INTRODUCTION TO MORPHOLOGY AND LEXICOLOGY

UNIT 1: WHAT IS LEXICOLOGY? (PART 2)
Chapter 1: What is lexicology?


1.1 LEXICOLOGY DEFINED

1.2 LEXICOLOGY AS A LEVEL OF LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS

1.3 THE STRUCTURE OF ENGLISH VOCABULARY
Chapter 1: What is lexicology?

1.1 LEXICOLOGY DEFINED
- morphology
- semantics
- etymology
- lexicography

1.2 LEXICOLOGY AS A LEVEL OF ANALYSIS
- lex. & phonology
- lex. & syntax

1.3 THE STRUCTURE OF ENG.VOCABULARY
- word & its associative fields
- lexical fields
- word families
- word classes
1.3 THE STRUCTURE OF ENGLISH VOCABULARY

- How is the total stock of English words structured and organized?

- 3 approaches:
  - Words and their associative fields
  - Semantic/Lexical fields
  - Word families
1.3.1 The word and its ASSOCIATIVE FIELD

- Every word is involved in a network of associations which connect it with other terms in the languages.

- TASK:
  - Look at the following diagram. What associative principles underlie each of the four lines radiating from the central word LECTURER? (What are the associations between the words in each line?)
The word and its associative fields

Figure 1.1 The word and its associative field
4 lines of association:

- (1) formal and semantic similarity (common STEM lecture)
- (2) semantic similarity
- (3) suffix –er forming agent nouns from verbs
- (4) accidental similarity in endings
Consider the following sentences:

- My neighbour works as a *lecturer*.
- My neighbour works as a *gardener*.
- My neighbour works as a *labourer*.

Paradigmatic relations between *lecturer* – *gardener* – *labourer*:

- similarity between the words (here - formal: suffix -er for agent nouns); jobs

- A word (e.g., *lecturer*) + all the terms that can substitute the word (*lecturer*) in a given utterance (e.g., *gardener*, *labourer*)

- vertical axis; relations ‘in absentia’
Paradigmatic relations - example

- ‘difficult‘ is paradigmatically related with ‘easy‘, ‘funny‘, ‘silly‘,...
  - An easy question
  - A funny question
  - A silly question

- ‘question‘ is paradigmatically related with ‘problem‘, ‘word‘,...
  - A difficult problem
  - A difficult word
The notion of paradigmatic relations

- First introduced by de Saussure – ‘associative relations‘ → substituted by ‘paradigmatic relations‘ (Hjelmslev, 1963)

- useful in language teaching (matching synonyms and antonyms, grouping words according to categories...)

- arrangement of words in the thesaurus (synonyms, antonyms...)
Syntagmatic relations

- The notion introduced by de Saussure
- The words involved are CO-OCCURRENT items
  → relations ‘in presentia’

Example:

- *An easy question* ← the adjective easy is syntagmatically related to the article *an* and the noun *question* in the expression ‘*an easy question*’
- horizontal axis
Focus is not on meaning, but on the lexical company the word keeps (consider, e.g., *collocations*) and the grammatical patterns in which the word occurs.
The meanings of words can be determined in terms of syntagmatic (horizontal) and paradigmatic (vertical) relations.
Paradigmatic and syntagmatic axes

Syntagmatic (in praesentia, horizontal)

The ridiculous girl fell into the pond.

Paradigmatic (in absentia, vertical)

silly foolish person screamed
funny lady jumped
loony princess plunged
klutzy child walked

river
lake
sea
pool
1.3.2 Lexical fields

- semantic fields = lexical sets = semantic domains
- “a named area of meaning in which lexemes interrelate and define each other in specific ways“ (Crystal, 1995: 157)

Examples:
- Kinship terms
- Military ranks
- Colours
Lexical field theory

- Origins: 1920s and 1930s (Swiss, German scholars)
- Origins according to Lyons: middle of C19, Humboldt‘s and Herder‘s ideas (C18-C19)

- Vocabulary of a language is a dynamic and well integrated system of lexemes structured by relationships of meaning

- The system is changing continuously (disappearance of lexemes, broadening/ narrowing of the meaning)
Broadening/ narrowing of meaning

☐ Any examples?
Note: broadening & narrowing of the meaning

- Broadening – example: the word ‘business’
  Originally: ‘a state of being busy, careworn or anxious’
  Now: includes all kinds of work occupations
  → Use of the word in more contexts

- Narrowing: the world ‘girl’,
  Originally: a child of either gender
  Now: a female child
  → Use of the word in fewer contexts
Lexical field theory

- In the system, there are mainly **general-particular** and **part-whole** relationships
  - between lexemes and the lexical fields
  - between lexical fields and the vocabulary
Lexical fields theory

- EXAMPLE:
- English vocabulary
  - Colours ← lexical field
    - Red, blue, orange,... ← lexemes

- English vocabulary
  - Colours ← lexical field
    - Red ← lexical subfield
      - Crimson, scarlet, vermilion,... ← lexemes
Assigning lexemes to fields: 3 difficulties

- (1) Difficult to define lexical fields for certain lexemes (e.g., a lexical field for the lexeme *noise* or *difficult*)

- (2) One word can belong to more fields (e.g., *orange* – fruit or colour)
Assigning lexemes to fields: 3 difficulties

- (3) Difficult to define a lexical field in relation to both the other fields and its constituent lexemes

(e.g., *tractor* belongs to ‘agricultural vehicles‘, ‘land vehicles‘ or just ‘vehicles‘?; *taste* vs. *flavour* - which one is the field and which one the lexeme? Or do they both belong to the lex.field ‘sensation‘?)
1.3.3 Word families

- Words are grouped into families on the basis of their MORPHOLOGY, both inflections and their derivations.

- A family consists of a BASE FORM, its possible INFLECTIONAL forms and DERIVED WORDS (by prefixation, suffixation)
Word families - examples

1
- state (verb)
- states, stated, stating (inflections)
- Stateable, statement; misstate, restate, understate (derivations)

2
- Skill (noun)
- Skills, skill‘s, skills‘ (inflections)
- Skilful, skilfully, skilfulness, skilless, skilled (derivations)
Levels of word families

- Bauer and Nation (1993)
- Word families are divided into levels based on a number of criteria:
  - Frequency
  - Productivity
  - Regularity
  - Predictability of the affixes in English
Criteria – a closer look

- **Frequency** – the number of words in which an affix occurs (-er X -ist to form an agent; *speaker X violinist*)

- **Productivity** – the use of the affix to form new words (-ly in deriving adverbs from adjectives)

- **Predictability** of the meaning of the affix ( -ness, adj. > noun; ‘quality of’, e.g., craziness, tiredness X -ist – a lot of meanings)

- **Regularity** of spelling and pronunciation (of the base and affix); regularity of the function of the affix
Levels of word families

- (Bauer and Nation, 1993)
  - 7 levels ranging from ‘no family’ (each word form is regarded as a different word) to Level 7 - words formed using classical (Latin and Greek) roots and affixes (e.g., bibliography)

- Useful in language learning – vocabulary building strategies, word formation.
Levels of word families - example

- **DEVELOP** (base form)
- **Level 2** (common base, variant inflectional suffixes)
  - Develop, develops, developed, developing
- **Level 3** (added words with most frequent and regular derivational affixes)
  - developABLE, UNdevelopABLE, developES(S),...
- [...]  
- **Level 6** (words with frequent but irregular affixes)
  - REdevelop, PREdevelopment
1.3.4 Word classes

- = parts of speech
- In English, traditionally 8:
  - NOUN
  - PRONOUN
  - ADJECTIVE
  - VERB
  - ADVERB
  - PREPOSITION
  - CONJUNCTION
  - INTERJECTION
Word classes: different classification

- Quirk (1985: 67)
  - **Closed** classes: preposition, pronoun, determiner, conjunction, auxiliary verb
    - ← **GRAMMATICAL** (FUNCTION) WORDS, RESTRICTED, largely UNCHANGING membership
  - **Open** classes: noun, adjective, verb, adverb
    - ← **CONTENT** WORDS, constantly BEING ADDED TO

- Lesser categories: numeral, interjection
- Words of unique function: particle *not*, infinitive marker *to*
Word classes

- All words with the same function are deemed to belong to the same word class.

ON
The book was IN the table.

UNDER

The notion of word class/ part of speech is more useful in syntax than in lexicology.
Word classes

- have CENTRAL and PERIPHERAL members
- overlap
- Boundaries between word classes are fuzzy.
- A word can belong to more than one word class.
  - A round stone, round the corner, they all gathered round, you can buy the next round, and when we round the next bend
That’s all for today.

- Thank you for your attention and active participation.
- I am looking forward to seeing you next week!