

# English Lexicology

## *Lecture 1*

# Lexicology

- **10 lectures**
- **7 seminars**

## EXAMINATION:

- ✓ **20 examination questions**
- ✓ **lexicological analysis ('a practical card'): 4 tasks**

❖ **B -- 203**

# **LEXICOLOGY. LEXICAL ITEMS.**

*Questions for discussion:*

- 1. Lexicology as a branch of linguistics.**
- 2. Words vs. lexical items.**

# LINGUISTICS:

- GENERAL LINGUISTICS
- HISTORY OF LG
- THEORETICAL PHONETICS
- THEORETICAL GRAMMAR
- LEXICOLOGY
- STYLISTICS

The term '*lexicology*':

(Gr.) *lexis* = 'word, phrase' +

(Gr.) *logos* = 'learning, department of knowledge'

=

'*lexicology*' is 'the science of the word'

**Lexicology -- the part of linguistics that studies vocabulary of a lg.**

# Lexicology

```
graph TD; A[Lexicology] --> B[general]; A --> C[special]; C --> D[lexicology of the English language]
```

*general*

*special*

**lexicology of the English language**

## *Subbranches in lexicology:*

1) *semasiology/semantics*

2) *etymology*

3) *word-formation*

4) *phraseology*

5) *lexicography*

# **Views on the lexicon:**

- **synchronic**
- **diachronic**
- **contrastive**
- **structural**
- **semantic**
- **syntagmatic**
- **paradigmatic**



## 2. Words vs. lexical items.

- **word – a nominative unit;**
- ***word* – a sequence/group of human sounds possessing a certain autonom. mg & forming an autonom. unity;**
- **the smallest autonom. name**
- **the term is *ambiguous***

**LEXEME/lexical item/lexical unit –**

**the *totality of mgs of a word* with the unity of its different grammatical forms**

▪ **B.L. Whorf (1938): ‘lexeme’**

- **in dictionaries (*headwords*), but not always**

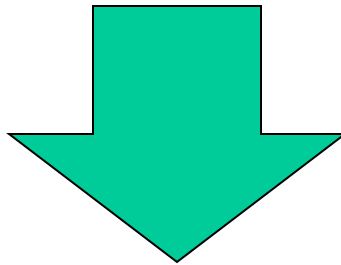
❖ **lexical-semantic variants = individual mgs of a lexeme**

- In corpus linguistics, lexemes are commonly referred to as **lemmas**.
- The lemma -- "essentially an abstract representation, subsuming all the formal lexical variations which may apply" (D.Crystal, Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics, 2008).
- currently used in corpus research & psycholinguistic studies as quasi-synonymous with lexeme

**Word – the smallest autonom. name**

- **Is it the only possible name?**

- ❖ **idioms/phraseological units – units of mg larger than a single word**



## Nominative means of a lg:

- **LEXIS** – the totality of words & phraseological units serving as means of naming
- **LEXICON** – the total stock of meaningful units in a lg: words + idioms + morphemes
- ❖ **LEXICOLOGY** – the science of the lexis/lexicon

Out of some 2,700 world lgs **English – the richest in vocabulary:**

**The OED: 500,000 words +**

**German: 185,000 words**

**French: 100,000 words**

## lexicology – a *socio-linguistic* discipline:

- word-stock immediately reacts to changes in social life:
  - ✓ ‘*cybervocabulary*’
  - ✓ ‘*gamespeak*’
- establishing interrelations btw **the lg, the social life & conventions of lg use**
- **communicative competence**: semantics + pragmatics + cultural aspect
- **culture-specific words/culture-bound terms**