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ПРАКТИЧЕСКИЙ КУРС АНГЛИЙСКОЙ ЛЕКСИКОЛОГИИ

A PRACTICAL COURSE IN ENGLISH LEXICOLOGY

Рекомендовано

*Учебно-методическим объединением по образованию в области лингвистики
Министерства образования и науки Российской Федерации
в качестве учебного пособия для студентов лингвистических вузов
и факультетов иностранных языков*

3-е издание, стереотипное



Москва
Издательский центр «Академия»
2008

УДК 802.0:801.3(075.8)
ББК 81.2Англ-3 я73
3-966

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3-966 Практический курс английской лексикологии = A Practical Course in English Lexicology : учеб. пособие для студ. лингв. вузов и фак. ин. языков / И. В. Зыкова. — 3-е изд., стер. — М. : Издательский центр «Академия», 2008. — 288 с.
ISBN 978-5-7695-5568-8

Учебное пособие охватывает всю программу курса лексикологии английского языка. В нем рассматриваются важнейшие проблемы лексикологии в свете ведущих принципов современной лингвистики. Введение в теоретические проблемы курса осуществляется на фоне обобщающего описания основ лексического строя английского языка. Каждый раздел пособия снабжен вопросами и практическими заданиями, контролирующими и углубляющими понимание языковых явлений, а также стимулирующими самостоятельный анализ фактов языка.

Для студентов лингвистических вузов и факультетов иностранных языков.

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ISBN 978-5-7695-5568-8

Предлагаемое учебное пособие представляет собой курс лексикологии английского языка и предназначено для студентов лингвистических университетов и институтов, а также для студентов факультетов иностранных языков. Пособие может быть использовано при изучении элементов лексикологии на занятиях по речевой практике и культуре речевого общения, а также на занятиях, посвященных проблемам межкультурной коммуникации. Пособие может быть использовано также при написании курсовых и дипломных работ, при выполнении самостоятельных учебно-исследовательских заданий и при самостоятельной работе над языковым материалом.

Практические цели учебного пособия предполагают усвоение основ частной лексикологии, ознакомление студентов с наиболее важными особенностями структурно-семантического строя английского языка, что поможет им в дальнейшем сознательно подходить к изучению лексики в практическом плане.

В пособии осуществлен единый подход к изложению материала, основной особенностью которого являются поэтапная проработка теоретических положений курса и контроль, осуществляемый посредством вопросов и практических заданий. Соблюдение общего принципа организации материала способствует более эффективному усвоению всех включенных в пособие тем.

Теория является неотъемлемой частью процесса подготовки специалистов по межкультурной коммуникации. Без углубления в теоретические аспекты языка невозможна подготовка квалифицированных кадров в области лингвистики, а также филологии. Знание теоретических основ как частных, так и общих лингвистических дисциплин способствует достижению высоких результатов в ходе обучения иностранному языку, позволяет сформировать прочные навыки практического использования того или иного иностранного языка. В настоящее время исследователи все чаще приходят к выводу о том, что *без знания теории изучение языков существенно осложняется*. Обучающийся, не имеющий представления о структурно-деривационных, семантических, прагматических и других особенностях изучаемого языка, а также его разнообразных закономерностях, не способен адаптироваться к новой для него языковой среде, к новым для него языковым стандартам и речевым ситуациям, не готов к адекватному использованию изучаемых языковых средств, поскольку в значительной степени опирается на знания и возможности родного

языка. Таким образом, овладение теоретической базой данных того или иного иностранного языка гарантирует успех в процессе межкультурного общения, снимает проблему возникновения различных межъязыковых конфликтов, существенно понижающих степень эффективности процесса межкультурной коммуникации, и формирует прочные рецептивные и продуктивные межъязыковые умения, необходимые для достижения понимания на межкультурном уровне общения.

Характер и объем теоретического материала определен практической необходимостью и целесообразностью. Теоретические сведения предлагаются в объеме, необходимом для практического овладения определенными лингвистическими понятиями. Теоретический материал во многих случаях сопровождается схемами и таблицами, что делает теорию более наглядной и запоминающейся.

Практическая часть учебного пособия начинается с серии вопросов, которые даются после каждой части или главы. Вопросы, выносимые на обсуждение, предшествуют блоку практических заданий, что, безусловно, облегчает их выполнение, поскольку данные вопросы способствуют не только повторению пройденного теоретического материала, но и концентрации внимания студентов на наиболее важных научных понятиях и явлениях языка.

Особое внимание в книге уделяется организации работы с практическим материалом. Большинство практических заданий содержит образцы их выполнения. Практические задания — это основной способ выработки умений и приобретения навыков в работе с английским языком.

Основой для практических заданий служат разнообразные современные английские лексикографические источники, а также современные английские тексты. Практический материал отбирался с таким расчетом, чтобы он, с одной стороны, расширял и одновременно углублял представление о том или ином лингвистическом явлении, с другой стороны, облегчал понимание самой сути этого явления, формируя прочные навыки не только его распознавания среди множества других фактов языка, но и научно-го анализа лингвистических данных.

Пособие содержит более 160 разнообразных практических заданий. В соответствии с задачами практической лексикологии автор предлагает для выполнения следующие практические задания: 1) развивающие умение анализировать языковые факты на основе приобретенных знаний; 2) направленные на нахождение практического решения проблемы на самостоятельно отобранном материале; 3) развивающие аналитическое мышление и умение обобщать и систематизировать конкретный языковой материал; 4) развивающие языковую догадку. Большое количество практических заданий и наличие ключей к ним дают установку на само-

стоятельное творческое изучение английского языка, позволяют значительно расширить сферу его практического применения. Таким образом, выполняя эти задания, студенты развивают чувство языка, пополняют свой словарный запас, а также знакомятся с современными тенденциями в английской языковой системе.

Практические задания можно рассматривать также как дополнительный иллюстративный материал к теоретическим положениям курса.

Учебное пособие завершается выполнением теста по всему пройденному материалу. Вопросы теста построены в строгом соответствии с той последовательностью, в которой представлен теоретический материал. Ключи к тесту помогают студентам самостоятельно оценить свои знания и степень усвоения той или иной темы.

Автор сердечно благодарит рецензентов книги за рекомендации, сделанные ими при ознакомлении с пособием, а также, несомненно, свою семью за понимание, терпение и поддержку.

И. В. Зыкова

1. The Object of Lexicology. Links of Lexicology with Other Branches of Linguistics
2. Two Approaches to Language Study
3. The Course of Modern English Lexicology

1. THE OBJECT OF LEXICOLOGY.

LINKS OF LEXICOLOGY WITH OTHER BRANCHES OF LINGUISTICS

The term '**lexicology**' is composed of two Greek morphemes: *lexis* denoting 'word' and *logos* denoting 'learning'. Thus the literal meaning of the term 'lexicology' is 'the science of the word'. In modern linguistics **lexicology** is one of the branches of science dealing with different properties of words and the vocabulary of a language.

The term '**word**' denotes the basic unit of a language resulting from the association of a particular meaning with a particular group of sounds capable of a particular grammatical employment. The word is a structural and semantic entity within the language system.

The term '**vocabulary**' is used to denote the system formed by the total sum of all the words that the language possesses.

Distinction is naturally made between General Lexicology and Special Lexicology.

The general study of words and vocabulary, irrespective of the specific features of any particular language, is known as **General Lexicology**.

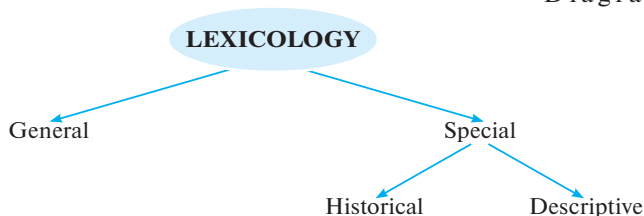
Special Lexicology is the lexicology of a particular language (e.g. English, Russian, etc.), i.e. the study and description of its words and vocabulary. Special Lexicology may be historical and descriptive.

The evolution of any vocabulary, as well as of its single elements, forms the object of **Historical Lexicology**. This branch of linguistics deals with the origin of various words, their change and development, and investigates the linguistic and extra-linguistic forces modifying their structure, meaning and usage. In the past historical treatment was always combined with the comparative method. Historical lexicology has been criticized for its atomistic approach, i.e. for treating every word as an

individual and isolated unit. This drawback is, however, not intrinsic to the science itself.

Descriptive Lexicology deals with the vocabulary of a given language at a given stage of its development. It studies the functions of words and their specific structure as a characteristic inherent in the system (Diagram 1).

Diagram 1



Lexicology has close ties with other branches of linguistics as they also take into account words in one way or another approaching them from different angles.

There is a relationship between lexicology and phonetics since phonetics is also concerned with the study of the word, i.e. with the sound-form of the word. A close connection between lexicology and grammar is conditioned by the manifold ties between the objects of their study. Even isolated words as presented in a dictionary bear a definite relation to the grammatical system of the language because they belong to some part of speech and conform to some lexico-grammatical characteristics of the word class to which they belong. Lexicology is linked with the history of a language since the latter investigates the changes and the development of the vocabulary of a language. There is also a close relationship between lexicology and stylistics. Stylistics studies many problems treated in lexicology. These are the problems of meaning, synonymy, differentiation of vocabulary according to the sphere of communication and some other issues. Lexicology is bound up with sociolinguistics. Sociolinguistics investigates the extra-linguistic or social causes of the changes in the vocabulary of a language. The word-stock of a language directly and immediately reacts to changes in social life. The intense development of science and technology, which is a social, i.e. an extra-linguistic factor, has lately given birth to a great number of new words, e.g.: *CD-ROM* ('compact disc read-only memory: a CD on which large quantities of information can be stored to be used by a computer, etc.'), *e-mail* ('a system that allows you to send and receive messages by computer'), *SMS* ('*technical* short message service: a method of sending a text message to a mobile phone'); *pager* ('a small radio device, activated from a central point which emits a series of bleeps or vibrates to inform the wearer that someone wishes to contact them or that it has received a short text message').

2. TWO APPROACHES TO LANGUAGE STUDY

There are two principal approaches in linguistic science to the study of language material, namely the synchronic (or descriptive) and the diachronic (or historical) approach. The distinction between a synchronic and a diachronic approach is due to the Swiss philologist Ferdinand de Saussure (1857 — 1913) who separated the two approaches stating that synchronic linguistics is concerned with systems and diachronic linguistics — with single units. Subsequent investigations, however, have shown the possibility and the necessity of introducing the historical point of view into systematic studies even in lexicology.

The term '**synchronic**' is composed of two Greek morphemes *syn* meaning 'together, with' and *chronos* which denotes 'time'. Thus, with regard to special lexicology the synchronic approach is concerned with the vocabulary of a language as it exists at a given period of time, e.g. at the present time.

The term '**diachronic**' is composed of the Greek morphemes *dia* meaning 'through' and *chronos* meaning 'time'. Thus, the diachronic approach in terms of special lexicology deals with the changes and the development of vocabulary in the course of time.

The two approaches in lexicology (synchronic and diachronic) should not be contrasted or set one against the other; in fact, they are interconnected and interdependent: every linguistic structure and system exists in a state of a constant development so that *the synchronic* state of a language system is a result of a long process of linguistic evolution, the result of *the historical* development of the language.

A good example illustrating both the distinction between the two approaches and their interconnection is furnished by the words *to beg* and *beggar*. Synchronically, these words are related as a simple word (*to beg*) and a derived word¹ (*beggar*). The noun *beggar* is derived from the verb *to beg* by means of the suffix **-ar**. Diachronically, however, we learn that the noun *beggar* was borrowed from Old French and the verb *to beg* appeared in the English language as a result of back derivation², i.e. it was derived from the noun *beggar*.

Thus, the synchronic approach studies language at a theoretical 'point' in time. It refers to Descriptive Lexicology as this branch of Linguistics deals with the vocabulary and vocabulary units of language at a certain time. The diachronic approach refers to Historical Lexicology that studies the development of language or languages over time.

¹ **Derived word** — a word formed or originated from another or from a root in the same or another language.

² **Back derivation** — the formation of a word from the stem (base) of another word, i.e. by means of cutting off suffixes (prefixes) from the source word. See also the formation of the words: *to burgle* from the word *burglar*; *to enthuse* from *enthusiasm*, *to legislate* from *legislator*.

3. THE COURSE OF MODERN ENGLISH LEXICOLOGY

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

Modern English Lexicology studies the relations between various layers of the English vocabulary and the specific laws and regulations that govern its development at the present time. The source and growth of the English vocabulary, the changes it has undergone in its history are also dwelt upon. A section dealing with Lexicography, the science and art of dictionary-compiling, is also traditionally included in a course of Lexicology.

The course of Modern English Lexicology is of great practical importance as the language learner will obtain much valuable information concerning the English word-stock and the laws and regulations governing the formation and usage of English words and word-groups.

This text-book treats the following basic problems:

1. Semasiology;
2. Word-Structure;
3. Word-Formation;
4. Etymology of the English Word-Stock;
5. Word-Groups and Phraseological Units;
6. Variants and Dialects of the English Language;
7. English Lexicography.

QUESTIONS

1. What Greek morphemes is the term 'lexicology' composed of?
2. What does lexicology study?
3. What does the term 'word' denote?
4. What is the term 'vocabulary' used to denote?
5. What is the object of study of General Lexicology?
6. What does Special Lexicology study?
7. What forms the object of study of Historical Lexicology?
8. What does Descriptive Lexicology deal with?
9. What branches of linguistics does lexicology have close ties with?
10. What are the principal approaches in linguistic science to the study of language material?

11. What scientist made the distinction between a synchronic and a diachronic approach?
12. What is the literal meaning of the term 'synchronic' which is Greek by origin?
13. What is the synchronic approach concerned with?
14. What is the literal meaning of the term 'diachronic' which is Greek by origin?
15. What does the diachronic approach deal with?
16. Why are the synchronic and the diachronic approaches interconnected and interdependent? Give an example.
17. What does Modern English Lexicology aim at?
18. What problems does Modern English Lexicology investigate?
19. What section is also traditionally included in a course of Lexicology? Why?
20. Why is the course of Modern English Lexicology of great practical importance for the language learner?

Chapter 1

1. Meaning as a Linguistic Notion
 - 1.1. Referential or Analytical Definitions of Meaning
 - 1.2. Functional or Contextual Definitions of Meaning
 - 1.3. Operational or Information-Oriented Definitions of Meaning
2. Two Approaches to the Content Facet of Linguistic Units. Naming
3. Types of Meaning
4. Aspects of Lexical Meaning

The branch of lexicology that is devoted to the study of meaning is called **semasiology**. What is meaning? To define meaning is especially difficult due to the complexity of the process by which language and human consciousness serve to reflect outward reality and to adopt it to human needs.

The definition of lexical meaning has been attempted more than once in accordance with the main principles of different linguistic schools¹. At present there is no universally accepted definition of meaning, or rather a definition reflecting all the basic features of meaning and being at the same time operational. Nevertheless different definitions of meaning help to sum up the general characteristics of the notion comparing various approaches to the description of the content side of the language.

1. MEANING AS A LINGUISTIC NOTION

There are three main categories of definitions of meaning which may be referred to as

- referential or analytical definitions of meaning;

¹ The disciples of **F. de Saussure**, a Swiss linguist (1857 — 1913), consider meaning to the relations between the object or notion named and the name itself. Descriptive linguistics of **the Bloomfieldian trend** defines meaning as the situation in which the word is uttered.

- functional or contextual definitions of meaning;
- operational or information-oriented definitions of meaning.

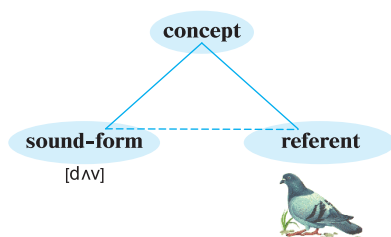
1.1. Referential or Analytical Definitions of Meaning

The essential characteristic of **the referential approach** is that it distinguishes between the three components closely connected with meaning:

- 1) the sound-form of the linguistic sign;
- 2) the concept underlying this sound-form;
- 3) the referent, i. e. the part or aspect of reality to which the linguistic sign refers.

The referential model of meaning is the so-called '**basic triangle**' which is graphically represented on Diagram 2.

Diagram 2



The sound-form of the linguistic sign [dʌv] is connected with our concept of the bird which it denotes and through it with the referent, i. e. the actual bird. The diagram implies that meaning is in a way a correlation between the sound-form of a word, the underlying concept and the concrete object it denotes. Hence, the questions arise: in what way does meaning correlate with each element of the triangle and in what relation does meaning stand to each of them?

1. It is easily observed that the sound-form of the word is not identical with its meaning. There is no inherent connection between the sound-cluster [dʌv] and the meaning of the word *dove*. The connection is conventional and arbitrary. This can be easily proved by comparing the sound-forms of different languages conveying one and the same meaning: English [dʌv] and Russian [golʊb']. The words have different sound-forms but express the same meaning.

2. When we examine a word we see that its meaning though closely connected with the underlying concept or concepts is not identical with it or with them. **Concept** is a category of human cognition (категория мышления). **Concept** is the thought of an object that singles out its essential features. **Concepts** are the results of abstraction and generalization. Thus they are almost the same for the whole of humanity

concept language	“a building for human habitation”	“fixed residence of family or household”
English	house	home
Russian	дом	дом

in one and the same period of its historical development. The meanings of words, however, are different in different languages. Compare the linguistic expression of one and the same concept in different languages (Table 1).

This comparison proves the fact that the concepts expressed by one and the same word in one language (in Russian), can be expressed by two different words in the other language (in English).

3. Distinguishing meaning from the referent, i.e. from the thing denoted by the linguistic sign, is of the utmost importance. To begin with, meaning is linguistic whereas the denoted object or the referent is beyond the scope of language. One and the same object can be denoted by more than one word of a different meaning. For example, in speech the referent



can be denoted by the word *cat*, *animal*, *pussy*, *Tom*, *this*, *pet*, etc. All these words have the same referent, but different meanings. Besides, there are words that have distinct meaning but do not refer to any existing thing, e.g. *mermaid* — ‘an imaginary sea creature that has the upper body of a woman and a fish’s tail’; *angel* — ‘a spirit that in some religions is believed to live in heaven with God; in pictures, angels are shown as people with wings’; *phoenix* — ‘in ancient stories, an imaginary bird which set fire to itself every 500 years and was born again, rising from its ashes (= the powder left after its body has been burnt)’; etc.

The conclusion is that meaning is not to be identical with any of the three points of the triangle — the sound-form, the concept and the referent, but is closely connected with them.

The referential definitions of meaning are usually criticized on the ground that: 1) they cannot be applied to sentences; 2) they cannot account for certain semantic additions emerging in the process of communication; 3) they fail to account for the fact that one word may denote different objects and phenomena (polysemy) while one and the same object may be denoted by different words (synonymy).

1.2. Functional or Contextual Definitions of Meaning

The functional approach to meaning maintains that the meaning of a linguistic unit can be studied only through its relation to other linguistic units. According to the given approach the meanings of the words *to move* and *movement* are different because these words function in speech differently, i. e. occupy different positions in relation to other words. *To move* can be followed by a noun (*to move a chair*) and preceded by a pronoun (*we move*). *Movement* may be followed by a preposition (*movement of a car*) and preceded by an adjective (*slow movement*). The position of a word in relation to other words is called **distribution of the word**. As the distribution of the words *to move* and *movement* is different they belong to different classes of words and their meanings are different.

The same is true of different meanings of one and the same word. Analyzing the function of a word in linguistic contexts and comparing these contexts, we conclude that meanings are different. For example, we can observe the difference of meanings of the verb *to take* if we examine its functions in different linguistic contexts, *to take a seat* ('to sit down') as opposed to *to take to smb.* ('to begin to like someone'). The term '**context**' is defined as the minimum stretch of speech necessary and sufficient to determine which of the possible meanings of a polysemantic word is used.

The functional approach is sometimes described as contextual as it is based on the analysis of various contexts. In the functional approach which is typical of structural linguistics semantic investigation is confined to the analysis of the difference or sameness of meaning: meaning is understood as the function of a linguistic unit.

1.3. Operational or Information-Oriented Definitions of Meaning

The operational or information-oriented definitions of meaning are centered on defining meaning through its role in the process of communication. Thus, this approach studies words in action and is more interested in how meaning works than in what it is. The information-oriented approach began to take shape with the growing interest of linguistics in the communicative aspect of the language when the object of study was shifted to relations between the language we use and the situations within which it is used, thus exploring the capacity of human beings to use the language appropriately.

Within the framework of the trend described meaning is defined as information conveyed from the speaker to the listener in the process of communication. This definition is applicable both to words and sentences and thus overcomes one of the alleged drawbacks of the referential

approach. The problem is that it is more applicable to sentences than to words and even as such fails to draw a clear distinguishing line between the direct meaning and implication (additional information).

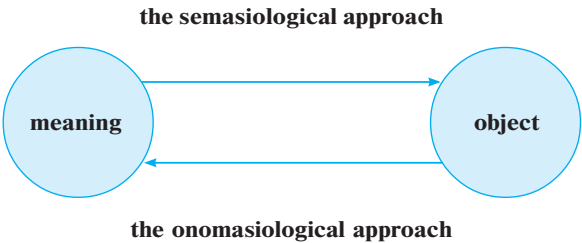
Thus, the sentence *John came at 6 o'clock* besides the direct meaning may imply that John *'was two hours late; failed to keep his promise; came though he did not want to; was punctual as usual, etc'*. In each case the implication would depend on the concrete situation of communication and discussing meaning as information conveyed would amount to the discussion of an almost infinite set of possible communication situations. The distinction between the two layers in the information conveyed is so important that two different terms may be used to denote them. **The direct information** conveyed by the units constituting the sentence may be referred to as meaning while **the information added** to the extralinguistic situation may be called sense.

2. TWO APPROACHES TO THE CONTENT FACET OF LINGUISTIC UNITS. NAMING

Since words denote objects, processes, phenomena of concrete reality, the first thing to be discussed is correlation between meaning and the thing denoted by the word. In studying such correlation two different approaches are possible. The study of the semantic side of the word may start with the name or with the object denoted. In the first case the study will consist in considering different meanings of the word, determining interrelations between them, as well as discovering semantic relations between different words. Such approach is called **semasiological**. The second approach is the reverse of the first: it starts from an object and consists in analyzing different words correlated with it. This approach is called **onomasiological** (from the Greek *onoma* = = 'name'). The onomasiological approach helps to discover how meaning is formed, considering its basic properties and peculiarities.

The difference between the two approaches may be illustrated by Diagram 3.

Diagram 3

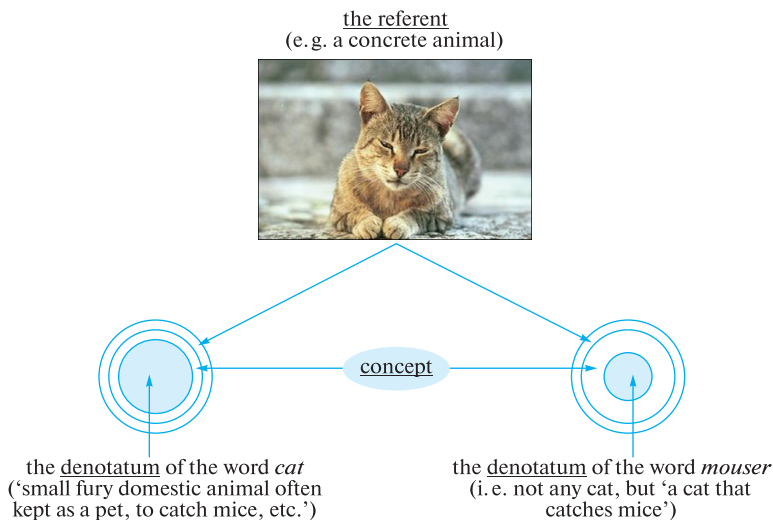


There are two main participants in the process of nomination: the one who gives a name to an object (**the nominator**) and the object which is given a name (**the referent**). The process of giving a name to an object consists of several stages.

1. The process of nomination starts with forming a **concept** of the object. The concept is a generalized idea of a class of objects, summing up the most essential features of the given class thus distinguishing it from other classes. There are several factors which influence the formation of concepts: 1) the objective reality itself. This factor accounts for differences in concepts in different language communities. This can be illustrated by the collocability of words in different languages: in Russian *есть суп* — in English *drink soup*; 2) the level of knowledge about the nature and structure of the given object. For example, the concept of “star” differs for the 15th century and 21st century European; 3) the general system of notions typical of the given language community, e.g. philosophic, moral, religious and other principles existing at the given period of time.

2. The next stage in the process of naming is the designation of class of objects under nomination with the help of linguistic means. To form meaning certain features (not necessarily the most important in shaping the concept) are singled out to underlie word semantics. The features chosen as the basic characteristics of the object form **the denotatum**. It is really what the word denotes, while the concept and the referent are what the word is correlated with. The interrelations of concept and denotatum may be different, in some cases the denotatum is close to the concept, in other cases it is much narrower than the underlying concept as can be seen from Diagram 4.

Diagram 4



The denotational part of meaning is relatively stable and it stands to represent all the characteristics of the object — general, individual, and those to be discovered.

3. Defining a set of denotational features constituting the most important part of meaning (i.e. the semantic core) in the process of nomination is not the final stage. The next step is the formation of functional significance of a linguistic unit. The attitude of the speaker towards the object, the place it is ascribed among other things also finds its reflection in shaping lexical meaning. **Information suggested in addition to the denotatum** may refer to the positive or negative attitude of the nominator, or it may indicate a certain situation of communication and point out at the participants and their roles. This additional information shapes the communicative value of lexical meaning.

4. Coming to the final stage it should be noted that to become a word, the semantic side formed in the process of nomination is to be correlated with certain material structure, i.e. **the sound form** and **the graphic form**. The acquisition of the sound and graphic forms makes it possible for the word to be conveyed from one person to another to serve the purposes of communication.

3. TYPES OF MEANING

Word-meaning is not homogeneous. It is made up of various components. These components are described as types of meaning. The two main types of meaning are the grammatical meaning and the lexical meaning. Still one more type of meaning is singled out. It is based on the interaction of the major types and is called the part-of-speech (or lexico-grammatical) meaning.

The grammatical meaning is defined as an expression in speech of relationship between words. Grammatical meaning is the component of meaning recurrent in identical sets of individual forms of different words, as, for example, the tense meaning in the word-forms of the verbs: *asked, thought, walked*; the case meaning in the word-forms of various nouns: *girl's, boy's, night's*; the meaning of plurality which is found in the word-forms of nouns: *joys, tables, places*.

The lexical meaning of the word is the meaning proper to the given linguistic unit in all its forms and distributions. The word-forms *go, goes, went, going, gone* possess different grammatical meanings of tense, person, number, but in each form they have one and the same semantic component denoting 'the process of movement'.

Both the lexical and grammatical meanings make up the word-meaning as neither can exist without the other. That can be observed in the semantic analysis of correlated words in different languages. The Russian word *сведения* is not semantically identical with

the English equivalent *information* because unlike the Russian *сведения* the English word does not possess the grammatical meaning of plurality which is part of the semantic structure of the Russian word.

In some parts of speech the prevailing component is the grammatical type of meaning. For example, in the verb *to be* the grammatical meaning of a linking element prevails: *He is a teacher*.

The essence of **the part-of-speech meaning** of a word is revealed in the classification of lexical items into major word-classes (nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs) and minor word-classes (articles, prepositions, conjunctions, etc.).

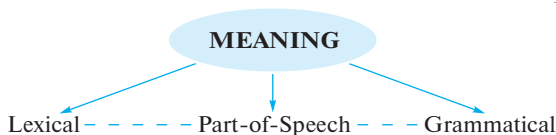
All members of a major word-class share a distinguishing semantic component which, though very abstract, may be viewed as the lexical component of part-of-speech meaning. For example, the meaning of thingness or substantiality may be found in all the nouns, e.g. *table*, *love*, *sugar*, though they possess different grammatical meaning of number and case.

The grammatical aspect of part-of-speech meaning is conveyed as a rule by a set of forms. If we describe the word as a noun we mean to say that it is bound to possess a set of forms expressing the grammatical meaning of number (*table-tables*) and case (*boy-boy's*).

The part-of-speech meaning of the words that possess only one form, e.g. prepositions, some adverbs, etc. is observed only in their distribution, e.g. *to come in (here, there); in (on, under) the table*.

The interconnection between the three types of meaning is shown in Diagram 5.

Diagram 5



4. ASPECTS OF LEXICAL MEANING

In the general framework of lexical meaning several aspects can be singled out. They are:

- a) the denotational aspect;
- b) the connotational aspect;
- c) the pragmatic aspect.

The denotational aspect of lexical meaning is the part of lexical meaning which establishes correlation between the name and the object, phenomenon, process or characteristic feature of concrete reality (or thought as such), which is denoted by the given word. The term 'denotational' is derived from the English word *to denote* which means 'be a sign of, indicate, stand as a name or symbol for'. For example,

the denotational meaning of *booklet* is ‘a small thin book that gives information about something’. It is through the denotational aspect of meaning that the bulk of information is conveyed in the process of communication. The denotational aspect of lexical meaning expresses the notional content of a word.

The connotational aspect of lexical meaning is the part of meaning which reflects the attitude of the speaker towards what he speaks about. Connotation conveys additional information in the process of communication. Connotation includes:

- 1) **the emotive charge**, e.g. *daddy* as compared to *father*;
- 2) **evaluation**, which may be positive or negative, e.g. *clique* (a small group of people who seem unfriendly to other people) as compared to *group* (a set of people);
- 3) **intensity** (or **expressiveness**), e.g. *adore* as compared to *love*;
- 4) **imagery**, e.g. *to wade* — to walk with an effort (through mud, water or anything that makes progress difficult). The figurative use of the word gives rise to another meaning which is based on the same image as the first — *to wade through a book*.

The pragmatic aspect of lexical meaning is the part of meaning, that conveys information on the situation of communication. Like the connotational aspect, the pragmatic aspect falls into four closely linked together subsections:

1) **information on the “time and space” relationship of the participants**. Some information which specifies different parameters of communication may be conveyed not only with the help of grammatical means (tense forms, personal pronouns, etc.), but through the meaning of the word. For instance, the words *come* and *go* can indicate the location of the Speaker who is usually taken as the zero point in the description of the situation of communication.

The time element when related through the pragmatic aspect of meaning is fixed indirectly. Indirect reference to time implies that the frequency of occurrence of words may change with time and in extreme cases words may be out of use or become obsolete. Thus, the word *behold* — ‘take notice, see (esp. something unusual or striking)’ as well as the noun *beholder* — ‘spectator’ are out of use now but were widely used in the 17th century;

2) **information on the participants and the given language community**. To illustrate this type of pragmatic information in the word meaning one can cite an example analysed by G.Leech in “Semantics”. Discussing two sentences

(1) *They chucked a stone at the cops, and then did a bunk with the loot.* (2) *After casting a stone at the police, they absconded with the money,*

G.Leech points out that sentence (1) could be said by two criminals, talking casually about the crime afterwards; sentence (2) might be said by the chief inspector in making his official report. Thus, the language

used may be indicative of the social status of a person, his education, profession or occupation, etc. The pragmatic aspect of the word may also convey information about the social system of the given language community, its ideology, religion, system of norms and customs;

3) **information on the tenor of discourse.** The tenors of discourse reflect how the addresser (the speaker or the writer) interacts with the addressee (the listener or the reader). Tenors are based on social or family roles of the participants of communication. A mother will talk in a different way (a) with her small child and (b) about her children. There may be a situation of a stranger talking to a stranger, or two friends discussing matters of interest, or a teacher talking to a student, or a student interviewed by the dean, etc.;

4) **information on the register of communication.** The conditions of communication form another important group of factors. The register defines the general type of the situation of communication grading the situations in formality (variations ranging from extreme degrees of formality through norm to extreme non-formality). Three main types of the situations of communication are usually singled out: formal, neutral and informal. Practically every word in the language is register-oriented. Thus, the pragmatic aspect of meaning refers words like *cordial, fraternal, anticipate, aid, sanguinary, celestial* to the formal register while units like *cut it out, to be kidding, hi, stuff* are to be used in the informal register.

The aspects of lexical meaning are presented graphically on Diagram 6.

Diagram 6

