

Lecture 1

**Introduction into
Modern English
Lexicology**

Plan:

1. Definition of lexicology. Aims of lexicology. The object of lexicology (L). Two approaches to language studies.
2. Links of lexicology with other branches of linguistics.
3. The course of modern English lexicology, its theoretical and practical significance.

List of Terms:

- lexicology
- aim of lexicology
- object of lexicology
- lexicon
- the synchronic approach to language studies
- the diachronic approach to language studies
- synchronic (descriptive) lexicology
- diachronic (historical) lexicology
- general lexicology
- special lexicology
- contrastive (comparative) lexicology
- lexicography

What's in a name? That which we call a rose
By any other name would smell as sweet...

(W. Shakespeare. Romeo and Juliet)

1. Definition of lexicology. Aims of lexicology. The object of lexicology. Two approaches to language studies.

lexis (“word”, “phrase”)

+

logos

(“learning”, “a department of
knowledge”)

Lexicology:

- the science of word. (Р.З. Гинзбург)
- a branch of linguistics which is the study of words. (Г.Б. Антрушина)
- is the part of linguistics dealing with the vocabulary of the language and the properties of words as the main units of the language. (И. В. Арнольд)
- наука, задача которой – изучение словарного состава языка во всей совокупности и сложности составляющих его элементов. (З.А. Харитончик)

Aim of Lexicology:

a study and systematic description of vocabulary in respect to its origin, development and current use.

Object of Lexicology:

lexicon - word-stock in modern
English

Two Approaches to Language Studies:

- **the synchronic approach** (concerned with the vocabulary of a language as it exists at a given time, e.g., at the present time)
- **the diachronic approach** (deals with the changes and the development of vocabulary in the course of time)

to beg and beggar

- Synchronically:

“beggar” was derived from the word “to beg” (as to sing – singer, to teach – teacher).

- Diachronically:

“beggar” was borrowed from Old French.

- **Descriptive Lexicology** deals with the vocabulary and vocabulary units at a certain time.
- **Historical Lexicology** deals with the evolution of the vocabulary units as time goes by.

- **General Lexicology** – is a part of general linguistics; it is concerned with the study of vocabulary irrespective of the specific features of any particular language.
- **Special Lexicology** – is the lexicology of a particular language (*e.g.* English, Russian), it is the study and description of its vocabulary and vocabulary units.

- **Contrastive (Comparative)**

Lexicology studies the correlation between the vocabularies of two or more languages, and finds out the correspondences between the vocabulary units of the languages under comparison.

2. Links of lexicology with other branches of linguistics.

Links with Other Branches of Linguistics:

- **phonetics** (e.g. [*pit*] is different from [*tip*])
- **stylistics**
- **grammar** (e.g. *word – words*)
- **sociolinguistics** (e.g. *computer, spaceship*)
- **phonology, morphology and syntax**
- **methods of language teaching**

3. The course of modern English lexicology, its theoretical and practical significance.

The Course of Modern English Lexicology Describes:

- the characteristic features of origin of English words (etymology);
- the problems of word-structure and word-formation in modern English (word-formation);
- peculiarities of meaning of English words (semantics);
- the classification of vocabulary units into various groupings;

The Course of Modern English Lexicology Describes:

- the relations between various lexical layers of the English vocabulary;
- combinability of lexical units and the laws of formation of phraseological units (phraseology);
- major ways of replenishing the English vocabulary with new vocabulary units;
- major standard variants of English.

Lexicography is the science and
art of dictionary-compiling

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