
Neologisms and archaisms
Coloured and neutral words
Word origin groups

Lecture 14.

§ 1. Neologisms and Achaisms

Language as an adaptive system undergoes modifications in function and structure so as to be fit for a new use, a new environment or a new situation. New names come into being and older names cease to be used.

Neologism is a newly coined word or phrase or a new meaning for an existing word, or a word borrowed from another language to name new things or an existing thing irrespective of their scale of importance.

Popular patterns:

1) **Composition** (retail elephant,

N+ *mad* or N+ *happy* or N+ *friendly*

power-mad, money-mad, speed-mad, movie-mad

auto-happy, trigger-happy,

computer-friendly, alcohol-friendly, environment-friendly

2) **shortening, blending**

*wordrobe=vocabulary, a vator=elevator, sarcastrophe, sexaholic, BFE (beyond Fu**ing Egypt) =very far away)*

3) **new meanings**

spam – a trademark for canned meat → electronic junk mail

4) **Other types of word-formation**

Examples – Guess What?

Clues for the meaning:

- context
- morphological structure

a netizen

a person who spends an excessive amount of time on the Internet.

to whatever

To dismiss or ignore. Desire to dismiss.

snail mail

The standard system of physical mail delivery in contrast to electronic mail

an emoticon

A symbol, usually found in e-mail messages, made up of punctuation marks that resembles a human expression.

a pooper-scooper

An instrument comprised of a scooping device on a long pole used for the collection of animal waste matter

CORDS

A garment or article of clothing made of corduroy fabric.

Archaisms are words that were once common but are now replaced by synonyms.

On becoming rare they acquire a **lofty poetic tinge** due to their ancient flavour, and then they are associated with poetic speech.

aught (n) - anything, whatever;

betwixt (prp) – between;

a billow – wave;

to chide - to scold;

a damsels - a noble girl;

ere (prp) – before;

forbears (n) – ancestors;

hapless (adj) - unlucky,

to hark – listen;

morn (n) – morning.

A **historism** is a name for the thing which is no longer used.

Names of horse-drawn carriages:

brougham, calash, diligence, fly, gig, hansom, phaeton

§ 2. Coloured vs. neutral words

Providing information is not the only function of speech, speakers can also seek to express emotions, approval, show their attitude towards the audience and state their social background through speech.

Types of coloured lexical units (emotional, expressive, evaluative and stylistic):

1) **Emotive (emotional)** speech on lexical level is characterized by:

- words with **emotional connotation** which is the power to evoke or directly express feelings as a result of long use in emotional contexts. The referent of such words are connected with emotions.

to be beastly mean about something, a glorious idea, a lovely drink, a rotten business

Interjections are typical emotive lexemes; they express emotions without naming them: ***Heavens! Hell! Nonsense! Pooh!***

- words with **diminutive and derogatory affixes**:

daddy, dearie, babykins, blackie, oldie

- *and their syntactical variants:*

little chap, old chap, old fellow, poor devil

- **emotional nonce-words** are created in angry or jocular back-chat by transforming whole phrases into verbs to express irritation or mockery

"How on earth?" - "Don't begin how-on-earthing!"

"Oh, bloody hell!" - "You don't bloody-hell here".

- an interaction of syntactic and lexical means

a devil of a time, a deuce of a price, a hell of a success, a peach of a car, an absolute jewel of a report, a mere button of a nose

2) **Emphatic or intensifying words** indicate the special importance of the thing expressed

ever, even, all, so

Compare: Whyever didn't you go?

Why didn't you go?

The best tea ever!

Typical emphatic words are intensifying adverbs:

*awfully, dreadfully, fiercely, frightfully,
marvelously, tremendously, wonderfully* (the use depends on the current fashion)

Some have unpredictable combinability:

*stark (wholly) naked, stark mad, but stone deaf
flat denial, sheer nonsense, paramount
importance, dead tired.*

3) **Evaluatory words** pass a value judgment on the thing or situation described; specify the emotion connected with it.

*Oh, you're not a spy. Germans are spies.
British are agents.*

*fabricate - invent falsely, expresses scorn,
irony or disgust*

4) **Words possessing some definite stylistic features** (see lecture 15)

§ 3. Native vs. Borrowed Words

Etymology is a branch of linguistics that studies the origin and history of words tracing them to their earliest determinable source.

A **borrowing (a loan word)** is a word taken over from another language and modified in phonemic shape, spelling, paradigm or meaning according to the standards of the English language.

80% of the English vocabulary is borrowed due to the historic conditions of the English language development.

Norman conquest

Old English,
(Anglo-Saxon)

+ a mixture of Latin
and French

+ Latin and Greek

*about 30,000
words*

1066

duchess, city, 16th century
mansion, palace

*distinct, cup, describe, transport,
evidence, animal, create, act,
generation, recollection*

Words are borrowed together with the thing named:

a material culture word rouge was borrowed from French,
a social culture word republic from Latin,
a religious culture word baptize from Greek

There are words that are only etymologically borrowed and words that preserve foreign flavour:

gourmet, coup d'etat, hors d'oeuvres (French)

patio, macho (Spanish);

kindergarten, blitz (German,);

status quo, ego, curriculum vita (Latin)

Sometimes it is only the word structure that is borrowed

утечка мозгов ← brain drain

небоскреб ← skyscraper

Groups of Native Words:

1) since English belongs to the Germanic branch of the Indo-European group of languages, the oldest words in English are of **Indo-European origin**:

words expressing family relations: *brother, father, mother, son*;

names of parts of the human body: *foot, eye, ear, nose, tongue*;

names of trees, birds, animals: *tree, birch, cow, wolf, cat*);

names expressing basic actions: *to come, to know, to sit, to work*;

words expressing qualities: *red, quick, right, glad, sad*;

numerals: *one, two, three, ten, hundred*, etc.

2) **Common Germanic words** are not to be found in other Indo-European languages but the Germanic. They constitute a very large layer of the vocabulary:

nouns: *life, sea, ship, meal, winter, ground, coal, goat*;

adjectives: *heavy, deep, free, broad, sharp, grey*;

verbs: *to buy, to drink, to find, to go, to have, to live, to make*;

pronouns: *all, each, he, self, such*;

adverbs: *again, forward, near*;

prepositions: *after, at, by, over, under, from, for*.

Practical tasks # 14

1. Match the neologism and its meaning

1. fantabulous

2. F.I.N.E

(We all know he's F.I.N.E, just like those freaks he hangs out with)

3. a gardenburger

4. a videophile

5. a swooshtika

6. a makintrash

a) a hamburger made with a non-meat, vegetarian patty instead of beef;

b) a derogatory reference to the distinctive logo of the Nike Corporation;

c) one who loves and collects video equipment and media;

d) beyond fabulous;

e) a derogatory reference to a Macintosh computer;

f) a derogatory acronym (F*cked up, Insecure, Neurotic, and Emotional); indicated by tone of voice

2. Which of the words below are neutral?

- a) *a sweetie*
- b) *a spy*
- c) *a copy*
- d) *a die-hard*
- e) *impatient,*
- f) *lovely*
- g) *to reach,*
- h) *lovely*

3. Which of the following words are borrowed?

- a. *to imagine*
 - b. *to know*
 - c. *to get*
 - d. *to consider*
 - e. *to set up*
 - f. *to tolerate*
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