what it was exactly that I proposed.
4.a)She began to ***sob*** hysterically.
b)Mary is quietly ***weeping*** to Constance with the utmost bewilderment.
5.a)You only ***want*** a car so that you can be independent of me.
b)She ***longed*** with all her heart for him to take her in his arms.
6.a)People turned in the streets and ***stared*** at her with open mouths.
b)He ***peeped*** through the heavy crep curtains that covered them.
7a)He was ***puzzled*** at the letter.
b)I was ***astonished*** at seeing him so changed.
8.a)Many of them had their sleeves rolled up, revealing ***bare*** arms.
b)He saw ***naked*** children playing on the heaps of rubbish.
9.a)There was a ***scent*** of honey from the lime-trees in flowers.
b)The room was permeated with the familiar ***smells*** of dust and yesterday's cooking.

IX.Write out the synonyms in groups and classify them according to types of connotations:

1.He ***shuddered*** at the thought of a meeting that lay before him.
2.He exchanged ***glances*** with a man-eating tiger.
3.He merely ***blushed*** and said he jolly well going to go, because the girl was in Cannes.

4.Gosh, how I used to ***admire*** you at the dear old school. You were my hero.

5.What I really ***want*** is a meal.

6.You get there splendid chaps who were ***worshipped*** by their schoolmates.

7.He resents their cold ***stare***.

8.Her voice was ***trembling*** with excitement.

9.The girl was ***shivering*** with cold.

10.I must confess I'm a little ***surprised***.

11. "A truck driver!" ***shouted*** someone from the audience.

12.You have settled it! cried the ***astonished*** parent.

13.The mothers applauded and the children ***yelled***.

14.His face ***reddened***.

15The audince ***roared*** with laughter.

16. "I ***adore*** you, Mary, he said.

17.I was perfectly ***amazed*** that one man, all by himself, could have been able to beat down them.

18.She ***liked*** going there.

19His eyes ***sparkled*** with happiness.

20Her eyes ***glittered*** with malice.

X.Write out synonymic groups and classify them into : A. synonyms differentiated by evaluative connotations; B. synonyms differentiated by connotation of manner.

1.Jack is a notorious domesticity for John!

2.His eyes sparkled with amusement.

3.I was staggering unevenly towards the peacock.

4.He wanted to peep in but he couldn't.

5.Presently I saw a man strolling along.

6.the will was fabricated.

Exercises are compiled from the book -.Лексикология английского языка – Г.Б. Антрушина, 1999.

Lecture V

The Dominant Synonymy; Euphemism; Antonyms (Antrushina G.B.,, English Lexicology, 1999) იხ.გვერდები 209 – 224).

The attentive listener will have noticed that during our previous lecture much use was made of the synonyms of the verb to look, and yet, the verb to look itself was never mentioned. That does not seem fair because it is, certainly, a verb which possesses the highest frequency of use compared with its synonyms, and so plays an important role in communication. Its role and position in relation to its synonyms is also of some importance as it presents a kind of centre of the group of synonyms, as it were, holding it together.

Its semantic structure is quite simple: it consists only of denotative component and it has no connotations.

All (or, at least, most) synonymic groups have a “central” word of this kind whose

meaning is equal to the denotation common to all the synonymic group. This word is called the dominant synonym.

Here are examples of other dominant synonyms with their groups:

To surprise – to astonish – to amaze – to astound

To shout – to yell – to bellow – to roar

To shine – to flash – to blaze – to gleam – to glisten – to sparkle – to glitter – to shimmer- to glimmer

To tremble – to shiver – to shudder – to shake

To make – to produce – to create – to fabricate – to manufacture

Angry – furious – enraged

Fear – terror – horror

The dominant synonym expresses the notion common to all synonyms of the group in the most general way, without contributing any additional information as to the manner, intensity, duration or any attending feature of the referent. So, any dominant synonym is a typical basic-vocabulary word. Its meaning which is broad and generalized, more or less “covers” the meanings of the rest of synonyms, so that it may be substituted for any of them. It seems that here, at last, the idea of interchangeability of synonyms comes into its own. And yet, each such substitution would mean an irreparable loss of the additional information supplied by connotative components of each synonym. So, using to look instead to glare, to stare, to peep, to peer we preserve the general sense of the utterance but lose a great deal in precision, expressiveness and colour.

Summing up what has been said, the following characteristic features of the dominant synonym can be underlined:

I.High frequency of usage.

II.Broad combinability, i.e. ability to be used in combinations with various classes of words.

III.Broad general meaning

IV. Lack of connotations. (This goes for stylistic connotations as well, so that neutrality as to style is also a typical feature of the dominant synonym.)

Euphemisms

There are words in every language which people instinctively avoid because they are considered indecent, indelicate, rude, too direct or impolite. As the “offensive” referents, for which these words stand, must still be alluded to, they are often described in around-about way, by using substitutes called euphemisms. This device is dictated by social conventions which are sometimes apt to be over-sensitive, see “indecency” where there is none and seek refinement in absurd avoidances and pretentiousness.

The word lavatory has, naturally, produced many euphemisms. Here are some of them: powder room, washroom, restroom, retiring room, (public) comfort station, ladies’ room, gentlemen’s room, water-closet, w.c., public conveniences and even Windsor castle *which is a comical phrase for “deciphering” w.c.).

Pregnancy is another topic for ‘’delicate’’ references. here are some of the euphemisms used as substitutes for the adjective pregnant: in an interesting condition, in a delicate condition, in the family way, with a baby coming, (big) with child, expecting.

The apparently innocent word trousers, not so long ago, had a great number of euphemistic equivalents, some of them quite funny: unmentionables, inexpressibles, indescribables, unwhisperables, you-must-not- mention ‘emes, sit-upons. Nowadays, however, nobody seems to regard this word as “indecent” any more, and so its euphemistic substitutes are no longer in use.

A landlady who refers to her lodgers as paying guests is also using a euphemism, aiming at half-concealing the embarrassing fact that she lets rooms.

The love of affectation, which displays itself in the excessive use of euphemisms, has never been a sign of good taste or genuine refinement. Quite the opposite. Fiction writers have often ridiculed pretentious people for their weak attempts to express themselves in a delicate and refined way.

“Mrs. Sunburry never went to bed, she *retired*” (S.Maugham, “The kite”).

To retire in this ironical passage is a euphemistic substitute for to go to bed.

Another lady, in Rain by the same author, easily surpasses Mrs. Sunburry in the delicacy of her speech. She says that there are so many mosquitoes on the island where the stiry is set that at the governor’s parties “all the ladies are given a pillow-slip to put their – their *lower extremities* in’’.

The speaker considers the word legs to be “indelicate” and substitutes for it its formal synonym lower extremities. The substitution makes her speech pretentious and ridiculous.

Eating is also regarded as unrefined by some minds. Hence, such substitutes as to partake of food (of refreshment), to refresh oneself, to break bread.

There are words which are easy targets for euphemistic substitution. These include words associated with drunkness, which are numerous.

The adjective drunk, for instance, has a great number of such substitutes, some of the “delicate”, but most comical. E.g. *intoxicated* (form.), *under the influence* (form.), *tipsy, mellow, fresh, high, merry, flustered, overcome, full* (coll.), *boiled , fried , tanked , tight, stiff, pickled, soaked, three sheets to the wind, high as a kite, half-seas-over* (slangs).

The following brief quotations gives two more examples of words belonging to the same group:

“Motty was *under the surface*. Completely *sozzled*.’’

In the following extracts we find slang substitutes for two other ‘’unpleasant” words: prison and imprison.

‘’Oh, no, he isn’t ill”, I said, “and as regards accidents, it depends on what you call an accident. He is in chokey.’’

“In what?’’

“In prison.”

" ... And now Mr. Sipperley is in the jug... He couldn't come himself, because he was jugged for biffing a cop''.

Euphemisms may, of course, be used due to genuine concern not to hurt someone's feelings. For instance, a liar can be described as a person who does not always strictly tell the truth and a stupid man can be said to be not exactly brilliant.

All the euphemisms that have been described so far are used to avoid the so-called social taboos. Their use, as has already been said, is inspired by social convention.

Superstitious taboos gave rise to the use of other type of euphemisms. The reluctance to call things by their proper names is also typical of this type of euphemisms, but this time it is based on a deeply – rooted subconscious fear.

Superstitious taboos have their roots in the distant past of mankind when people believed that there was a supernatural link between a name and the object or creature it represented. Therefore, all the words denoting evil spirits, dangerous animals, or the powers of nature were taboo. If uttered, it was believed that unspeakable disasters would result not only for the speaker but also for those near him. That is why all creatures, objects and phenomena threatening danger were referred to in a round-about descriptive way. So, a dangerous animal might be described as the one-lurking-in-the-wood and a mortal disease the black death. Euphemisms are probably the oldest type of synonyms, for it is reasonable to assure that superstitions which caused fear called for the creation of euphemisms long before the need to describe things in their various aspects or subtle shades caused the appearance of other synonyms.

The proverb Speak of the devil and he will appear must have been used and taken quite literally when it was first used, and the fear of calling the devil by name was certainly inherited from ancient superstitious beliefs. So, the word devil became taboo, and a number of euphemisms were substitutes for it: the Prince of Darkness, the Black one, the evil one, dickens (coll.), deuce (coll.), (Old) Nick (coll.).

Even in our modern times, old superstitious fears still lurk behind words associated with death and fatal diseases. People are not superstitious nowadays and yet they are surprisingly reluctant to use the verb to die which has a long chain of both

solemn and humorous substitutes. E.. to pass away, to be taken, to breathe one's last, to depart this life, to close one's eyes, to yield (give) up the ghost, to go the way of all flesh, to go West (sl.), to kick off (sl.), to check out (sl.), to kick the bucket (sl.), to take a ride (sl.), to hop the twig (sl.), to join the majority (sl.).

The slang substitutes seem to lack any proper respect, but the joke is a sort of cover for the same old fear: speak of death and who knows what may happen.

Mental diseases also cause the frequent use of euphemisms.

A mad person may be described as insane, mentally unstable, unbalanced, unhinged, not (quite) right (coll.), not all there (coll.), off one's head (coll.), off one's rocker (coll.), wrong in the upper storey (coll.), having bats in one's belfry (coll.), crazy as a bedbug (coll.), cuckoo (sl.), nutty (sl.0, off one's nut (sl.), loony (sl.), a mental case, a mental defective, etc.

A clinic for such patients can also be discreetly referred to as, for instance, an asylum, sanitarium, sanatorium, (mental) institution, and, less discreetly, as a nut house (sl.), booby hatch (sl.), loony bin (sl.), etc.

The great number of humorous substitutes found such groups of words prove particularly tempting for writers who use them for comical purposes. The following extracts from a children's book by R. Dahl are, probably, not in the best of taste, but they demonstrate the range of colloquial and slang substitutes for the word mad.

"He's gone off his rocker!
"He is balmy!"
"He is nutty!"
"He is screw!"
"He is batty!"
"He is dippy!"
"He is dotty!"
"He is daffy!"
"He is goofy!"
"He is beany!"
"He is buggy!"

“He is loony!”

…”What did I tell you!” – cried Grandam Georgina. “He’s round the twist! He’s bogged as a beetle! He’s dotty as a dingbat! he’s got rats in the roof!...”.

All the above examples show that euphemisms are substitutes for their synonyms. Their use and very existence are caused either by social conventions or by certain psychological factors. Most of them have stylistic connotations in their semantic structures. one can also assume that there is a special euphemistic connotation that can be singled out in the semantic structure of each such word. Let us point out, too, that euphemistic connotations in formal euphemisms are different in “flavour” from those in slang euphemistic substitutes. In the first case they are solemn and delicately evasive, and in the second rough and somewhat cynical, reflecting an attempt to laugh off an unpleasant fact.

Antonyms

We use the term antonyms to indicate words of the same category of parts of speech which have contrasting meanings, such as hot – cold, light – dark, happiness – sorrow, to accept – to reject, up – down.

If synonyms form whole, often numerous groups, antonyms are usually believed to appear in pairs. Yet, this is not quite true in reality. For instance, the adjective cold may be said to have warm for its second antonym, and sorrow may be very well contrasted with gaiety.

On the other hand, a polysemantic word may have an antonym (or several antonyms) for each of its meanings. So, the adjective *dull* has the antonyms interesting, amusing, entertaining for its meaning of “deficient in interest”, *clever, bright, capable* for its meaning of “deficient in intellect”, and *active* for the meaning of “deficient in activity”.

Antonymy is not evenly distributed among the categories of parts of speech. Most antonyms are adjectives which is natural because qualitative characteristics are easily compared and contrasted: high – low, wide – narrow, strong – weak, old – young, friendly – hostile.

Verbs take the second place, so far as antonymy is concerned. Yet, verbal pairs are fewer in number. Here are some of them: to lose – to find, to live – to die, to open – to close, to weep – to laugh.

Nouns are not rich in antonyms, but even so some examples can be given: friend – enemy, joy – grief, good – evil, heaven – earth, love – hatred.

Antonymic adverbs can be subdivided into two groups; a)adverbs derived from adjectives: warmly – coldly, merrily – sadly, loudly – softly; b)adverbs proper: now – then, here – there, ever – never, up – down, in – out.

Not so many years ago antonymy was not universally accepted as a linguistic problem, and the opposition within antonymic pairs was regarded as purely logical and finding no reflection in the semantic structures of these words. The contrast between heat and cold or big and small, said most scholars, is the contrast of things opposed by their very nature. When we were dealing with the problem of synonymy, we emphasized the fact that both the identity and differentiations in words called synonyms can be said to be encoded within their semantic structures. Can the same be said about antonyms? Modern research in the field of antonymy gives a positive answer to this question. Nowadays most scholars agree that in the semantic structures of all words, which regularly occur in antonymic pairs, a special antonymic connotation can be singled out. We are so used to coming across hot and cold together, in the same contexts, that even when we find hot alone, we cannot help subconsciously registering it as not cold, that is, contrast it to its missing antonym. The word possesses its full meaning for us not only due to its direct associations but also because we subconsciously oppose it to its antonym, with which it is regularly used, in this case to hot. Therefore, it is reasonable to suggest that the semantic structure of hot can be said to include the antonymic connotation of “not cold”, and the semantic structure of enemy the connotation of “not a friend”.

It should be stressed once more that we are speaking only about those antonyms which are characterized by common occurrences, that is, which are regularly used in pairs. When two words frequently occur side by side in numerous contexts, subtle and complex associations between them are not at all unusual. These associations are

naturally reflected in the word's semantic structures. Antonymic connotations are a special case of such "reflected associations".

Together with synonyms, antonyms represent the language's important expressive means.

1.Лексикология английского языка – Г.Б. Антрушина, 1999. (Antrushina G.B.,, English Lexicology, 1999) იხ.გვერდები 209 – 224.

2. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Euphemism

3.http://grammar.about.com/od/e/g/euphemismterm.htm

4.http://www.polseguera.com/colaboracion/english/6en.htm

Lecture V. Exercises For Seminars and Independent Work

I.Consider your answers to the following.

1.Which word in a synonymic group is considered to be the dominant synonym? What are its characteristic features?

2.Can the dominant synonym be substituted for certain other members of a group of synonyms? Is the criterion of interchangeability applicable in this case?

3.Which words are called euphemisms? What are their two main types? What function do they perform in speech? What is the effect of overusing euphemisms in speech?

4.Show that euphemisms may be regarded as a subtype of synonyms. Which type of connotation is characteristic to them?

5.which words do we usually classify as antonyms?

6.To which part of speech do most antonyms belong? How do you account for this?

7.Explain what is meant by "reflected associations".

8.Explain why antonyms can be regarded as an important group of the language's expressive means.

II.Find the dominant synonym in the following groups of synonyms.

1.to glimmer – to glisten – to blaze – to shine – to sparkle – to flash – to gleam.
2.to glare – to gaze – to stare – to peep – to peer – to glance.
3.to astound – to surprise – to amaze – to puzzle – to astonish.
4.strange – quaint – odd – queer.
5.to saunter – to stroll – to wander – to walk – to roam.
6.scent – perfume – smell – odour – aroma.
7.to brood – to reflect – to meditate – to think.
8.to fabricate – to manufacture – to produce – to create – to make.
9.furious – enraged – angry.
10.to sob – to weep – to cry.

III.Provide as many synonyms as you can explainig the difference between them; single out their dominant synonyms.

fellows, fight, to reply, little, to want, to yell, man, old, assistance, to say, to answer, baby, to be delighted, to start, to glare, to make, to long, to talk, to die, to cry

IV.Find the dominant synonyms for the following italicized words and prove that they can be used as substitutes. Are they interchangeable? what is lost if we make the substitution?

1.Never for a moment did he interrupt or ***glance*** at his watch.
2.The girl looked ***astonished*** at my ignorance.
3.Sometimes perhaps a tramp will ***wander*** there.
4.I was filled with an intense ***desire*** to please.
5.The restaurant was filled with people who ***chatted*** and laughed.
6.I've got a sister and an ***ancient*** grandmother.
7. A bowl of roses had a depth of colour and ***scent***.
8.He saw newcomers, literally ***staggering*** from the bus.
9.That was really ***odd***.

10. It could be a dream world. So ***pretty***, yet so sad.

V.Find the euphemistic substitutes for the following words: die, drunk, prison, mad, liar, devil, lavatory, eat, pregnant, stupid. Write them out into two columns: A.euphemistic substitutes for social taboos. B. euphemistic substitutes for superstitous taboos.

VI.Find antonyms for the words given below.

Good, adj.; deep, adj.; narrow, adj.; clever, adj.; young, adj.; to love, to reject, to give, strong, adj.; to laugh, joy, n.; evil, n.; slowly, adv.; black, adj.; sad, adj.; to die, to open, clean, adj.; darkness, n.; big, adj.

Exercises are compiled from the book -.Лексикология английского языка – Г.Б. Антрушина, 1999.

Lecture VI

Homonyms:

Words of the Same Form (Antrushina G.B.,, English Lexicology, 1999 pp.166 – 183).

Homonyms are words which are identical in sound and spelling, or, at least, in one of these aspects, but different in their meaning.

E.g. bank, n. – a shore

bank, n. – an institution for receiving, lending, exchanging, and safeguarding money

ball, n. – a sphere; any spherical body

ball, n. – a large dancing party

English vocabulary is rich in such pairs and even groups of words. Their identical forms are mostly accidental: the majority of homonyms coincided due to **phonetic changes** which they suffered during their development.

If synonyms and antonyms can be regarded as the treasury of the language's expressive resources, homonyms are of no interest in this respect, and one cannot expect them to be of particular value for communication. Metaphorically speaking, groups of synonyms and pairs of antonyms are created by the vocabulary system with a particular purpose whereas homonyms are accidental creations, and therefore purposeless.

In the process of communication they are more of an encumbrance, leading sometimes to confusion and misunderstanding. Yet it is this very characteristic which makes them one of the most important sources of popular humour.

The pun is a joke based upon the play upon words of similar form but different meaning (i.e. on homonyms) as in the following:

"A tailor guarantees to give each of his customers a perfect fit."
(The joke is based on the homonyms: 1. fit, n. – perfectly fitting clothes; fit, n. – a nervous spasm.)

Homonyms which are the same in sound and spelling (as the examples given in the beginning of this chapter) are traditionally termed ***homonyms proper.***

The following joke is based on a pun which makes use of another type of homonyms:

"Waiter!"
"Yes, sir."
"What's this?"

“It’s bean soup, sir.”
“Never mind what it has been. I want to know what it is now.”

Bean, n. and been, past part. of to be are **homophones**. As the example shows they are the same in sound but different in spelling. Here are some more examples of homophones:

night, n. – knight, n.; piece, n. – peace, n.; scent, n. – cent, n. – sent, v. (Past Ind. Past Part. of to send); rite, n. – to write, v. – right, adj.; sea, n. – to see. v. – C (the name of a letter).

The third type of homonyms is called **homographs**. These are words which are the same in spelling but different in sound.

E.g. to bow v. – to incline the head or body in salutation
bow n. – a flexible strip of wood for propelling arrows

to lead v. – to conduct on the way, go before to show the way
lead n. – a heavy, rather softy metal

to tear v. – to pull apart or in pieces by force
tear n. – a drop of the fluid secreted by the lachrymal glands of the eye

Sources of Homonyms

One source of homonyms has already been mentioned: **phonetic changes** which words undergo in the course of their historical development. As a result of such changes, two or more words which were formerly pronounced differently may develop identical sound forms and thus become homonyms.

Night and knight, for instance, were not homonyms in Old English as the initial K in the second word was pronounced, and not dropped as it is in its modern sound form:

(kniht). A more complicated change of form brought together another pair of homonyms: to knead (O.E. cnedan) and to need (O.E. neodian).

In O.E. The verb to write had the form of writan, and the adjective right had the forms reht, riht. The noun sea descends from the Old English s e and the verb to see from O.E. seon. The noen work and the verb to work had different forms in O.E.: wyrkean and weork respectively.

Borrowing is another source of homonyms. A borrowed word may, in its final stage of its phonetic adaption, duplicate in form either a native word or another borrowing. In the group of homonyms rite, n. - to write, v. – right, adj. the second and third words are of native origin whereas rite is a Latin borrowing (< Lat. ritus). In the pair bank, n. ("shore") is a native word, and bank, n. (a financial institution") is an Italian borrowing. Fair, adj. (as in a fair deal) is native, and fair, n. (a gathering of buyers and sellers") is a French borrowing. Match, n. (" a game; a contest of skill, strength") is native, and match, n. ("a slender piece of wood used for producing fire") is a French borrowing.

Word-building also contributes significantly to the growth of homonymy, and the most important type in this respect is undoubtedly conversion. such pairs of words as comb, n. – to comb, v., pale, adj. – to pale, v., to make, v. – make, n. are numerous in vocabulary. Homonyms of this type, which are the same in sound and spelling but refer to different categories of parts of speech, are called lexico-grammatical homonyms.

Shortening is a further type of word-building which increases the number of homonyms. E.g. fan, n. in the sense of "an enthusiastic admirer of some kind of sport or of an actor, singer, etc.) is a shortening produced from fanatic. Its homonym is a Latin borrowing fan,n. which denotes an implement for waving lightly to produce a cool current air.

Words made by ***sound-imitation*** can also form pairs of homonyms with other words: e.g. bang, n. ("a loud, sudden, explosive noise") – bang, n. ("a fringe of hair combed over the forehead"). Also, mew, n. ("the sound a cat makes") – mew, n. ("a sea gull) – mew, n. (" a pen in which poultry is fattened") – mews ("small terraced houses in Central London").

The above described sources of homonyms have one important feature in common. In all the mentioned cases the homonyms developed from two or more different words, and their similarity is purely accidental. (In this respect, conversion certainly presents an exception for in pairs of homonyms formed by conversion one word of the pair is produced from the other: a find < to find.)

Now we come to a further source of homonyms which differs essentially from all the above cases. Two or more homonyms can originate from different meanings of the same word when, for some reason, the semantic structure of the word breaks into several parts. This type of formation of homonyms is called split polysemy.

From what has been said about polysemantic words, it should have become clear that the semantic structure of the polysemantic word presents a system within which all its constituent meanings are held together by logical associations. In most cases, the function of the arrangement and the unity is determined by one of the meanings (e.g. the meaning of “flame” in the noun fire.) If this meaning happens to disappear from the word’s semantic structure, associations between the rest of the meanings may be severed, the semantic structure loses its unity and falls into two or more parts which then become accepted as independent lexical units.

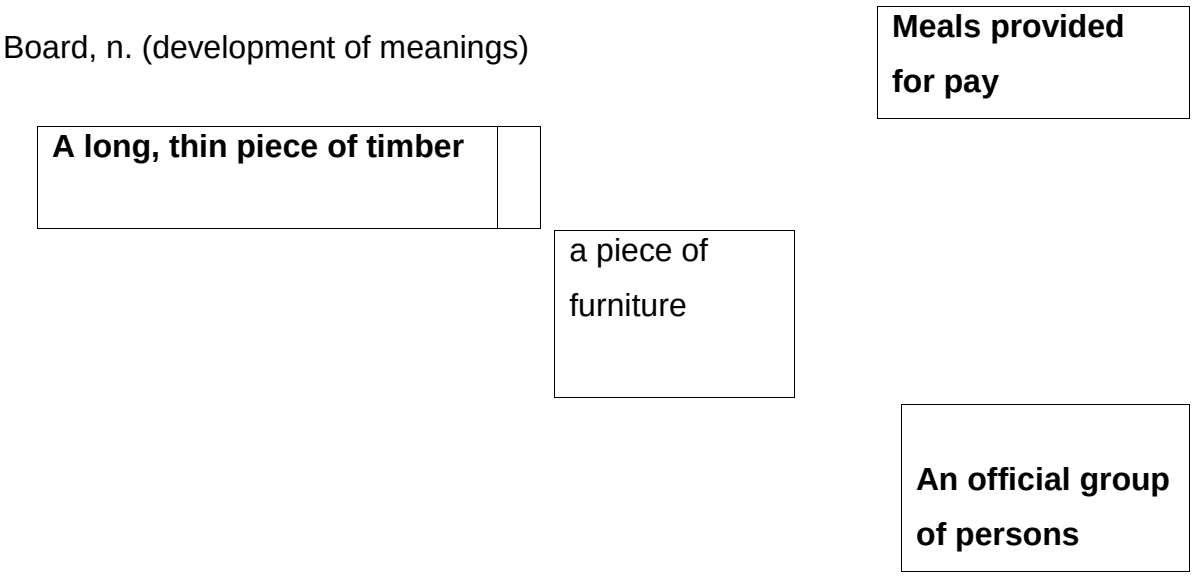
Let us consider the history of three homonyms:

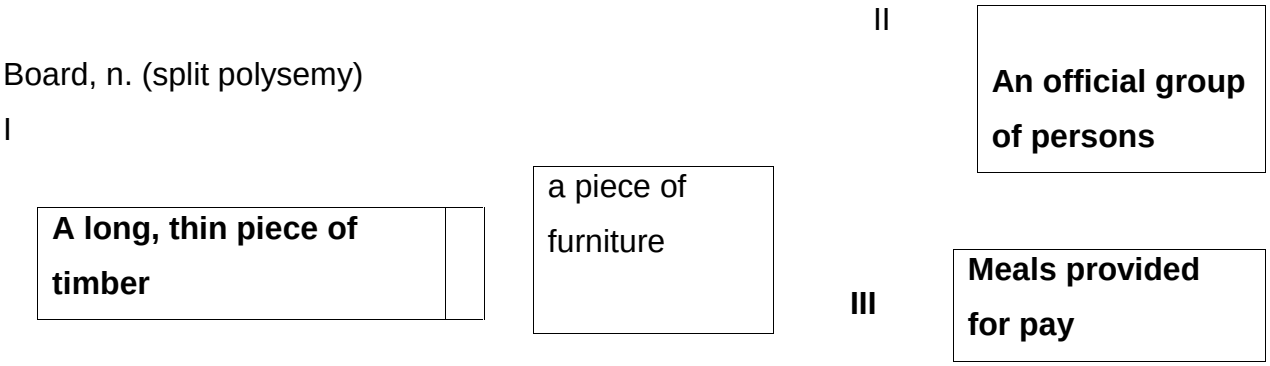
board, n. – a long and thin piece of timber
board, n. – daily meals, esp. as provided for pay, e.g. room and board
board, n. – an official group of persons who direct or supervise some activity, e.g. a board of directors.

It is clear that the meaning of these three words are in no way associated with one another. Yet, most larger dictionaries still enter other meanings “table”. It developed from the meaning “a piece of timber” by transference based on contiguity (association of an object and the material from which it is made). The meanings “meals” and “an official group of persons” developed from the meaning “table”, also by transference based on contiguity: meals are easily associated with a table on which they are served; an official group of people in authority are also likely to discuss their business round a table.

Nowadays, however, the item of furniture, on which meals are served and round which boards of directors meet, is no longer denoted by the word board by the French Norman borrowing table, and board in this meaning, though still registered by some dictionaries, can very well be marked as archaic as it is no longer used in common speech. That is why, with the intrusion of the borrowed table, the word board actually lost its corresponding meaning. But it was just that meaning which served as alink to hold together the rest of the constituent parts of the word's semantic structure. With its diminished role as an element of communication, its role in the semantic structure was also weakened. The speakers almost forgot that board had ever been associated with any item of furniture, nor could they associate the concepts of meals or of a responsible committee with a long thin piece of timber (which is the oldest meaning of board). Consequently, the semantic structure of board was split into three units.

The following scheme illustrates the process:





A somewhat different case of split polysemy may be illustrated by the three following homonyms:

1.spring, n. – the act of springing, a leap

2.spring, n. – a place where a stream of water comes out of the earth

3.spring, n. – a season of the year.

Historically all three nouns originate from the same verb with the meaning of “to jump, to leap” (O.E. springan), so that the meaning of the first homonym is the oldest. The meanings of the second and third homonyms were originally based on metaphor. At the head of a stream the water sometimes leaps up out of the earth, so that metaphorically such a place could well be described as a leap. On the other hand, the season of the year following winter could be poetically defined as a leap from the darkness and cold into sunlight and life. Such metaphors are typical enough of Old English and Middle English semantic transferences but not so characteristic of modern mental and linguistic processes. The poetic associations that lay in the basis of the

semantic shifts described above have long since been forgotten, and an attempt to re-establish the lost links may well seem far-fetched. It is just the near-impossibility of establishing such links that seems to support the claim for homonymy and not for polysemy with these three words.

It should be stressed, however, that split polysemy as a source of homonyms is not accepted by some scholars. It is really difficult sometimes to decide whether a certain word has or has not been subjected to the split of the semantic structure and whether we are dealing with different meanings of the same word or with homonyms, for the criteria are subjective and imprecise. The imprecision is recorded in the data of different dictionaries which often contradict each other on this very issue, so that board is represented as two homonyms in V.K. Muller's dictionary, as three homonyms in V.d. Arakin's and as one and the same word in Hornby's dictionary.

Spring also recieves different treatment. Muller's and Hornby's dictionaries acknowledge but two homonyms: 1. a season of the year, 2)a) the act of springing, a leap, b)a place where a stream of water comes up out of the earth; and some other meanings, whereas Arakin's dictionary presents the three homonyms as given above.

Classification of Homonyms

The subdivision of homonyms into homonyms proper, homophones and homographs is certainly not precise enough and does not reflect certain important features of these words, and, most important of all, their status as parts of speech. The examples given at the beginning of oru lecture show that homonyms may belong both to the same and to different categories of parts of speech. Obviously, a classification of homonyms should reflect this distinctive feature. Also, the paradigm of each word should be considered, because it has been observed that the paradigms of some homonyms coincide completely, and of others only partially.

Accordingly, homonyms can be classified into two large classes: I. full homonyms, II. partial homonyms.

Full lexical homonyms are words which represent the same category of parts of speech and have the same paradigm.

E.g. match, n. – a game, a contest

match, n. – a short piece of wood used for producing fire

A.***Partial homonyms*** are subdivided into three subgroups:

Simple lexico-grammatical partial homonyms are words which belong to the same category of parts of speech. Their paradigms have one identical form, but it is never the same form, as will be seen from the examples.

E.g. (to) found, v.

found, v (Past Indef., Past part. of to find)

to lay, v.

to lay, v. (Past Indef. of to lie)

to bound, v.

to bound, v. (Past Indef., Past part. of to bind)

B.***Complex lexico-grammatical partial homonyms*** are words of different categories of parts of speech which have one identical form of their paradigms.

E.g. rose, n.

rose, v. (past ind. of to rise)

maid, n.

made, v. (Past Ind. Past Part. of to make)

left, adj.

left, v. (Past Ind. Past Part. of to leave)

bean, n

been, v. (Past Ind. Past Part. of to be)

one, num.

won, v. (Past Ind. Past Part. of to win)

C.***Partial lexical homonyms*** are words of the same category of parts of speech which are identical only in their corresponding forms.

E.g. to lie (lay, lain)

to lie (lied, lied)

to hang (hung, hung)

to hang (hanged, hanged)

to can (canned, canned)

can (could)

1.Лексикология английского языка – Г.Б. Антрушина, 1999. (Antrushina G.B.,, English Lexicology, 1999) იხ.გვერდები 166 – 183.

2. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homonym

3.http://a4esl.org/q/h/homonyms.html

4. http://www.enchantedlearning.com/english/homonyms/

5. http://www.manythings.org/fq/1/9994.html

Lecture VI. Exercises for Seminars and independent Work

I. Consider your answers to the following.

1.Which words do we call homonyms?
2. Why can't homonyms be regarded as expressive means of the language?
3.What is the traditional classification of homonyms? Illustrate your answer with examples.
4.What are the distinctive features of other classification of homonyms?
5.What are the main sources of homonyms? Illustrate your answer with examples.
6.In what respect does split polysemy stand apart from other sources of homonyms?
7. What is the essential difference between homonymy and polisemy? What do they have in common? Illustrate your answer with examples.

II. Find the homonyms in the following extracts. Classify them into homonyms proper, homographs and homophones.

1."Mine is along and a sad tale!" said the Mouse, turning to Alice, and sighing. "It is a long tail, certainly", said Alice, looking down with wonder at the Mouse's tail; "but why do you call it sad?"
2.a)My seat was in the middle of the row.
b)"I say, you haven't had a row with John, have you?"
3.a)Our Institue football team got a challenge to a match from the University team and we accepted it.
b)Somebody struck a match so we could see each other.
4.a) It was nearly December but the California sun made a summer morning of the season.
b)On the way home Crane drove like a nervous old maid.
5.a)She loved to dance and had every right to expect the boy she was seeing almost every night in the week to take her dancing at least once on the weekend.
b)"That's right", she said.
6.a)Do you always forget to wind up your watch?
b) Crane had an old Ford which rattled so much and the wind made so much noise.

7.a) In Brittany there was once a knight called Eliduc.

b)she looked up through the window at the night.

8.a)He had a funny round face.

b)My house faces the south.

9.a)She didn’ t shake his hand because she didn’t shake cowards’ hands, see, and somebody else was elected captain.

b)Mel’s plane had been shot down into the sea.

10.a)He knew which way his experimental bread was buttered on.

b)His wife was as finely bred as she was faithful to him.

11. a)He was growing deaf in the left ear.

b)I understod that he had left the territory.

12.a)Iron and lead are base metals.

b)Where does the road lead.

III. On what linguistic phenomena is the joke in the following extract based? What causes the misunderstanding.

1.”Are your father and mother in?” asked the visitor of the small boy who opened the door.

“They was in”, said the child, “but they is out”.

“They was in”, they is out”. where’s your grammar?”

“She’s gone upstairs,” said the boy, “for a nap”.

2.Husband and wife were enjoying a quiet evening by their fireside, he deep in his book and she in a crossword puzzle. Suddenly she questioned him:

“Darling, what is a female sheep?”

Ewe, he replied. His further explanation hardly soothed her.

3.”I spent last summer in a very pretty city in Switzerland.”

“Berne?”

“No, I almost froze.”

4.Officer (to driver in parked car): Don't you see that sign "Fine for parking"?
Driver: Yes, officer, I see and agree with it.

IV.Find the homonyms proper for the following words and give definitions:

1.band – a company of musicians.
2.seal – a warm-blooded, fish-eating sea animal.
3.ear – the grain-bearing spike of a cereal plant.
4.corn – a hard, horny thickening of the skin, esp. on foot.
5.fall – the act of falling, dropping or coming down.
6.to hail – to greet, salute, shout an expression of welcome.
7.draw – something that attracts attention.

b.Find the homophones to the following words and give definitions

Heir, dye, tale, sea, week, peace, sun, meat, steel, knight, sum, coarse, write, sight, hare.

c.Find the homographs to the following words and give definitions

1.to bow – to bend the head or body
2.wind – air in motion
3.to tear – to pull apart by force
4.to desert – to go away from a person or place.
5.row – a number of persons or things in a line.

V. Classify the following italicized homonyms. Use modern classification system.

1.a) He should give the ball in your honour as the bride.
b)the boy was playing with a ball

2.a)He wished he could explain about his left ear.

b)He left the sentence unfinished.

3.a)I wish you could stop lying.

b)The yellow mouse was still dead, lying as it had fallen in the crystal clear liquid.

4.a)This time, he turned on the light.

b)He wore suits with light ties and he was a man you should instinctively trust anywhere.

5.a)When he is at the door of her room, he sends the page ahead.

b)Open your books at page 20.

6.a) His voice rose for the first time.

b)I'll send you roses, one rose for each year of your life.

7.a)The pain was more than he could bear.

b)Catch the bear before you sell the skin

8.a) To can means to put up in airtight tins or jars for preservation.

b)A man can die but once.

VI. Explain how the following italicized words became homonyms

1.a)The king of Brittany was very fond of the knight.

b)"I haven't slept a wink all night, my eyes just wouldn't shut."

2.a)The tiger did not spring, and so I'm still alive.

b)It was there, on a hot night in spring.

3.a)She left her fan at home.

b)John is a football fan.

4.a)See if it pleases him.

b)Eliduc rode to the sea.

5.a)The teacher told the students to write an essay about the last football match.

b)Give me a match, please.

6.a)You are not right!

b)I will write letters to you.

7.a)The verb to knead means to mix and make into mass, with the hands or by machinery, especially, mix flour into dough for making bread.

b)No need to give up hope so soon.

8.a)Ads in America are ubiquitous.

b)Add a few more onions.

9a)Your work is so interesting!

b)He works too much.

Exercises are compiled from the book -.Лексикология английского языка – Г.Б. Антрушина, 1999.

Lecture 7 Test

Lecture 8

The Etymology of English Words (Prentice Hall Literature, Cambridge University Press, 1999, pp 4 – 10); (Antrushina G.B.,, English Lexicology, 1999 44 – 75).

A person who does not know English but knows French (Italian, Latin Spanish) is certain to recognize a great number of familiar-looking words when skipping through an English book.

It is true that English vocabulary, which is one of the most extensive amongst the world's languages, contains an immense number of words of foreign origin. Explanations for this should be sought in the history of the language which is closely connected with the history of the nation speaking the language. In order to have a better understanding of the problem, it will be necessary to go through a brief survey of some historical facts, relating to different epochs.

* * *

The first century B.C. The conquerors of Britain were far more sophisticated Romans. In 55 BC and again next year, the Roman general Julius Caesar made hasty invasions. The true conquest of Britain however occurred nearly one hundred years later. Disciplined Roman legions spread out over the island, establishing camps that soon grew into towns. Roman rule for Britain lasted for more than 300 hundred years. It

ended only when northern European tribes invaded Italy and increased pressure on Rome itself. The last Roman legions departed from Britain to defend Rome in A.D. 407. In the first century among the inhabitants of the continent were Germanic tribes, “barbarians” as arrogant Romans called them. Theirs was really a rather primitive stage of development, especially if compared with the high civilization and refinement of Rome. Local inhabitants were primitive cattle-breeders and knew almost nothing about land cultivation. Their tribal languages contained only Indo-European and Germanic elements.

After a number of wars between the Germanic tribes and the Romans these two opposing peoples came into peaceful contact. Trade was carried on, and the Germanic people gained knowledge of new and useful things. The first among them were new things to eat. The only products of Germanic cattle-breeding were milk and meat. It was from the Romans that they learned how to make butter and cheese and, as there were naturally no words for these foodstuffs in their tribal languages, they used the Latin words to name them. It is also to the Romans that the Germanic tribes owe the knowledge of some new fruits and vegetables of which they had no idea before, and the Latin names of the fruits and vegetables enter their vocabularies reflecting this new knowledge: cherry (Lat cerasum), pear (Lat. pirum), plum (Lat. prunus), pea (Lat. pisum), beet (Lat. beta), pepper (Lat. piper), plant (Lat. planta).

Some more examples of Latin borrowings of this period are: cup (cuppa), kitchen (coquina), mill (molina), port (portus), wine (vinum).

The fifth century A.D. Several of the Germanic tribes (the most numerous amongst them the Angles, the Saxons, and the Jutes) migrated across the sea now known as the English Channel to the British Isles. There they were confronted by the Celts, the original inhabitants of these isles. The Celts desperately defended their country against the invaders. Finally they retreated to the North and South-West (modern Scotland, Wales and Cornwall). Through their numerous contacts with the Celts, the conquerors got to know and assimilated a number of Celtic words (bald, down, glen, cradle). Especially numerous among the Celtic borrowings were place names, names of rivers, hills, etc. The Germanic tribes occupied the land, but the names of many parts and

features of their territory remained Celtic. Even the name of the English capital originates from Celtic Llyn (river) + dun (fortified hill), the meaning of the whole being “fortress on the hill over the river”.

Some Latin words entered the Anglo-Saxon languages through Celtic, among them such widely-used words as street (Lat. strata via) and wall (Lat. vallum).

The seventh century A.D. This century was signified for the christianization of England. Latin was the official language of the christian church, and consequently the spread of christianity was accompanied by a new period of Latin borrowings. These no longer came from spoken Latin as they did eight centuries earlier, but from church Latin. Also, these new Latin borrowings were very different in meaning from the earlier ones. They mostly indicated persons, objects and ideas associated with church and religious rituals. E.g. priest (Lat. presbyter), bishop (lat.episcopus), monk (Lat. monachus), nun (nonna), candle (candela).

Also, educational terms were borrowed for the first schools in England were church schools, and the first teachers priests and monks. The very word school is a latin borrowing (schola, of Greek origin) and so are such words as scholar (scholaris) and magister (magister).

From the end of the 8th century to the middle of the 11th century. England underwent several Scandinavian invasions which inevitably left the trace on English vocabulary. Here are some examples of early Scandinavian borrowings: call take, cast, die, law, husband, window, loose, low, weak.

Some of the words of this group are easily recognizable as Scandinavian borrowings by the initial sk combination. e.g. sky, skin, ski, skirt.

Some English words changed their meanings under the influence of Scandinavian words of the same root. O.E. bread meant “piece” acquired its modern meaning by association with the Scandinavian braud. The O.E. dream which meant “joy” assimilated the meaning of the Scandinavian draumr.

1066. With the famous Battle of Hastings, when the English were defeated by the Normans under William the Conqueror, we come to the eventful epoch of the Norman conquest. The epoch can well be called eventful not only in national, social, political and human terms, but also in linguistic terms. England became a bi-lingual country, and the impact on the English vocabulary made over this two-hundred-years period is immense: French words from the Norman dialect penetrated every aspect of social life. Here is a very brief list of Norman French borrowings:

Administrative words: state, government, parliament, council, power.
Legal terms: court, judge, justice, crime, prison
Military terms: army, war, soldier, officer, battle, enemy.
Educational terms: pupil, lesson, library, science, pen, pencil.

Everyday life was also affected by the powerful influence of French words. e.g. table, plate, saucer, dinner, supper, river, autumn, uncle.

The Renaissance Period. In England, as in all European countries, this period was marked by significant developments in science, art, culture and, also, by a revival of interest in the ancient civilizations of Greece and Rome and their languages. Hence, there occurred a considerable number of Latin and Greek borrowings. In contrast to the earliest Latin borrowings (1st B.C.), the Renaissance ones were rarely concrete names. They were mostly abstract words (major, minor, moderate, intelligent, permanent, to elect, to create). There were naturally numerous scientific and artistic terms (datum, status, phenomenon, philosophy, method, music). The same is true of Greek Renaissance borrowings (atom, cycle, ethics, esthete).

The Renaissance was a period of extensive cultural contacts between the major European states. Therefore, it was only natural that new words also entered the English vocabulary from other European languages. The most significant once more were French borrowings. This time they came from the Parisian dialect of French and are known as Parisian borrowings. Examples: regime, routine, machine, police, ballet,

matinee, scene, technique, bourgeous, etc. Italian also contributed a considerable number of words to English, piano, violin, opera, alarm, colonel.

* * *

The historical survey is far from complete. Its aim is to give just a general idea of the ways in which English vocabulary developed. There are certain structural features which enable us to identify some words as borrowings and even to determine the source language.

1.Latin Affixes

The suffix –ion	communion, legion, opinion, session, union, etc.
The suffix –tion	relation, revolution, starvation, temptation, unification
The suffix –ate	appreciate, create, congratulate
the remnant suffix –ct	act, conduct, collect, connect
The remnant suffix –d(e)	applaud, divide, exclude, include
The prefix –dis	disable, distract, disagree
The suffix –able	detestable, curable
The suffix –ate	accurate, desperate, graduate
the suffix –ant	arrogant, constant, importanr
The suffix –ent	absent, convenient, decent, evident
The suffix –or	major, minor, junior, senior
The suffix –al	cordial, final, fraternal, maternal
The suffix –ar	lunar, solar, familiar

French Affixes

The suffix –ance	arrogance, endurance, hindrance
The suffix –ence	consequence, intelligence, patience
The suffix –ment	appointment, development, experiment
The suffix –age	courage, marriage, passage, village
The suffix –ess	tigress, lioness, actress
The suffix –ous	curious, dangerous, joyous, serious
The Prefix en-	enable, enact, enslave

It seems advisable to sum up what has been said in a table

The Etymological Structure of English Vocabulary

The native element	The borrowed element

1.Indo-European element 2.Germanic element 3.English Proper element (no earlier than 5th c. A.D.)	1.Celtic (5th –6th c. A.D.) 2.Latin 1st group:1st c. B.C. 2nd group: 7th c. A.D. 3rd group: the Renaisance period 3.Scandinavian (8th – 11th c. A.d) 4.French 1.Norman borrowings 11th – 13th c A.D. 2.Parisian borrowings (Renaisance) 5.Greek (Renaisance) 6.Italian (Renaisance and later) 7.Spanish (Renaisance and later) 8. German 9.Indian 10.Russian

Modern scholars estimate the percentage of borrowed words in the English vocabulary at 65-70 per cent which is exceptionally high figure. This anomaly is explained by the country's eventful history and by its many international contacts.

On a straight vocabulary count, considering the high percentage of borrowed words, one would have to classify English as a language of international origin or, at least, a Romance one (as French and Latin words prevail). but here another factor comes into play, the relative frequency of occurrence of words, and it is under the heading that the native Anglo-Saxon heritage comes into its own. The native element comprises a large number of high-frequency words like the articles, prepositions, pronouns, conjunctions,

auxiliaries and, also, words denoting everyday objects and ideas (house, water, go, come, eat, good, bad, etc).

Furthermore, the grammatical structure is essentially Germanic having remained unaffected by foreign influence.

The first column consists of three groups, only third being dated. As to the Indo-European and Germanic groups, they are so old that they cannot be dated. It was mentioned that the tribal languages of the Angles, the Saxons, the Jutes, by the time of their migration, contained only words of Indo-European and Germanic roots plus a certain number of the earliest Latin borrowings

By the ***Indo-European element*** are meant words of roots common to all or most languages of the Indo-European group. English words of this group denote elementary concepts without which no human communication would be possible. The following groups can be identified:

1.Family relations: father, mother, brother, son, daughter
2.parts of the human body: foot, nose, lip, heart.
3.Animals: cow, swine, goose
4.Plants: tree, birch, corn,
5.Time of day: day, night
6.Heavenly bodies: sun, moon, star
7.Numerous adjectives: red, new, glad, sad
8.The numerals from one to a hundred
9.Pronouns – personal (except they which is Scandinavian); demonstrative
10.Numerous verbs: be, stand, sit, eat, know.

The Germanic element represents words of roots common to all or most Germanic languages. Some of the main groups of Germanic words are the same as in the Indo-European element.

1.Parts of the human body: head, hand, arm, finger, bone
2.Animal:bear, fox, calf

3.Plants:oak, fir, grass

4.Natural phenomena: rain, frost

5.Serasons of the year (only autumn is the French borrowing)

6.Landscape features: sea, land

7.Human dwellings and furniture: house, room, bench

8.Sea-going vessels: boat, ship

9.Adjectives:green, blue, grey, white, small, thick, high, old, good

10.Verbs: see, hear, speak, tell, say, answer, make, give, drink

It has been mentioned that the English Proper element is, in certain respects, opposed to the first two groups. These words have distinctive feature: they are specifically English having no cognates (words of the same etymological root, of common origin) in other languages whereas for Indo-European and Germanic words such cognates can always be found (star: germ. stella: Lat).

Here are some examples of English proper words. These words stand quite alone in the vocabulary system of Indo-European languages: bird, boy, girl, lord, lady, woman, daisy, always.

It should be also taken into consideration that the English proper element also contains all the later formations, that is, words, which were made after the 5th c. according to English word-building patterns both from native and borrowed morphemes. For instance, the adjective beautiful built from the French borrowed root and the native suffix belongs to the English proper element. It is natural, that the quantity of such words is immense.

1.Лексикология английского языка – Г.Б. Антрушина, 1999. (Antrushina G.B.,, English Lexicology, 1999) იხ. გვერდები 44 – 75.

2.Prentice Hall Literature, Cambridge University Press, 1999. იხ.გვედები 4 – 10.

3. http://ancienthistory.about.com/od/etymology/a/021810aaetymologyprefixes.htm

4. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Etymology

5.http://www.wordsources.info/

Exercises for Seminars

I. Consider your answers to the following.

1.How can you account for the fact that English vocabulary contains such an immense number of words of foreign origin?
2.What is the earliest group of English borrowings?
3.What Celtic borrowings are there in English?
4.Which words were introduced into English vocabulary during the period of Christianization?
5.What are the characteristic features of Scandinavian borrowing?
6.When and under what circumstances did England become a bi-lingual country? What imprint features were left in English vocabulary by this period?
7.What are the characteristic features of words borrowed into English during the Renaissance?
8.What suffixes and prefixes can help you to recognize words of Latin and French origin?
9.What is meant by the native element of English vocabulary?

II.Subdivide all the following words of native origin into: a)Indo-European b)Germanic c)English Proper.

Daughter, woman, room, land, cow, moon, sea, red, spring, three, I lady, always, goose, bear, fox, lord, tree, nose, birch, grey, old, glad, daisy, heart, hand, night, to eat, to see, to make.

III.Explain the etymology of the italicized words.

1.He dropped around to the ***girl's house*** and as he ran up the steps he was confronted by her ***little brother***.

"Hi, Billy."

"Hi," said the brat.

"Is your ***sister*** expecting me?"

"Yeah."

"How do you know that?"

'she's gone out".

2.***A man*** was at the theatre. He was sitting behind two ***women*** whose continuous chatter became more he could bear. Leaning forward, he tapped one of them on the shoulder.

"Pardon me, madam. But I can't ***hear***."

"You are not supposed to – this is a private conversation".

IV.Find examples of Latin borrowings

1.The garden here consisted of a long smooth lawn with two rows of cherry trees planted in the grass.

2.They set to pork-pies, cold potatoes, hard-boiled eggs, cold bacon, ham, crabs, cheese, butter, cherry-tarts, bread, sausages.

3.A cold wind knifing through downtown streets penetrated the thin coat she had on.

4.On the morning of burial – taking no chances – an archbishop, a bishop and a monsignor concelebrated a Mass of the Resurrection. A full choir intoned responses to prayers with reassuring volumes.

5.I made way to the kitchen door which gave on to the fire-escape.

6."Could you interrupt your speech and pour more wine?"

7.All her life worked to schedule; like a nun, she would have been lost without her watch

V.How can the Scandinavian borrowings be identified?

1.She was wearing a long blue skirt and a white blouse.
2.Two eyes like winter windows, glared at him.
3.The sun was high, the sky unclouded.
4.You are looking for a husband, not a servant, ma'am.

VI.Explain the etymology of the following words.

Sputnik, kindergarten, opera, potato, tomato, czar, violin, coffee, cocoa, colonel, alarm, cargo, banana, balalaika.

Exercises are compiled from the book -.Лексикология английского языка – Г.Б. Антрушина, 1999.

Lecture 9

Phraseology: Word-Groups with Transferred Meanings (Antrushina G.B.,, English Lexicology, 1999) იხ. გვერდები 225 – 241).

Phraseology is the branch of lexicology specializing in word-groups which are characterized by stability of structure and transferred meaning, e.g. to take the bull by the horns, to see red, etc.

Phraseological units, or idioms, as they are called by most western scholars, represent what can probably be described as the most picturesque, colourful and expressive part of the language's vocabulary.

If synonyms can be figuratively referred to as the tints and colours of the vocabulary, then phraseology is a kind of picture gallery in which are collected vivid and amusing sketches of the nation's customs, traditions, and prejudices, recollections of its past history, scraps of folk songs and fairy-tales.

And what a variety of odd and grotesque images, figures and personalities one finds in this amazing picture gallery: dark horses, white elephants, bulls in china shops and green-eyed monsters, cats escaping from beds or looking at kings, dogs barking up the wrong tree and men either wearing their hearts on their sleeves or having them in their mouths or even in their boots. Sometimes this parade of funny animals and quaint human beings looks more like a hilarious fancy-dress ball than a peaceful picture gallery and it is really pity that the only interest some scholars seem to take in it is whether the leading component of the idiom is expressed by a verb or a noun.

The metaphor fancy-dress ball may seem far-fetched to skeptical minds, and yet it aptly reflects a very important feature of the linguistic phenomenon under discussion: most participants of carnival, if we accept the metaphor, wear masks, are disguised as something or somebody else. Word-groups known as phraseological units or idioms are characterized by a double sense: the current meanings of constituent words build up a certain picture, but the actual meaning of the whole unit has little or nothing to do with that picture, in itself creating an entirely new image.

So, a dark horse mentioned above is actually not a horse but a person about whom no one knows anything definite, and so one is not sure what can be expected from him. The imagery of a bull in a china shop lies very much on the surface: the idiom describes a clumsy person. A white elephant, however, is not even a person but a valuable object, which involves great expense or trouble for its owner. The green-eyed monster is jealousy, the image drawn from Othello (Iago's words from Act III, Sc. 3). To let the cat out of the bag has actually nothing to do with cats, but means simply "to let some secret become known". In to bark up the wrong tree (Am.), the current meanings of the constituents create a vivid picture of a foolish dog sitting under a tree and barking at it. But the actual meaning of the idiom is "to follow a false scent; to look for somebody or something in a wrong place; to expect from somebody what he is unlikely to do". The idiom is frequently used in detective stories: The police are barking up the wrong tree as usual (i.e. they suspect somebody who has nothing to do with the crime).

The ambiguousness of these interesting word-groups may lead to an amusing misunderstanding, especially for children who are apt to accept words at their face value.

little Johnnie: (crying): Mummy, mummy, my auntie Jane is dead.

Mother: Nonsense, child! She phoned me exactly five minutes ago.

Johnnie: But I heard Mrs. white that her neighbors cut her dead.

(To cut somebody dead means “to rudely ignore somebody; to pretend not to know or recognize him”.)

Puns are frequently based on ambiguousness of idioms:

“Isn’t our Kitty a marvel! I wish you could have seen her at the party yesterday. If I’d collected all the bricks she dropped all over the place, I could build a villa.”

(To drop a brick means “to say unintentionally a quite indiscreet or tactless thing that shocks and offends people”.)

So together with synonymy and antonymy, phraseology represents expressive resourses of the vocabulary.

V.H. Collins writes in his Book of English idioms: “In standard spoken and written English today idiom is an established and essential element that, used with care, ornaments and enriches the language.”

Use with care is an important warning because speech overloaded with idioms loses its freshness and originality. Idioms, after all, are ready-made speech units, and their continual repetition sometimes wears them out: they lose their colours and become trite cliches. Such idioms can hardly be said “to ornament” or “enrich the language”.

On the other hand, oral or written speech lacking idioms loses its expresiveness, colour and emotional force.

In modern linguistics, there is considerable confusion about the terminology associated with these word-groups: phraseological units, idioms. There are some other terms denoting more or less the same linguistic phenomenon.: set-expressions, set-phrases, phrases, fixed word-groups, collocations.

The confusion in the terminology reflects insufficiency of positive or wholly reliable criteria by which phraseological units can be distinguished from “ free” word-groups.

It should be pointed out at once that the “freedom” of free word-groups is relative and arbitrary. Nothing is entirely “free” in speech and its linear relationships ar governed, restricted and regulated, on the one hand, by requirements of logic and common sense, and on the other, by the rules of grammar and combinability. One can speak of the black-eyed girl but not of a black-eyed table (unless a piece of modernist poetry where everything is possible). Also, to say that a child was glad is quite correct, but a glad child is wrong because in modern English glad is attributively used only with a very limited number of nouns (e.g. glad news), and names of persons are not among them.

Free word-groups are so called not because of any absolute freedom in using them but simply because they are each time built up anew in the special process whereas idioms are used as ready-made units with fixed and constant structures.

How to Distinguish Phraseological Units from Free Word-Groups

This is probably the most discussed – and the most controversial – problem in the field of phraseology. The task of distinguishing between free word-groups and phraseological units is further complicated by the existence of a great number of marginal cases, the so-called semi-fixed or semi-free word-groups, also called non-phraseological word-groups which share with phraseological units their structural stability but lack their semantic unity and figurativeness (to go to school, to go by bus, to commit suicide).

There are two major criteria for distinguishing between phraseological units and free word-groups: semantic and structural.

Compare the following examples:

A.Cambridge don: I’m told they are inviting more American professors to this university. Isn’ it rather carrying coals to Newcastle?

(To carry coals to Newcastle means “to take something to a place where it is already plentiful and not needed”.)

B.This cargo ship is carrying coal to Liverpool.

The first thing that captures the eye is the semantic difference of the two word-groups consisting of the same essential constituents. In the second sentence the free word-group is carrying coal is used in the direct sense, the word coal standing for hard, black coal and carry for the plain process of taking something from one place to another. The first context quite obviously has nothing to do with either with coal or with transporting it, and the meaning of the whole word-group something entirely new and far removed from the current meanings of the constituents.

The semantic shift affecting phraseological units does not consist in a mere change of meanings of each separate constituent part of the unit. The meanings of the constituents merge to produce an entirely new meaning: e.g. to have a bee in one's bonnet means "to have an obsession about something"; "to be eccentric or a bit mad". The humorous metaphoric comparison with a person who is distracted by a bee continually buzzing under his cap has become erased and half-forgotten, and the speakers using the expression hardly think of bees or bonnets but accept it in its transferred sense: "obsessed, eccentric".

That is what is meant when phraseological units are said to be characterized by semantic unity. In the traditional approach, phraseological units have been defined as word-groups conveying a single concept (whereas in free word-groups each meaningful component stands for a separate concept).

It is this feature that makes phraseological units similar to words: both words and phraseological units possess semantic unity. Yet, words are also characterized by structural unity which phraseological units lack being combinations of words..

That is why we can conclude that we must accept the semantic criterion of distinguishing units from free word-groups as the major one.

The structural criterion also brings forth the distinctive features characterizing phraseological units and contrasting them to free word-groups.

Structural invariability is an essential feature of phraseological units, though, as we shall see, some of them possess it to a lesser degree than others. Structural invariability finds expression in a number of restrictions.

1.***Restriction in substitution***.

As a rule, no word can be substituted for any meaningful component of a phraseological unit without destroying its sense. The idiom to give somebody a cold shoulder means " to treat somebody coldly, to ignore or cut him", but a warm shoulder or a cold elbow make no sense at all. The meaning of a bee in smb's bonnet has been explained, but a bee in smb's hat would sound a silly error, one of those absurd slips that people are apt to make when speaking a foreign language.

At the same time, in free word-groups substitution does not present any dangers and does not lead to any serious consequences. in the cargo ship is carrying coal to Liverpool all the components can be changed: The ship\vessel\boat carries\transports\brings coal to (any port).

2. **R*estriction in Introducing Additional Components***. The second type of restriction is the ***restriction in introducing any additional*** components into the structure of a phraseological unit.

In a free word-group such changes can be made without affecting the general meaning of the utterance: This big ship is carrying a large cargo of coal to the port of Liverpool.

In the phraseological unit to carry coals to Newcastle no additional components can be introduced. Nor can one speak of the big white elephant (of course when using the white elephant in its phraseological sense) or about somebody having his heart in his brown boots.

Though, in fiction we meet variations of idioms for stylistic purposes. For example, in Vanity Fair W.Thackeray uses the idiom to build a castle in the air like that:

"While dressing for dinner, she built for herself a most significant castle in the air of which she was the mistress".

But in oral speech phraseological units mostly preserve their traditional structures and resist the introduction of additioanal components.

3. ***Grammatical Invariability***. The third type of structural restrictions in phraseological units is ***grammatical invariability***. Sometimes students make typical mistake for foreigners by using the plural form in “to find fault with smb”. (e.g.The teacher always finds faults with the boy). Though the plural form in this context is well-founded, it is amistake in terms of the grammatical invariability of phraseological units. A similar typical mistake often occurs on the unit from head to foot. Students are apt to use the plural form of foot in this phrase.

Yet again, as in the case of restriction in introducing additional components, there are exceptions to the rule, and these are probably even more numerous.

One can build a castle in the air, but also castles. A shameful or dangerous family secret is described as skeleton in the cupboard, the, the first substantive component being frequently and easily used in the plural form, as in: I’m sure they have skeletons in every cupboard! A black sheep is a disreputable member of a family who , in especially serious cases, may be described as the blackest sheep of the family.

Completely or partially transferred meaning

According to A.Koonin, “A phraseological unit is a stable word-group characterized by a completely or partially transferred meaning”.

This definition clearly suggests that the degree of semantic change in a phraseological unit may vary (completely, or partially). In actual fact the semantic change may affect either the whole word-group or only one of its components. The following phraseological units represent the first case: to skate on thin ice (= to put oneself in a dangerous position); to take risks); to wear one’s heart on one’s sleeve (= to expose, so that everybody knows, one’s most intimate feelings); to have one’s heart in one’s boots (= to be deeply depressed, anxious about something); to have one’s heart in one’s mouth (= to be greatly alarmed by what is expected to happen); to have one’s heart in the right place (= to be a good, honest and generous fellow); a crow in borrowed plumes (= a person pretentiously and unsuitably dressed); a wolf in a sheep’s clothing (= a dangerous enemy who plausably poses as a friend).

The second type is represented by phraseological units in which one of the components preserves its current meaning and the other is used in a transferred meaning: to lose (to keep) one’s temper, to fly into a temper, to fall ill, to fall in love (out

of love), to stick to one's word (promise), to arrive at a conclusion, bosom friends, shop talk (also to talk shop), small talk.

Here, though, we are on dangerous ground because the border-line dividing phraseological units with partially changed meanings from the so-called semi-fixed or non-phraseological word-groups (marginal cases) is uncertain and confusing.

The term "idiom" is mostly applied to phraseological units completely units with completely transferred meanings, that is, to the ones in which the meaning of the whole unit does not correspond to the current meanings of the components. There are many scholars who regard idioms as the essence of phraseology and the major focus of interest in phraseology research.

Proverbs

We never know the value of water till the well is dry.
You can take the horse to the water, but you cannot make him drink.
Those who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones.

Even these few examples show that proverbs are different from phraseological units. the first distinctive feature that strikes one is the obvious structural dissimilarity. Phraseological units, as we have seen, are a kind of ready-made blocks which fit into the structure of a sentence performing a certain syntactical function, more or less as words do.

Proverbs if viewed in their structural aspect, are sentences.

If one compares them in the semantic aspect, the difference seems to become even more obvious. Proverbs may be compared with minute fables for, like the latter, they sum up the collective experience of the community. They moralize (Hell is paved with good intentions), give advice (Don't judge a tree by its bark), give warning (If you sing before breakfast, you will cry before night), admonish (Liars should have good memories), criticize (Everyone calls his won geese swans).

No phraseological unit does any of these things. They do not stand for whole statement as proverbs do but for a single concept. Their function in speech is purely

nominative (i.e. they denote an object, an act, etc.). The function of proverbs is communicative (i.e. they impart certain information).

The question whether or not proverbs should be regarded as a subtype of phraseological units and studied together with phraseology of a language is a controversial one. Prof. Coonin labels them as communicative phraseological units.

There does not seem to exist any rigid or permanent border-line between proverbs and phraseological units as the latter rather frequently originate from the former.

So, the phraseological unit the last straw originated from the proverb The last straw breaks the the camel's back, the phraseological unit birds of a feather from the proverb birds of a feather flock together, the phraseological unit to catch at a straw (straws) from a drawning man catches straws.

What is more, some of the proverbs a re easily transformed into phraseological units. E.g. Don't put all your eggs in one basket > to put all one's eggs in one basket, don't cast pearls before swine > to cast pearls before swine.

1.Лексикология английского языка – Г.Б. Антрушина, 1999. (Antrushina G.B.,, English Lexicology, 1999) იხ. გვერდები 225 – 241)

2. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phraseology

3. http://www.idiomsite.com/

4. http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/

5. www.jlls.org/Issues/Volume%203/No.1/amdumitrascu.pdf

6. http://www.world-english.org/englishidiomstest.htm

7. http://www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/proverbs.html

Lecture 9. Exercises for Seminars

I. Consider your answers to the following.

1.Why is it very important to use idioms with care?
2.How can you show that the “freedom” of the of free word-groups is relative and arbitrary?
3.What are the two major criteria for distinguishing between phraseological units and free word-groups?
4.How could you explain the term “grammatical invariability” of phraseological units?
5.How do proverbs differ from phraseological units?

II. What is the source of the following idioms?

The Trojan horse, Archilles heel, a labour of Hercules, an apple of discord, forbidden fruit, the serpent in the tree, an ugly duckling, to hide one’s head in the sand.

III.Substitute phraseological units with the noun “heart” for the italicized words. What is the difference between the two sentences?
1.He is not a man who shows his feelings openly.
2.She may seem cold but she has true, kind feelings.
3.I learned that piece of poetry by memory.
4.When I think about my exam tomorrow I become desperate.

IV.Show that you understand the meaning of the following phraseological units by using each of them in a sentence.

1.Between the devil and the deep sea
2.to have one's heart in one's boots
3. to have one's heart in the right place
4. to wear one's heart on one's sleeve
5.in the blues
6.once in a blue moon
7.to swear black is white
8.out of the blue
9.to talk till all is blue
10.to talk oneself blue in the face.

V.Substitute phraseological units incorporating the names of colours for the italicized words.

1.***I' feeling*** rather ***miserable*** today. 2.A thing like that happens ***very rarely***. 3.You can ***talk till you are tired*** of it but I shan't believe you. 4.The news was a great shock to me. It came quite ***unexpetdly***. 5.You can never believe what he says, he will swear anything if it suits his purpose.

VI.Explain how misunderstanding arises in each case.

1."Now, my little boys and girls," said the teacher."I want you to be very still – so that you can here a pin drop." For a minute all was still, and then a little boy shrieked out: "Let her drop".
2."You must be pretty strong," said Willie, aged six to the young widow who had come to call on his mother.
"Strong? What makes you think so?"
"Daddy said you can wrap any man in town around your little finger."

3.Tom: What would you do if you were in my shoes?

Tim: Polish them.

4.Little girl: Oh, Mr.Sprawler, do put on your skates and show me the funny figures you can make.

Mr.Sprawler:I'm only a beginner. I can't make any figures.

Little girl: But Mother said you were skating yesterday and cut a ridiculous figure.

VII.Explain whether the semantic changes in the following phraseological units are complete or partial. Paraphrase them.

To wear one's heart on one's sleeve; a wolf in a sheep's clothing; to fly into a temper; to stick to one's word; bosom friend, small talk; to cast pearls before swine; to beat about the bush; to add fuel to the fire; to fall ill; to fall in love; to sail under false colours, to be at sea.

VIII.Say what structural variations are possible in the following phraseological units.

To catch at a straw; a big bug; the last drop; to build a castle in the air; to weather the storm; to get the upper hand; to run for one's life; to do wonders; to run a risk; just the other way about

IX.Read the following proverbs. Give their Georgian equivalents or explain their meanings.

A bargain is a bargain. A cat in gloves catches no mice. Those who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones. A good beginning is half the battle. A new broom sweeps clean. An hour in the morning is worth two in the evening. It never rains but it pours. Don't look a gift horse in the mouth. Make hay while the sun shines.

Exercises are compiled from the book -.Лексикология английского языка – Г.Б. Антрушина, 1999.

Lecture 10.

Phraseology: Principles of Classification (Antrushina G.B.,, English Lexicology, 1999) იხ. გვერდები 241 – 259.

It would be interesting now to look at phraseological units from a different angle: How are all these treasures of the language approached by the linguistic science? They must be sorted out and arranged in certain classes which possess identical characteristics.

But which characteristics should be chosen as the main criteria for such a classification system? The structural? The semantic? Those of degree of stability? Of origin?

There exist a considerable number of different classification systems devised by different scholars and based on different principles.

The traditional and the oldest principle for classifying phraseological units is based on their original content and might be alluded to as “thematic”” (although the term is not universally accepted). The approch is widely used in numerous English and American guides to idiom, phrase books, etc. On this principle, idioms are classified according to their sources of origin, “source” referring to the particular sphere of human activity, of life of nature, of natural phenomena, etc. L.Smith gives in his classification groups of idioms used by sailors, fishermen, soldiers, hunters and associated with the realia, phenomena and conditions of their occupations. In smith’s classification we also find groups of idioms associated with domestic and wild animals and birds, agriculture and cooking. There are also numerous idioms drawn from sports, arts, etc.

We can single out the following groups:

body parts

1.If you are feeling nervous, you might say you have butterflies in your stomach

2.If something costs a lot, it costs an arm and a leg

3.If someone does not dance well or is clumsy, they have two left feet

4.If something is very near you and you are close to finding it, it is right under your nose

5.If you need to hurry up, someone might tell you to shake a leg

6.If someone wants you to be quiet, they may tell you to zip your lip

7.If someone needs help, you can give them a hand

8.If something is teasing you, they are pulling your leg

9.If you want someone to know that you are listening carefully, you can say that you're all ears

10.If someone is not very good at something, they are all thumbs

11.If someone blabs or talks too much, they have a big mouth.

12.If something is very expensive, you might have to pay through the nose.

13.If something is bothering you and you need to tell someone, you need to get it off your chest.

Body Parts

1.If you took too much food than you could eat, maybe your eyes were bigger than your stomach

2.If you cannot quite think of a word but almost get it, that word is on the tip of your tongue.

3.If you are getting nervous about doing something, you are getting cold feet.

4.If something is really bothering you, you might say to them, "Get off back".

5.If something really annoys you, they get on your nerves.

6.If you accidentally said something that might have hurt someone else's feeling or embarrassed someone, you might have put your foot in your mouth.

7.If someone wants you to think hard about something, they may tell you to use your head.

8.If you need to be careful of what you say, you will need to watch your mouth.

9.If you think of something quickly, you think of it off the top of your head.

Animals

1.If someone is crying but the tears aren't real, they are crying crocodile tears.

2.If someone is really good at playing cards, they might be called a card (shark)

3.If you give away a secret or a surprise, you let the cat out of the bag.

4.If someone is being difficult to teach or doesn't want to do things differently, you might say that you can't teach an old dog new tricks.

5.If someone does not want you to get too excited about something, they might tell you, "Don't have a cow.

6.If you need to be brave or bald about something, you need to take the bull by the horns.

7. If something is harmless, you can say that it wouldn't hurt a fly/flea

8.If someone told you something directly and you did not hear it from someone else, it came straight from the horse ('s) mouth.

9.If you want to save time and get two things done at the same time, you can kill 2 birds with one stone.

10.If someone is afraid of something, they might be called a scared cat

11.If you are in trouble, you are in the dog house.

12.If you cannot sit still, you might say the person has ants in his pants.

13.If you are very hungry, you might say that you are so hungry you could eat a horse.

14.If you eat too much someone might say that you pigged/pig.

15.If it's raining hard, you can say it's raining cats and dogs.

16.If you stop something suddenly, you stop cold turkey.

17.If someone isn't really that young anymore, you can say that they have a frog in their throat.

18. If you don't want to tell someone where you heard information from, you can say that a little bird told you.

19.If someone does not see well, they might say that they are as blind as a bat.

Colours

1.If you are embarrassed, you might turn as red as beet.

2.Is someone is really scared, they might look as white as ghost.

3.If you want to treat someone very nicely, you roll out the red carpet.

4.If someone approves or ok's what you can do, they give you the green light.

5.If you tell something that is not true and won't hurt anyone, you tell a white lie.

6.If you are jealous of something or somebody, you are green.

7.If something does not happen very often, it happens once in a blue moon.

8.If someone feels like they don't belong to a group, they feel like a black sheep.

9.If something looks better than someone else is doing, they might say that the grass is always greener on the other side.

10.If you are feeling sad, you are feeling blue

11.If someone is born rich, you can say that they were born with a silver spoon in their mouth.

12.If you are good at growing, you have a green thumb.

13.If something really pleases you, you are tickled pink.

Another principle of classification is sometimes called "etymological".

Here are some examples:

To be all at sea – to be unable to understand; to be in a state of ignorance or bewilderment about something (e.g. how can I be a judge in a situation in which I'M all at sea?" Collins remarks that the metaphor is that of a boat tossed about, out of control, with its occupants not knowing where they are.

To sink or swim – to fail or succeed (e.g. It is a cese of sink or swim).

In deep water – in trouble or danger.

In low water, on the rocks – in strained financial circumstances.

To be in the same boat with somebody – to be in a situation in which people share the same difficulties and dangers (e.g. I don' t like you much, but seeing that we are in the same boat, I'll back you all I can). The metaphor is that of passengers in the life-boat of a sunken ship.

To sail under false colours – to pretend to be what one is not, sometimes, to pose as a friend and, at the same time, have hostile intentions. The metaphor is that of an

enemy ship that approaches its intended prey showing at the mast the flag (“colours”) of a pretended friendly nation.

To show one’s colours – to betray one’s real character or intentions. The allusion is, once more, to a ship showing the flag of its country at the mast.

To strike one’s colours – to surrender, give in. the metaphor refers to a ship’s hauling down its flag (sign of surrender).

To weather (to ride out) the storm – to overcome difficulties; to have courageously stood against misfortunes.

To bow to the storm – to give in, to acknowledge one’s defeat.

Three sheets in(to) the wind (sl.) – very drunk.

Half seas over (sl.) – very drunk.

As you can see distant memories of the sea romance and adventure still linger in some of the idioms. They bring to mind the distant past of pirates, sea battles and great discoveries of new lands.

It is true that original associations are almost fully forgotten. And yet, are we entirely free from the picture built up by the direct meanings of the words? If it were really so and all the direct associations of the idioms had been entirely erased, phraseology would not constitute one of the language’s main expressive resources. Its expressiveness and and wealth of colour largely – if not solely – depend on the ability of an idiom to create two images at once: that of a ship safely coming out of the storm – and that of a man overcoming his troubles and difficulties (to weather\ride out the storm);

The thematic principle of classifying phraseological units has real merit but it does not take into consideration the linguistic characteristic features of them.

The considerable contribution in phraseological research was made by prominent scholar v.Vinogradov. His classification system is founded on the degree of semantic cohesion between the components of a phraseological unit. Units with a partially transferred meaning show the weakest cohesion between their components. The more distant the meaning of a phraseological unit from the current meaning of its constituent parts, the greater is its degree of semantic cohesion. Accordingly, Vinogradov classifies

phraseological units into three classes: phraseological combinations, unities, and fusions.

Phraseological Combinations are word-groups with a partially changed meaning. They must be said to be clearly motivated, that is, the meaning of the unit can be easily deduced from the meanings of its constituents.

E.g. to be at one's wits' end, to be good at something, bosom friends, gospel truth, to stick to one's word, etc.

Phraseological Unities are word-groups with a completely changed meaning, that is, the meaning of the unit does not correspond to the meanings of its constituent parts. they are motivated units or, putting it another way, the meaning of the whole unit can be deduced from the meanings of the constituent parts; the metaphor, on which the shift of meaning is based, is clear and transparent.

E.g. to stick to one's guns (= to be true to one's views or convictions. The image is that of a gunner who does not desert his gun even if a battle seems lost); to sit on the fence (= in discussion, politics, etc. refrain from commiting oneself to either side); to catch\clutch at a straw (= when in extreme danger, avail oneself of even the slightest chance of rescue); to lose one's head (= to be at a loss what to do; to be out of one's mind); to lose one's heart to smb. (to fall in love); to lock the stable door after the horse is stolen (= to take precautions too late); to look a gift horse in the mouth (= to examine a present too critically; to find fault with something one gained without effort); to ride the high horse (= to behave in a superior, haughty, overbearing way); the last dro\straw (the final culminating circumstance that makes a situation unendurable); a big bug\pot, sl. (a person of importance); a fish out of water (a person situated uncomfortably outside his usual or proper enviroment).

Phraseological Fusions are word-groups with a completely changed meaning but, in contrast to the unities, they are demotivated, that is, their meaning cannot be deduced from the meanings of the constituent parts; the metaphor, on which the shift of meaning was based, has lost its clarity and is obscure.

E.g. to come a cropper (to come to disaster), neck and crop (entirely, altogether, thorougly, as in: She severed all relations with them neck and crop); to set one's cap at smb. (to try and attract a man. The image, which is now obscure, may have been either

that of a child trying to catch a butterfly with his cap or of a girl putting on a pretty cap to attract a man; to leave smb. in the lurch (to abandon a friend when he is in trouble); to show the white feather (to betray one's cowardice. the allusion was originally to cock fighting. A white feather in a cock's plumage denoted a bad fighter); to dance attendance on smb. (to try and please or attract smb.; to show exaggerated attention to smb.).

It is obvious that this classification system does not take into account the structural characteristics of phraseological units. On the other hand, the border-line separating unities from fusions is vague and even subjective. one and the same phraseological unit may appear motivated to one person and demotivated to another. The more profound one's command of the language and one's knowledge of its history, the fewer fusions one is likely to discover in it.

The structural principle of classifying phraseological units is based on their ability to perform the same syntactical functions as words. In the traditional structural approach, the following principal groups of phraseological units are distinguishable.

A.Verbal. E.g. to run for one's (dear) life, to get (win) the upper hand; to talk through one's hat, to make a song and dance about smth; to sit pretty (sl.Amer.).

B.substantive. E.g. dog's life, cat-and-dog life, calf love, white lie, tall order, birds of a feather, red tape, brown study.

C.Adjectival. E.g. high and mighty, spick and span, brand new, safe and sound. In this group the so-called comparative word-groups are particularly expressive and sometimes amusing in their unanticipated and capricious associations: (as) cool as acucember, nervous as a cat, weak as a kitten, good as gold (speaking about children), pretty as a picture, as large as life, slippery as an eel, drunk as an owl, mad as a hare in March.

D.Adverbial.E.g. high and low (They searched him high and low), by hook or by crook (She decided that, by hook or by crook, she must marry him), for love or money (He came to the conclusion that a really good job couldn't be found for love or money), in cold blood (The crime was said to be committed in cold blood), in the dead of night, between the devil and the deep sea, to the bitter end (to fight to the bitter end), by a long chalk (It is not the same thing, by a long chalk).

E.Interjectional. E.g. By Jove! By George! goodness gracious! good Heavens!

1.Лексикология английского языка – Г.Б. Антрушина, 1999. (Antrushina G.B.,, English Lexicology, 1999) იხ. გვერდები 241 – 259.

2. www.jlls.org/Issues/Volume%203/No.1/amdumitrascu.pdf

3. http://www.world-english.org/englishidiomstest.htm

Lecture 10. Exercises for Seminars

I. Consider your answers to the following.

1.What is the basis of the traditional and the oldest principle for classifying phraseological units?
2.What other criteria can be used for the classification of phraseological units?
3.Do you share the opinion that in idioms the original associations are partly or wholly lost? Are we entirely free from the picture built up by the current meanings of the individual words in idioms? Illustrate your answer with different examples.
4.What are the merits and disadvantages of the thematic principle of classification for phraseological units?
5.Explain the semantic principle of classification for phraseological units.
6.What is the basis of the structural principle of classification for phraseological units?

II.Classify the following idioms phraseological units according to Vinogradov's classification system.

To keep your head is to remain calm, but ***to lose it*** is to panic and do something foolish. If ***something is above or over your head***, it is too difficult for you to understand. An ***egg-head*** is intellectual, and someone who has ***his head screwd*** on, is very sensible.

If you ***split hairs***, you are very pedantic, but if you ***don't turn a hair*** you are very calm.

To ***pay through the nose*** is to pay a very high price for something, but if you ***turn up your nose at something*** you despise it. if ***you are all ears***, you listen very carefully, and if you ***keep your ear to the ground***, you listen and watch out for signs of future events. ***To see eye to eye with someone*** is to agree with them, and if you ***don't bat an eyelid,*** you show no surprise or excitement. If you are ***down on the mouth***, you're rather depressed. A ***stiff upper lip*** is the traditionally British quality of not showing any emotions in times of trouble.

To have your tongue in your cheek is to say one thing and mean something else. ***To have a sweet tooth*** is to have a taste for sweet food, and ***to do something by the skin of your teeth*** is just manage to do it.

To stick your neck out is to do something risky or dangerous, and ***to keep someone at arm's length*** is to avoid getting too friendly with them. ***To be high-handed*** is to behave in a superior fashion, but ***to lend someone a hand*** is to help them. If you ***have a finger in every pie***, you are involved in many different projects, and if ***you have green fingers*** , you are very good at gardening. ***To be all fingers and thumbs*** is to be very clumsy, and ***to be under someone's thumb*** is to be under their influence. If ***you pull someone's leg***, you tease them, and if ***you haven't a leg to stand on***, you have no reason or justification for what you do. ***To put your foot down*** is to insist on something and ***to fall on your feet*** is to be very fortunate. ***To find your feet*** is to become used to a new situation, but ***to get cold feet*** is to become frightened or nervous about something. If you ***put your foot in it***, you say or do something to upset or annoy someone else, and ***if you tread on someone's toes*** you do the same without meaning it.

III. Decide on what principles the idioms are selected.

If you feel under the weather, you don't feel very well, and if you make heavy weather of something, you make it more difficult than it needs to be. Someone with a sunny disposition is always cheerful and happy, but a person with his head in the clouds

does not pay much attention to what is going on around him. To have a place in the sun is to enjoy a favourable position, and to go everywhere under the sun is to travel all over the world. Someone who is under a cloud is in disgrace or under suspicion, and a person who is snowed under with work is overwhelmed with it. When you break the ice, you get to know someone better, but if you cut no ice with someone, you have no effect on them. To keep smth. on ice or in cold storage is to reserve it for the future, and to skate on thin ice is to be in a dangerous or risky situation. If smth. is in the wind, it is being secretly planned, and if you have the wind up, you became frightened. To throw caution to the winds is to abandon it and act recklessly, but to see how the wind blows is to find out how people are thinking before you act. If you take the wind out of someone's sails, you gain the advantage over him by saying or doing smth. first. To save smth. for a rainy day is to put some money aside for when it is needed. To do smth. come rain or shine is to do it whatever the circumstances. Finally, everyone knows that it never rains but it pours, that problems and difficulties always come together. But every cloud has a silver lining – every misfortune has a good side.

IV.**Complete the following sentences, using the phraseological units in the list below**.

1.If I pay my rent, I won't have any money to buy food. I'm between ----------.
2.It's no use grumbling about your problems – we're all ----------.
3.He's sold his house and his business to go to Africa, so re's really ----------.
4.She prefers not to rely on anyone else, she likes to ----------.
5.They didn't know whether to get married or not, but they finally ----------.
6.You can't expect everything to go right all the time, you must learn to ----------.

to take the rough with the smooth; between the devil and the deep sea; to take the plunge; in the same boat; to paddle one's own canoe; to burn one's boats.

V. **Complete the following sentences, using the words from the list below.**

1. She was so embarrassed that she went as red as a ----------.

2.I can carry the suitcase easily, it's as light as a ----------.

3.The room is as warm as ----------.

4 My sister does so many things that she's always as busy as a ----------.

5.He's as proud as a ---------- of his new car.

6.It's as cold as ---------- in the room.

7.Once he's made his mind, he'll never change it, he's as stubborn as a ----------.

8.she was so frightened that her face went as white as a ----------.

9.The postman always calls at 8 o'clock, he's as regular as ----------.

10.He's as thin as a ----------.

ice, beetroot, mule, feather, sheet, toast, clockwork, bee, rail, peacock.

Lecture 11 Test

Lecture 12

Word- Building (how English words are made)

Affixation - Native affixes; Productive and Nonproductive Affixes; Conversion

(Antrushina G.B.,, English Lexicology, 1999 pp. 78 - 91.)

Before turning to the various processes of making words, it would be useful to analyze the related problem of the composition of the words, i.e. of their constituent parts.

If viewed structurally, words appear to be divisible into smaller units which are called morphemes. Morphemes do not occur as free forms but only as constituents of words. Yet they possess meanings of their own.

All morphemes are subdivided into two large classes: roots (or radicals) and affixes. The latter, in their turn, fall into prefixes which precede the root in the structure of the word (as in re-read, mis-pronounce, un-well) and suffixes which follow the root (as in teach-er, cur-able, dict-ate).

Words which consist of a root and an affix (or several affixes) are called derived words or derivatives and are produced by the process of word-building known as affixation (or derivation).

Derived words are extremely numerous in the English vocabulary. Successfully competing with this structural type is the so-called root word which has only a root morpheme in its structure. This type is widely represented by a great number of words belonging to the original English stock or to earlier borrowings (house, room, book, work, port, street, table, etc.), and, in Modern English, has been greatly enlarged by the type of word-building called conversion (e.g. to hand, v. formed from the noun hand; to can, v. from can, n., to pale, v. from pale, adj.; a find, n. from to find, v.; etc.).

Another wide-spread word-structure is a compound word consisting of two or more stems (Stem is a part of the word consisting of root and affix. In English words stem and root often coincide.) E.g. dining-room, blue-bell, mother-in-law, good-for-nothing). Words of this structural type are produced by the word-building processes called composition.

The somewhat odd-looking words like flu, pram, lab, M.P., V-day, H-bomb are called shortenings, contractions or curtailed words and are produced by the way of word-building called shortening (contraction).

The four types (root words, derived words, compounds, shortenings) represent the main structural types of Modern English words, and conversion, derivation and composition the most productive ways of word-building.

To return to the question posed by the title of today's lecture – word-building (How words are made) – let us try and get a more detailed picture of each of the major types of Modern English word-building, and, also, of some minor types.

Affixation

The process of affixation consists in coining a new word by adding an affix or several affixes to some root morpheme. The role of the affix in this procedure is very important and therefore it is necessary to consider certain facts about the main types of affixes. From the etymological point of view affixes are classified into the same two large groups as words: native and borrowed.

Some Native Suffixes

Noun - Forming	Er	worker, miner, teacher, painter, etc.
	ness	coldness, loneliness, loveliness, etc
	ing	feeling, meaning, singing, reading, etc
	dom	freedom, wisdom, kingdom, etc.
	hood	childhood, manhood, motherhood, etc.
	ship	friendship, companionship, mastership, etc
	Th	length, breadth, health, truth, etc.
Adjective - Forming	ful	careful, joyful, wonderful, sinful, skilful
	less	careless, sleepless, cloudless, senseless, etc.
	Y	Cozy, tidy, merry, snowy, showy, etc.
	ish	English, Spanish, reddish, childish, etc.
	Ly	lonely, lovely, ugly, likely, lordly, etc
	En	wooden, woolen, silken, golden
	some	handsome, quarrelsome, tiresome, etc.
Verb – Forming	En	widen, redden, darken, sadden
Adverb – Forming	Ly	warmly, hardly, simply, carefully, coldly, etc

Borrowed affixes, especially of Romance origin are numerous in the English vocabulary. It would be wrong, though, to suppose that affixes are borrowed in the same way and for the same reasons as words. An affix of foreign origin can be regarded as borrowed only after it has begun an independent and active life in the recipient language, that is, is taking part in the word-making processes of that language.

this can only occur when the total of words with this affix is so great in the recipient language as to affect the native speakers' subconscious to the extent that they no longer realize its flavour and accept it as their own.

Affixes can also classified into productive and non-productive types. By productive affixes we mean the ones, which take part in deriving new words in this particular period of language development. The best way to identify productive affixes is to look for them among neologisms and so-called nonce-words, i.e. words coined and used only for this particular occasion. The latter are usually formed on the level of living-speech and reflect the most productive and progressive patterns in word - building. When a literary critic writes about a certain book that it is an unputdownable thriller, we will seek in vain this strange and impressive adjective in dictionaries, for it is a nonce – word coined on the current pattern of Modern English and is evidence of the high productivity of the adjective-forming borrowed suffix –able and the native prefix un-.

Consider, for example, the following:

Professor Pringle was a thinnish, baldish, dispeptic-looking cove with an eye like a haddock.

The adjectives thinnish and baldish bring to mind dozens of other adjectives made with the same suffix: oldish, youngish, mannish, girlish, fattish, longish, yellowish, etc. But dispeptic-lookingish is the author's creation aimed at a humorous effect, and, at the sane time, proving beyond doubt that the suffix –ish is a live and active one.

The same is well-illustrated by the following popular statement: "I don't like Sunday evenings: I feel so *Mondayish".(Mondayish is a nonce-word).*

One should not confuse the productivity of affixes with their frequency of occurrence. There are quite a number of high-frequency which, nevertheless, are no longer used in word-derivation (e,g. the adjective-forming native suffixes –ful, -ly; the adjective-forming suffixes of Latin origin -ant, -ent, -al, which are quite frequent).

Some productive Affixes

Noun-forming suffixes	-er, -ing, -ness, -ism (materialism), -ist (intern,suffixes) (impressionist), -ance
Adjective-forming suffixes	-y,-ish,-ed (learned), -able, -less
Adverb-forming suffixes	-ly
Verb-forming suffixes	-ize\ise (realize), -ate
Prefixes	un- (unhappy), re- (reconstruct), dis- (disapoint).

Some Non-Productive Affixes

Noun-forming suffixes	-th, -hood
Adjective-forming suffixes	-ly, -some, -en, -ous
Verb-forming suffixes	-en

Note. The native noun-forming suffixes dom and ship ceased to be productive centuries ago. Yet, professor I.V. Arnold in the English WORD gives some examples of comparatively new formations with the suffix –dom: boredom, serfdom, slavedom. The same is true of –ship (salesmanship). The adjective-forming –ish, which leaves no

doubt as to its productivity nowadays, has comparatively recently regained it, after having been non-productive for many centuries.

Semantics of Affixes

The morpheme, and therefore affix, which is a type of morpheme, is generally defined as the smallest indivisible component of the word possessing a meaning of its own. Meanings of affixes are specific and considerably differ from those of root morphemes. Affixes have widely generalized meanings and refer the concept conveyed by the whole word to a certain category, which is vast and all-embracing. So, the noun – forming suffix –er could be roughly defined as designating persons from the object of their occupation or labour (painter - the one who paints) or from their place of origin or abode (southerner – the one living in the South). the adjective-forming –ful has the meaning of “full of”, “characterized by” (beautiful, careful) whereas –ish may often imply insufficiency of quality (greenish – green, but not quite; youngish – not quite young but looking it).

Such examples might lead one to the somewhat hasty conclusion that the meaning of a derived word is always a sum of the meanings of its morphemes: un\eat\able = “not fit to eat” where not stands for un- and fit for - able.

There are some numerous derived words whose meanings can be easily deduced from the meanings of their constituent parts. Yet, such cases represent only the first and simplest stage of semantic readjustment within derived words. The constituent morphemes within derivatives do not always preserve their current meanings and are open to subtle and complicated semantic shifts.

Let us take at random some of the adjectives formed with the same productive suffix –y, and try to deduce the meaning of the suffix from the dictionary definitions:

brainy (inform) – intelligent, intellectual, i.e. characterized by brains

catty – quietly and slyly malicious, spiteful, i.e. characterized by features ascribed to a cat

chatty – given to chat, inclined to chat

dressy (inform) – showy in dress, i.e. inclined to dress well or to be overdressed

fishy (e.g. in a fishy story, inform.) – improbable, hard to believe (like stories told by fishermen)

foxy – foxlike, cunning or crafty, i.e. characterized by features ascribed to a fox

stagy – theatrical, unnatural, i.e. inclined to affectation, to unnatural theatrical manners

touchy – apt to take offence on slight provocation, i.e. resenting a touch or contact (not at all inclined to be touched)

the Random-House Dictionary defines the meaning of the –y suffix as “characterized by or inclined to the substance or action of the root to which the affix is attached”. Yet, even the few given examples show that, on the one hand, there are cases, like touchy or fishy that are not covered by the definition. On the other hand, even those cases that are roughly covered, show a wide variety of subtle shades of meaning. It is not only the suffix that adds its own meaning to the meaning of the root, but suffix is, in its turn, affected by the root and undergoes certain semantic changes, so that mutual influence of root and affix creates a wide range of subtle nuances.

But is the suffix –y probably exceptional in this respect? It is sufficient to examine further examples to see that other affixes also offer an interesting variety of semantic shades. Compare, for instance, the meanings of adjective-forming suffixes in each of these groups of adjectives.

1.eatable (fit or good to eat)
lovable (worthy of loving)
questionable (open to doubt, to question)
imaginable (capable of being imagined)
2.lovely (charming, beautiful, i.e. inspiring love)
lonely (solitary, without company; lone; the meaning of the suffix does not seem to add anything to that of the root)
friendly (characteristic of or befitting a friend)
heavenly (resembling or befitting heaven; beautiful, splendid)
3.childish (resembling or befitting a child)

tallish (rather tall, but not quite, i.e. approaching the quality of big size)

girlish (like a girl, but, often, in a bad imitation of one)

bookish (1) given or devoted to reading or study; (2) more acquainted with books than with real life, i.e. possessing the quality of bookish learning)

The semantic distinctions of words produced from the same root by means of different suffixes are also of considerable interest, both for language studies and research work. Compare: *womanly – womanish, flowery – flowered – flowering, starry – starred, reddened – reddish, shortened – shortish*.

The semantic difference between the members of these groups is very obvious: the meanings of the suffixes are so distinct that they colour the whole words.

Womanly is used in a complimentary manner about girls and women, whereas womanish is used to indicate an effeminate man and certainly implies criticism.

Flowery is applied to speech or a style, *flowered* means "*decorated with a pattern of flowers" (e.g. flowered silk or chintz)* and *flowering* is the same as *blossoming (e.g. flowering bushes or shrubs.*

Starry means "resembling stars" (e.g.starry eyes) and starred – " covered or decorated with stars" (e.g. starred skies)

Reddened and *shortened* both imply the result of an action or process, as in the eyes reddened with weeping or a shortened version of a story (i.e. a story has been abridged)whereas shortish and reddish point to insufficiency of quality: reddish is not exactly red, but tinged with red, and shortish man probably a little taller than a man described as short.

Conversion

When in a book-review a book is referred to as a splendid read, is read to be regarded as a verb or a noun? What part of speech is room in the sentence: I was to room with another girl called Jessie. If a character in a novel is spoken about as one who had to be satisfied with the role of a has-been, what is this odd-looking has-been, a verb or a noun? One must admit that it has quite a verbal appearance, but why, then, is it preceded by the article?

Why is the word *if* used in the plural form in the popular proverb: If ifs and ans were pots and pans (an = if, dial., arch.)

This type of questions naturally arise when one deals with words produced by conversion, one of the most productive ways of modern English word-building.

Conversion is sometimes referred to as an affixless way of word-building or even affixless derivation. Saying that, however, is saying very little because there are other types of word-building in which new words are also formed without affixes (most compounds, contracted words, sound-imitation words, etc.).

Conversion consists in making a new word form some existing word by changing the category of a part of speech, the morphemic shape of the original word remaining unchanged. The new word has a meaning which differs from that of the original one though it can more or less be easily associated with it. It has also a new paradigm peculiar to its new category as a part of speech.

nurse, n. > to nurse, v.

Substantive paradigm	-s, pl.	Verbal paradigm	-s,3rd p. sg.
	-'s, poss.c.,		-ed, past indef.,
	-s', poss.c., pl.		past part..
			-ing, pres. part
			gerund

The question of conversion has, for a long time, been a controversial one in several aspects. The very essence of this process has been treated by a number of scholars (H.Sweet), not as a word-building act, but as a mere functional change. From this point of view the word hand in Hand me that book is not a verb, but a noun used in a verbal syntactical function, that is, hand (me) and hands (in She has small hands) are not two different words but one. Hence, the case cannot be treated as one word-formation for no new word appears.

According to this functional approach, conversion may be regarded as a specific feature of the English categories of parts of speech, which are supposed to be able to break through the rigid borderlines dividing one category from another thus enriching

the process of communication not by creation of new words but through the sheer flexibility of the syntactic structures.

Nowadays this theory finds increasingly fewer supporters, and conversion is universally accepted as one of the major ways of enriching English vocabulary with new words. One of the major arguments for this approach to conversion is the semantic change that regularly accompanies each instance of conversion. Normally, a word changes its syntactic function without any shift in lexical meaning. E.g. both in “yellow leaves” and in the “the leaves were turning yellow” the adjective denotes colour, but the process of changing colour, so that there is an essential change in meaning.

The change of meaning is even more obvious in such pairs as hand > to hand, face > to face, to go> a go, to make > a make, etc

The other argument is the regularity and completeness with which converted units develop a paradigm of their new category of part of speech. As soon as it has crossed the category borderline, the new word automatically acquires all the properties of the new category, so that if it has entered the verb category, it is now regularly used in all the forms of tense and it also develops the forms of the participle and the gerund. Such regularity can hardly be regarded as indicating a mere functional change which might be expected to bear more occasional characteristics. The completeness of the paradigms in new conversion formations seems to be a decisive argument proving that here we are dealing with new words and not with mere functional variants. The data of the more reputable modern English dictionaries confirm this point of view: they all present converted pairs as homonyms, i.e. as two words, thus supporting the thesis that conversion is a word-building process.

Conversion is not only a highly productive but also a particularly English way of word-building. Its immense productivity is considerably encouraged by certain features of the English language in its modern stage of development. The analytical structure of Modern English greatly facilitates processes of making words of one category of parts of speech from words of another. So does the simplicity of paradigms of English parts of speech. A great number of one-syllable words is another factor in favour of conversion, for such words are naturally more mobile and flexible than polysyllables.

Conversion is a convenient and “easy” way of enriching the vocabulary with new words. It is certainly an advantage to have two (or more) words where there was one, all of them fixed on the same structural and semantic base.

The high productivity of conversion finds its reflection in speech where numerous occasional cases of conversion can be found, which are not registered by dictionaries and which occur momentarily, through the immediate need of the situation. “If anybody oranges me again tonight, I’ll knock his face off”, says the annoyed character of a story by O’Henry when a shop-assistant offers him oranges (for the tenth time in one night) instead of peaches for which he is looking. One is not likely to find the verb to orange in any dictionary, but in this situation it answers the need for brevity, expressiveness and humour.

The very first example, which opens the section on conversion in this chapter (the book is a splendid read), though taken from a book-review, is a nonce-word, which may be used by reviews now and then or in informal verbal communication, but has not yet found its way into the universally acknowledged English vocabulary.

Such examples as these show that conversion is a vital and developing process that penetrates contemporary speech as well. Subconsciously every English speaker realizes the immense potentiality of making a word into another part of speech when the need arises.

* * *

One should guard against thinking that every case of noun and verb (verb and adjective, adjective and noun) with the same morphemic shape results from conversion. There are numerous pairs of words (e.g. love – to love, work - to work , drink – to drink, etc.) which did not occur due to conversion but coincided as a result of certain historical processes (dropping of endings, simplification of stems) when before that they had different forms. On the other hand, it is quite true that the first cases of conversion (which were registered in the 14th century)imitated such pairs of words as love – to love, for they were numerous in the vocabulary and were subconsciously accepted be native speakers as one of the typical language patterns.

* * *

The two categories of parts of speech especially affected by conversion are nouns and verbs. Verbs made from nouns are the most numerous amongst the words produced by conversion: e.g. to hand, to back, to face, to eye, to mouth, to nose, to dog, to wolf, to monkey, to can, to coal, to stage, to screen, to room, to floor, to blackmail, to blacklist, to honeymoon, and very many others.

Nouns are frequently made from verbs: do (e.g. This is the queerest do I've ever come across,. Do – event, incident), go (e.g. He has still plenty of go at his age. Go – energy), make, run, find, catch, cut, walk, worry, show, move, etc.

Verbs can also be made from adjectives: to pale, to yellow, to cool, to grey, to rough (e.g. We decided to rough it in the tents as the weather was warm), etc.

Other parts of speech are not entirely unsusceptible to conversion as the following examples show: to down, to out, (Diplomatist Ousted from Budapest), the ups and downs, the ins and outs; the like of me and the like of you).

1.Лексикология английского языка – Г.Б. Антрушина, 1999. (Antrushina G.B.,, English Lexicology, 1999) იხ. გვერდები 78 - 91.

2. http://www.sil.org/linguistics/GlossaryOfLinguisticTerms/WhatIsAffixation.htm

3. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Affix

4. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conversion_(linguistics)

Lecture 12. Exercises for Seminars and independent Work

I. Consider your answers to the following.

1.What are the main ways of enriching the English vocabulary?
2.What are the principal productive ways of word-building in English?
3.What do we mean by derivation?
4.What is the difference between frequency and productivity of affixes?
5.Give examples of your own to show that affixes have meanings.
6.Prove that the words a finger and to finger ("to touch or handle with fingers") are two words and not the one word finger used either as a noun or as a verb.
7.What features of modern English have produced the high productivity of conversion?
8.Which categories of parts of speech are especially affected by conversion?
9.Prove that the pair of words love, n. and love, v. do not present a case of conversion.

II. The italicized words in the following extracts are formed by derivation. Write them out in two columns: A.Those formed with the help of productive affixes. B.Those formed with the help of non-productive affixes.

1.Willie was invited to a party, where ***refreshments*** were ***bountifully*** served.
"Won't you have something more, Willie?" the ***hostess*** said.
"No, thank you," replied Willie, with an ***expression*** of great ***satisfaction***. "I'm full."
"Well, then," smiled the hostess, "put some ***delicious*** fruit and cakes in your pocket to eat on your way home.
"No, thank you," came the rather ***startling*** response of Willie, "they are full too."
2.The scene was a ***tiny*** wayside railway platform and the sun was going down behind the ***distant*** hills. It was a ***glorious*** sight. An ***intending passenger*** was chatting with one of the porters.
"Fine sight, the sun tipping the hills with gold," said the poetic passenger.
"Yes," reported the porter; "and to think that I was often as ***lucky*** as them 'ills.
3."You have an ***admirable*** cook, yet you are always growling about her to your friends."
"Do you suppose I want her lured away?"
4.Patient:Do you extract teeth ***painlessly***?
Dentist:Not always – the other day I nearly ***dislocated*** my wrist.
5.Dear Daddy-Long Legs.

Please forget about the ***dreadful*** letter I sent you last week – I was feeling ***terribly lonely*** and ***miserable*** and sore-throaty the night I wrote. The head nurse is very bossy. She is tall and thinnish with a dark face and the funniest smile. please forgive me for being impertinent and ungrateful.

III.Explain the etymology and productivity of the affixes given below.
ness, ous, ly, y, do, ish, tion, ed, en, ess, or, er, hood, less, ate, ing, al, ful, un, re, im (in), dis, over-, ab-.

IV.Deduce the meanings of the following derivations from the meanings of their constituents. What are the meanings of the affixes in the words under examination?

Reddish,adj.; overwrite,v.; irregular, adj.; illegal, adj.; retype, v.; old-womanish, adj.; disrespectable, adj.; inexpensive, adj.; unladylike, adj.; disorganize, v.; renew, v.; eatable, adj.; overdress,v.; disinfection, n.; snobbish, adj.; tallish, adj.; sandy, adj.; breakable, adj.

V.Find cases of conversion in the following sentences.

1.The clerk was eyeing him expectantly. 2.Under the cover of that protective din he was able to toy with a steaming dish which his waiter had brought. 3.an aggressive man battled his way to Stout's side. 4.Just a few yards from the front door of the bar there was an elderly woman comfortably seated on a chair, holding a hose linked to a tap and watering the pavement. 5.What are you doing here? I'm tidying your room. 6.My seat was in the middle of a row. I could not leave without inconveniencing a great many people, so I remained. 7.How on earth do you remember to milk the cows and give pigs their dinner? 8.Ten minutes later I was speeding along in the direction of Cape Town. 9.Restaurants in all large cities have their ups and downs.

VI.One of the italicized words in the following examples was made from the other by conversion. What semantic correlations exist between them?

1.a)”You’ve got a funny ***nose***,” he added. b)He began to ***nose*** about. He pulled out a drawer after drawer, pottering round like an old bloodhound. 2.a)I’d seen so many cases of fellows who had become perfect slaves of their ***valets***. b)I supposed that while he had been ***valeting*** old Florence must have trodden on his toes in some way. 3.a)It so happened that the night before I had been present at a rather cheery little ***supper***. b)So the next night I took him him along to ***supper*** with me. 4.a)Buck seized his ***hand*** in his teeth. b)The desk clerk ***handed*** me the key. 5.a)A small hairy object sprang from a basket and stood yapping in the middle of the ***room***. b)There are advantages, you see, about ***rooming*** with Julia. 6.a)I’m engaged for ***lunch***, but I’ve plenty of time. b)There was a time when he and I had been lads about town together, ***lunching*** and dining together practically every day. 7.a)Mr.Biffen rang up on the ***telephone*** while you were in your bath. b)I found Muriel singer ther, sitting by herself at a table near the door. Corky, I took it, was out ***telephoning***. 8.Use small ***nails*** and ***nail*** the pictire on the wall. 9.a)I could just see that he was waving a letter or something equally foul in my ***face***. b)When the bell stopped, Crane turned around and ***faced*** the students seated in rows before him. 10.a)Lizzie is a good cook. b)She cooks the meals in his house. 11.a)The ***wolf*** was suspicious and afraid. b)The boy ***wolfed*** a plateful. 12.Use the bigger ***hammer*** for those nails and ***hamme***r them in well. 13.a)Show me your little ***finger***. b) The coach ***fingered*** the papers on his desk. 14.a)These men wanted ***dogs***. b)This woman ***dogs*** me.

VII.Explain the semantic correlation between the following pairs of words.

Shelter – to shelter, park – to park, groom – to groom, elbow – to elbow, breakfast – to breakfast, pin – to pin, trap – to trap, fish – to fish, head – to head, nurse – to nurse.

VIII.Deduce the meanings and use them in constructing sentences of your own.
star – to star, picture – to picture, colour – to colour, blush – to blush, key- to key, fool – to fool, breakfast – to breakfast, house – to house, monkey – to monkey, fork – to fork, slice – to slice, age – to age, touch – to touch, make – to make, finger – to finger, empty

adj. – to empty, poor adj. – the poor, n. pale, adj. – to pale, dry, adj. – to dry, nurse – to nurse, dress – to dress, floor – to floor.

Exercises are compiled from the book -.Лексикология английского языка – Г.Б. Антрушина, 1999.

Lecture 13.

Word-Building (How English words are made); conversion, composition . (Antrushina G.B.,, English Lexicology, 1999, pp. 91 – 113)

It was mentioned that a word made by conversion has a different meaning from that of the word from which it was made through the two meanings can be associated. There are certain regularities in these associations which can be roughly classified. For instance, in the group of verbs made from nouns some of the regular semantic associations are as indicated in the following list:

I.The noun is the name of a tool or implement, the verb denotes an action performed by the tool: to hammer, to nail, to pin, to brush, to comb, to pencil

II.The noun is the name of an animal, the verb denotes an action or aspect of behaviour considered typical of the animal: to dog, to wolf, to monkey, to ape, to fox, to rat. Yet, to fish does not mean to “to behave like a fish” but “to try to catch fish”. The same meaning of hunting activities is conveyed by the verb to whale and one of the meanings of to rat; the other is “ to turn informer, squeel” (sl.).

III. The name of apart of the human body – an action performed by it: to hand, to leg (sl), to eye, to elbow, to shoulder, to nose, to mouth. However, to face does not imply doing something by or even with one’s face but turning it in a certain direction. To back means either “to move backwards” or, in the figurative sense, “ to support somebody or something”.

IV. The name of a profession or occupation – an activity typical of it: to nurse, to cook, to maid, to groom.

V.The name of a place – the process of occupying the place or of putting smth.-smb. in it (to room, to house, to place, to table, to cage).

VI. The name of a container – the act of putting smth. within the container (to can, to bottle, to pocket).

VII. The name of a meal – the process of taking it (to lunch, to supper).

The suggested groups do not include all the great variety of verbs made from nouns by conversion. They just represent the most obvious cases and illustrate, convincingly enough, the great variety of semantic interrelations within so-called converted pairs and the complex nature of the logical associations which specify them.

In actual fact, these associations are not only complex but sometimes perplexing. It would seem that if you know that the verb formed from the name of an animal denotes behaviour typical of the animal, it would be easy for you to guess the meaning of such a verb provided that you know the meaning of the noun. Yet, it is not always easy. Of course, the meaning of to fox is rather obvious being derived from the associated reputation of that animal for cunning: to fox means “to act cunningly or craftily”. But what about to wolf? How is one to know which of the characteristics of the animal was picked by the speaker’s subconsciousness when this verb was produced? Ferocity? Loud and unpleasant howling? The inclination to live in packs? Yet, as the following example shows, to wolf means “to eat greedily, voraciously”: Charlie went on wolfing the chocolate.

In the same way, from numerous characteristics of the dog, only one was chosen for the verb to dog which is well illustrated by the following example:

I pity any detective who would have to dog him through those twenty months.
(J.Fowles, The French Lieutenant’s Woman)

(To dog – to follow or track like a dog, especially with hostile intention.)

The two verbs to ape and to monkey, which might be expected to mean more or less the same , have shared between themselves certain typical features of the same animal:

to ape – to imitate, mimic (e.g. He had always aped the gentleman in his clothes and manners. – J.Fowels);

to monkey – to fool, to act or play idly and foolishly. To monkey can also be used in the meaning “to imitate”, but much rather than ape.

The following anecdote shows that the intricacies of semantic associations in words made by conversion may prove somewhat bewildering even for some native speakers, especially for children.

“Mother”, said Johnny, “Is it correct to say you ‘water a horse’ when he’s thirsty?”
“Yes, quite correct.”
“Then”, (picking up a saucer) “I’m going to milk the cat”.

The joke is based on the child’s mistaken association of two apparently similar patterns: water, n. – to water v., milk n. – to milk v. But it turns out that the meanings of the two verbs arose from different associations: to water a horse means “to give him water”, but to milk implies getting milk from an animal (e.g. to milk a cow).

Composition

This type of word-building, in which new words are produced by combining two or more stems, is one of the three most productive types in Modern English, the other two are conversion and affixation. Compounds, though certainly fewer in quantity than derived or root words, still represent one of the most typical and specific features of English word-structure.

There are at least ***three aspects*** of composition that present special interest.

The first is the **structural** aspect. Compounds are not homogeneous in structure. Traditionally three types are distinguished:neutral, morphological and syntactic.

In neutral compounds the process of compounding is realized without any linking elements, by a mere juxtaposition of two stems, as in blackbird, shop-window, sunflower, bedroom, tallboy, etc. There are three subtypes of neutral compounds depending on the structure of the constituent stems.

The examples above represent the subtype which may be described as simple neutral compounds: they consist of simple affixless stems.

Compounds which have affixes in their structure are called derived or derivational compounds. E.g. absent-mindedness, blue-eyed, golden-haired, broad-shouldered, lady-killer, film-goer, music-lover, honey-mooner, first-nighter, late-comer, newcomer, early-riser, evil-doer. The productivity of this type is confirmed by a considerable number of comparatively recent formations, such as teenager, babysitter, strap-hanger, four-seater ("car or boat with four seats"), doubledecker ("a ship or bus with two decks"). Numerous nonce-words are coined on this pattern which is another proof of its high productivity: e.g. luncher-out ("a person who habitually takes his lunch in restaurants and not at home"), goose-flesher ("murder story") or attention getter in the following fragment:

"Dad," I began … "I'm going to lose my job." That should be an attention getter, I figured.

The third subtype of neutral compounds is called ***contracted compounds***. These words have a shortened (contracted) stem in their structure: TV-set (-program, -show, -canal, etc., V-day (Victory Day), G-man (Government man "FBI agent"), H-bag (handbag), T-shirt, etc.

Morphological compounds are few in number. This type is non-productive. It is represented by words in which two compounding stems are combined by a linking vowel or consonant, e.g. Anglo-Saxon, Franco-Prussian, handiwork, handicraft, craftsmanship, spokesman, statesman.

In syntactic compounds we once more find a feature of specifically English word-structure. These words are formed from segments of speech, preserving in their structure numerous traces of syntagmatic relations typical of speech: articles, prepositions, adverbs, as in the nouns lily-of-the-valley, Jack-of-all-trades, good-for-nothing, mother-in-law, sit-at-home. syntactical relations and grammatical patterns current in present-day English can be clearly traced in the structures of such compound nouns as pick-me-up, know-all, know-nothing, go-between, get-together, whodunit. The

last word (meaning “a detective story”) was obviously coined from the ungrammatical variant of the word-group who (has) done it.

In this group of compounds, once more, we find a great number of neologisms, and whodunit is one of them. Consider, also, the two following fragments which make rich use of modern city traffic terms.

Randy managed to weave through a maze of one-way-streets, no-left-turns, and no-stopping-zones...

“You go down to the Department of Motor Vehicles tomorrow and take your behind-the-wheel test.

The structure of most compounds is transparent, as it were, and clearly betrays the origin of these words from word-combinations. The fragments below illustrate admirably the very process of coining nonce-words after the productive patterns of composition.

“Is all this really true?” he asked. “Or are you pulling my leg?”

There was no sign of leg-pulling on any of the faces.

“What if they capture us? what if they shoot us? what if my beard were made of green spinach?”

“You’ll never get anywhere if you go about what-iffing like that. ... We want no what-iffers around.

The first of the examples presents the nonce-word leg-pulling coined on the pattern of neutral derivational compounds. The what-iffing and what-iffers of the second extract seem to represent the same type, though there is something about the words clearly resembling syntactic compounds.

* * *

Another focus of interest is the semantic aspect of compound words, that is, the question of correlations of the separate meanings of the constituent parts and the actual

meaning of the compound. or, to put it in easier terms: can the meaning of a compound word be regarded as the sum of its constituent meanings?

To try and answer this question, let us consider the following groups of examples.

(1)Classroom, bedroom, working-man, evening-gown, dining-room, sleeping-car, reading-room, dancing-hall.

This group seems to represent compounds whose meanings can really be described as the sum of their constituent meanings. Yet, in the last four words we can distinctly detect a slight shift of meaning. The first component in these words, if taken as a free form, denotes an action or state of whatever or whoever is characterized by the word. Yet, a sleeping-car is not a car that sleeps (a sleeping child), nor is a dancing-hall actually dancing (dancing pairs).

The shift of meaning becomes much more pronounced in the second group of examples.

(2)Blackboard, blackbird, football, lady-killer, pick-pocket, good-for-nothing, lazybones, chatterbox.

In these compounds one of the components (or both) has changed its meaning: a blackboard is neither a board nor necessarily black, football is not a ball but a game, a chatterbox not a box but a person, and a lady-killer kills no one but is merely a man who fascinates women. It is clear that in all these compounds the meaning of the whole word cannot be defined as the sum of the constituent meanings. The process of change of meaning in some such words has gone so far that the meaning of one or both constituents is no longer in the least associated with current meaning of the corresponding free form, and yet the speech community quite calmly accepts such seemingly illogical word groups as a white blackbird, pink bluebells or an entirely confusing statement like: Blackbarries are red when they are green.

Yet, despite a certain readjustment in the semantic structure of the word, the meanings of the constituents of the compounds of this second group are still transparent: you can see through them the meaning of the whole complex. Knowing the meanings of the constituents a student of English can get a fairly clear idea what the whole word means even if he comes across it for the first time. At least, it is clear that a blackbird is some kind of bird and that a good-for-nothing is not meant as a compliment.

(3) In the third group of compounds the process of deducing the meaning of the whole from those of the constituents is impossible. The key to meaning seems to have been irretrievably lost: ladybird is not a bird, but an insect, tallboy not a boy but a piece of furniture, bluestocking, on the contrary, is a person, whereas blue-bottle may denote both a flower and an insect but never a bottle.

Similar enigmas are encoded in such words as man-of-war (“warship), merry-to-round (“carousel”), horse-marine (“a person who is unsuitable for his job or position”) butter-fingers (“clumsy person”), wall-flower (“a girl who is not invited to dance at a party’), whodunit (“detective story”), straphanger (1. “a passenger who stands in a crowded bus or underground and holds onto a strap) 2. a book of light genre, trash; the kind of book one is likely to read when travelling in buses or trains”).

The compounds whose meanings do not correspond to the separate meanings of their constituent parts (2nd and 3rd group listed above) are called idiomatic compounds, in contrast to the first group known as non-idiomatic compounds.

The suggested subdivision into three groups is based on the degree of semantic cohesion of the constituent parts, the third group representing the extreme case of cohesion wher the constituent meanings blend to produce an entirely new meaning.

The following joke perfectly shows what happens if an idiomatic compound is misunderstood as non-idiomatic.

Patient:They tell me, doctor, you are a perfect lady-killer.

Doctor: Oh, no, no! I assure you, my dear madam, I make no distinction between the sexes.

In this joke, while the patient means to compliment the doctor on his being a handsome and irresistible man, he takes or pretends to take the word ladykiller literally, as a sum of the direct meanings of its constituents.

Composition is not quite so flexible a way of coining new words as conversion but flexible enough as is convincingly shown by the examples of nonce-words given above. Among compounds are found numerous expressive and colourful words. They are also comaparatively laconic, absorbing into one word an idea that otherwise would have

required a whole phrase (The hotel was full of week-enders and the Hotel was full of people spending the week-end there).

Both the laconic and the expressive value of compounds can be well illustrated by English compound adjectives denoting colours (snow-white – as white as snow).

In the following extract a family are discussing which colour to paint their car.

“Could you paint it canary yellow, Fred?”
“Turtle green”, shouted mother.
“Mouse grey,” Randy suggested.
“Dove white, maybe?”
‘Rattlesnake brown?”
“No, peacock blue”.

The meanings of all these multi-coloured adjectives is based on comparison: the second constituent is the name of a colour used in its actual sense and the first is the name of an object (animal, flower) with which the comparison is drawn. The pattern is productive and a great number of nonce-words are created after it. You can coin an adjective comparing the colour of a defined object with almost anything on earth: the pattern allows for vast creative experiments. If canary yellow, peacock blue, dove white are registered by dictionaries, turtle green and rattlesnake brown are certainly typical nonce-words, amusing inventions of the author aimed at a humorous effect.

Sometimes it is pointed out, as a disadvantage, that the English language has only one word blue for Georgian ლურჯი” and “ცისფერი”.

But this seeming inadequacy is compensated by a large number of adjectives coined on the pattern of comparison such as navy blue, cornflower blue, peacock blue, china blue, sky-blue, turquoise blue, forget-me-not blue, powder-blue. This list can be supplemented by compound adjectives which also denote different shades of blue, but are not built on comparison: dark blue, light blue, pale blue, etc.

1.Лексикология английского языка – Г.Б. Антрушина, 1999. (Antrushina G.B.,, English Lexicology, 1999) იხ. გვერდები 91 - 113

2. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conversion_(linguistics)
3. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Compound_(linguistics)
4. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Word
5. http://pandora.cii.wwu.edu/vajda/ling201/test1materials/Morphologyoverhead.htm

Lecture 13. Exercises for Seminars and Independent Work

1.Consider your answers to the following.

1.What is understood by composition? What do we call words made by this type of word-building?
2.Into what groups and subgroups can compounds be subdivided structurally? Illustrate your answer with examples.
3.Which types of composition are productive in Modern English? How can this be demonstrated?
4.What are the interrelationships between the meaning of a compound word and the meanings of its constituent parts? Point out the principal cases and give examples.

II. Find compounds in the following sentences and extracts and write them out in three columns: A. Neutral compounds. B. Morphological compounds. C. Syntactic compounds.

1. During a tour of the shops in the West End Pat and Jack came to an expensive-looking barber's. "Razors!" exclaimed Pat. "You want one, don't you? There's a beauty there for twenty-five shillings, and there's another for thirty. Which would you sooner have?" "A beard," said Jack, walking off.
2. The children were in the midst of a free-for-all (a fight without rules).

3. That night, as they cold-suppered together, Barmy cleared his throat and looked across at Pango with a sad sweet smile. “You never can plan and scheme and weigh your every action, because you never can tell when doing such-and-such won’t make so-and-so happen – while, on the other hand, if you do so-and-so happen – while, on the other hand, if you do so-and-so it may just as easily lead to such-and-such.

4.On the side of your travelling-bag is your name.

5.”I’ve had nothing to eat for three days”, he said. “would you spare an old man a bite of dinner?”

“I should say not, you good-for-nothing loafer,” said the landlady and slammed the door in his face.

6.”Where are you living Grumpy”?

“In the Park. The fresh-air treatment is all the thing nowadays”.

7.Arriving home one evening a man found the house locked up. He climbed upon the shed roof and with much difficulty entered through a second-story window. On the dining-room table he found a note from his absent-minded wife: “I have gone out. You’ ll find the key under the door mat.

8.One balmy, blue-and-white morning the old woman stood in her long, tidy garden and looked up at her small neat cottage. Its tip-tilted roof was new and its its well-fitting doors had been painted blue. Its newly-hung curtains were gay … bird-early next morning she went into dew-drenched garden.

III.Identify the neutral compounds in the word combinations given below and write them out in 3 columns: A.Simple neutral compounds. B.Neutral derived compounds. C.neutral contracted compounds.

An air-conditioned hall; a glass-walled room; to fight against H-bomb; a loud revolver-shot; a high-pitched voice; a heavy topcoat; a car’s windshield; a snow-white handkerchief; a radio-equipped car; thousands of gold-seekers; a big hunting-knife; to howl long and wolf-like.

IV.Arrange the compounds given below into two groups: a. Idiomatic. B.Non-idiomatic. Say whether the semantic change within idiomatic compounds is partial or total.

Light-hearted, butterfly, homebody, cabman, medium-sized, blackberry, bluebell, good-for-nothing, wolf-dog, highway, dragon-fly, looking-glass, greengrocer, bluestocking, gooseberry, necklace, earthquake, lazy-bones.

V. Identify the compounds in the word-groups below. Say as much as you can about their structure and semantics.

A heavy snowfall, an automobile salesman, corn-coloured chiffon, vehicle searchlights, Afro-American, to disembark a stowaway, stoop-shouldered man, a somewhat matter-of-fact manner, a fur-lined boot, to pick forget-me-nots and lilies-of-the-valley, a small T-shirt.

Exercises are compiled from the book -.Лексикология английского языка – Г.Б. Антрушина, 1999.

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Lecture 14.

Composition. Shortening (Contraction). Sound-Imitation (Onomatopoeia). Reduplication. Back-formation (Reversion) . (Antrushina G.B.,, English Lexicology, 1999, 113 – 127).

Criteria for composition

A further theoretical aspect of composition is the criteria for distinguishing between a compound and a word-combination.

This question has a direct bearing on the specific feature of the srtucture of most English compounds which has already been mentioned: with the exception of the rare morphological type, they originate directly from word-combinations and are often homonymous to them: a tall boy – a tallboy.

In this case the ***graphic criterion*** of distinguishing between a word and a word-group seems to be sufficiently convincingyet, in many cases it cannot wholly be relied on. The

spelling of many compounds, tallboy among them, can be varied even within the same book. In the case of tallboy the ***semantic criterion*** seems more reliable, for the striking difference in the meanings of the word and the word-group certainly points to the highest degree of semantic cohesion in the word: tallboy does not even denote a person, but a piece of furniture, a chest of drawers supported by a low stand.

Moreover, the word-group a tall boy conveys two concepts: 1.a young male person; 2.big in size), whereas the word tallboy expresses one concept.

Yet, the semantic criterion alone cannot prove anything as phraseological units also convey a single concept and some of them are characterized by a high degree of semantic cohesion.

The phonetic criterion for compounds may be treated as that of a single stress. The criterion is convincingly applicable to many compound nouns, yet does not work with compound adjectives

‘slowcoach, ‘blackbird, ‘tallboy,
but: ‘blue-‘eyed, ‘absent-‘minded, ‘ill-‘mannered.

Still, it is true that the morphological structure of these adjectives and their hyphenated spelling leave no doubt about their status as words and not word-groups.

Morphological and syntactic criteria can also be applied to compound words in order to distinguish them from word-groups.

In the word-group a tall boy each of the constituents is independently open to grammatical changes peculiar to its own category as a part of speech: They were the tallest boys in their form.

Between the constituent parts of the word-group other words can be inserted: a tall handsome boy.

The compound tallboy – and, in actual fact, any other compound – is not subjected to such changes. The first component is grammatically invariable; the plural form ending is added to the whole unit: tallboys. No word can be inserted between the components, even with the compounds which have a traditional separate graphic form.

All this leads us to the conclusion that, in most cases, only several criteria (semantic, morphological, syntactic, phonetic, graphic) can convincingly classify a lexical unit as either a compound word or a word group.

Semi-Affixes

Back-formation (Reversion)

Consider the following examples:

Better sorts of lip-stick are frequently described in advertisements as kissproof. Certain technical devices are foolproof meaning that they are safe even in a fool's hands.

All these words, with –proof for the second component, stand between compounds and derived words in their characteristics. On the one hand, the second component seems to bear all the features of a stem and preserves certain semantic associations with the free form –proof. On the other hand, the meaning of –proof in all the numerous words built on this pattern has become so generelized that it is certainly approaching that of a suffix. The high productivity of the pattern is proved, once more, by the possibility of coining nonce-words after this pattern: look-proof and knid-proof, the second produced from the non-existent Knid.

The component proof, standing thus between a stem and an affix, is regarded by some scholars as a semi-affix.

Another example of semi-affix is –man in a vast group of English nouns denoting people:sportsman, gentleman, nobleman, salesman, seaman, fisherman, countryman, statesman, policeman, chairman, etc.

Semantically, the constituent –man in these words approaches the generalized meaning of such noun-forming suffixes as –er, -or, -ist (artist), -ite (hypocrite). It has moved so far in its meaning from the corresponding free form man, that such word-groups as woman policeman or Mrs. Chairman are quite usual.

Other examples of semi-affixes are –land, Scotland, fatherland, wonderland), -like (ladylike, unladylike, businesslike, unbusinesslike, starlike, flowerlike) –worthy (seaworthy, trustworthy, praiseworthy).

Shortening (Contraction)

This comparatively new way of word-building has achieved a high degree of productivity nowadays, especially in American English.

Shortenings (or contractd\curtailed words) are produced in two different ways. The first is to make a new word from a syllable (rarer two) of the original word. The latter may lose its beginning (as in phone made from telephone, fence from defense), its ending (as in hols from holidays, vac from vacation, props from properties, ad from advertisement) or both the beginning and ending (as in flu from influenza, fridge from refrigerator).

The second way of shortening is to make a new word from the initial letters of a word group: U.N.O. (United Nations Organization), B.B.C. (British Broadcasting Corporation), M.P/ Member of Parliament. This type is called initial shortenings. They are found not only among formal words, but also among colloquialisms and slang. So, g.f. is a shortened word made from the compound girl-friend. The word, though. seems somewhat ambiguous as the following conversation clearly shows:

- Who's the letter from?
- My g.f.
- Didn't know that had girl-friends. A nice girl?
- Idiot! It's from my grandfather!.

It is believed that the preference for shortenings can be explained due to the ever-increasing tempo of modern life. Yet, confusion and misunderstanding are quite natural consequences of the modern overabundance of shortened words, and initial shortenings are often especially enigmatic and misleading.

Both types of shortenings are characteristic of informal speech in general and of uncultivated speech particularly. The history of the American Okay seems to be rather typical. Originally this initial shortening was spelt O.K. and was supposed to stand for all correct. The purely oral manner in which sounds were recorded for letters resulted in O.K.

Here are some more examples of informal shortenings. Movie (from moving-picture), gent (from gentleman), specs (from spectacles), circs (circumstnces), I.O.Y (a written acknowledgement of debt, made from I owe you), lib (liberty. May I take the lib of saying something to you?), cert (certainly. This enterprise is a cert if you have a bit of a capital), metrop (metropoly Paris is a gay metrop).

Students' informal speech abounds in words of the type:exam, lab, prof, vac, hol, co-ed (a girl student at a coeducational school).

Sound-Imitation (Onomatopoeia)

Words coined by this type of word-building are made by imitating different kinds of sounds that may be produced by animals, birds, insects, human beings and inanimate objects.

It is of some interest that sounds produced by the same kind of animal are frequently represented by quite different sound groups in different languages. English dogs bark or howl. The English cock cries cock-a doole-doo. In England ducks quack and frogs croak.

Some names of animals and especially of birds and insects are also produced by sound-imitation: crow, cuckoo, humming-bird, cricket.

There is a hypothesis that sound-imitation as a way of word-formation should be viewed as something much wider than just the production of words by the imitation of purely acoustic phenomena. Some scholars suggest that words may imitate through their sound form certain unacoustic features and qualities of inanimate objects, actions and processes or that the meaning of the word can be regarded as the immediate relation of the sound group to the object. If a young chicken or kitten is described as fluffy there seems to be something in the sound of an adjective that conveys the softness. Such verbs as to glance, to glide, to slide, to slip are supposed to convey by their very sound the nature of the smooth, easy movement over a slippery surface. The sound form of the words shimmer, glimmer, glitter seems to reproduce the wavering, tremulous nature of the faint light. the sound of the verbs to rush, to dash, to flash may be said to reflect brevity, swiftness and energetic nature of their corresponding actions.

The word thrill has something in the quality of its sound that very aptly conveys the trumulous, tingling sensation it expresses.

Some scholars have given serious consideration to this theory. However, it has not yet been properly developed.

Reduplication

In reduplication new words are made by doubling a stem, either without any phonetic changes as in bye-bye or with a variation of the root-vowel or consonant as in ping-pong, chit-chat (gradational reduplication).

This type of word-building is greatly facilitated in Modern English by the vast number of monosyllables. Stylistically speaking most words made by reduplication represent informal groups: colloqualisms and slang. E.g. walkie-talkie, riff-raff (worthless and disreputable element of society), chi-chi (for chic), dilly-dallying (wasting time, doing nothing), shilly-shallying (irresolution, indecision).

Back Formation (Reversion)

The earliest examples of this type of word-building are the verb to beg that was made from the French borrowing beggar, to burgle from burglar, to cobble from cobbler. In all these cases the verb was made from the noun by subtracting what was mistakenly associated with the English suffix -er. The pattern of the type to work – worker was firmly established in the subconscious of English-speaking people at the time when these formations appeared, and it was taken for granted that any noun denoting profession or occupation is certain to have a corresponding verb of the same root. So, in the case of to burgle, to beg the process was reversed: instead of a noun made from a verb by affixation (painter – to paint), a verb was produced from a noun by subtraction. That is why this type of word-building received the name of back-formation or reversion.

Later examples of back-formation are to butle from butler, to baby-sit from baby-sitter, to blood-transfuse from blood-transfusion, to fingerprint from finger printing.

1.Лексикология английского языка – Г.Б. Антрушина, 1999. (Antrushina G.B.,, English Lexicology, 1999) იხ. გვერდები 113 – 127.

2. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reduplication

3.http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Back-formation

Lecture 14. Exercises for Seminars

I. Consider your answers to the following.

1.What are the criteria for distinguishing between a compound and a word-combination?

2.What are the italicized elements in the words given below? what makes them different from affixes? from stems?

Statesman, waterproof, cat-like, trustworthy.

3.What are the two processes of making shortenings? Explain the productivity of this way of word-building and stylistic characteristic of shortened words. Give examples.

4.What minor processes of word-building do you know? Illustrate your answer with examples.

II.Say whether the following lexical units are word-groups or compounds.

Railway platform, snowman, light dress, traffic light, railway station, landing field, film star, white man, hungry dog, medical man, landing plane, top hat, distant star, small house, green light, evening dressblack skirt, medical student, hot dog, blue dress, U-shaped trap, black shirt.

III.Find shortenings and specify the method of their formation

1.Doc, I got bad eyes.

2.I feel O.k.

3.Two planes collided in the mid-air.

IV. What is the type of word-building by which the italicized words in the following extracts were made?

1.If they'd anything to tell each other, they could ***hob-nob*** (to be on familiar terms) over ***beef-tea*** in a **perfectly** casual and natural manner.

2.Six cats were ***meowing piteously***.

3.he was anxious to ***broadcast*** the fact.

4Itook the lib of barging in.

5.Pots were boiling and ***bubbling*** on huge stoves, and kettles were ***hissing***, and pans were ***sizzling,*** and strange iron machines were ***clanking*** and ***spluttering***.

6.I'd work for him, steal for him, *slave* for him, even ***beg f***or him.

Lecture 15. Revision

Test