

Lexicology as a branch of linguistics

1. Lexicology as a branch of linguistics. Its interrelations with other sciences
2. The word as the fundamental object of lexicology. The morphological structure of the English word.

Lexicology

(from Gr lexis “word” and logos “learning”)
is a part of linguistics dealing with the vocabulary of a language and the properties of words as the main units of the language. It also studies all kinds of semantic grouping and semantic relations: synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, semantic fields, etc.

The subject-matter of lexicology

word, its morphemic structure,
history and meaning.

Branches of lexicology

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graph TD; A[Branches of lexicology] --> B[General lexicology]; A --> C[Contrastive lexicology]; A --> D[Special lexicology]; C --> E[Semasiology]; C --> F[Historical lexicology (etymology)]; C --> G[Onomasiology]; F --> H[Descriptive lexicology];
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General lexicology

Special lexicology

Contrastive lexicology

Semasiology

Historical lexicology
(etymology)

Onomasiology

Descriptive lexicology

Approaches to the language within the framework of lexicology

The synchronic approach is concerned with the vocabulary of a language as it exists at a certain time (e.g., a course in Modern English Lexicology);

The diachronic approach deals with the changes and the development of the vocabulary in the course of time.

Lexicology interrelations with other sciences

- general linguistics,
- the history of the language,
- phonetics,
- stylistics, and grammar.

Word nature

- First, the word is a unit of speech which serves the purposes of human communication. Thus, the word can be defined as **a unit of communication.**
- Secondly, the word can be perceived as **the total of the sounds which comprise it.**
- Third, the word, viewed structurally, **possesses several characteristics.**

Word Structures

- The external structure of the word - its morphological structure. For example, in the word *post-impressionists* the following morphemes can be distinguished: the prefixes *post-*, *im-*, the root *-press-*, the noun-forming suffixes *-ion*, *-ist*, and the grammatical suffix of plurality *-s*.
- The internal structure of the word - the word's semantic structure (its meaning). This is the word's main aspect.

Kinds of words

- ❑ **orthographic words** – words distinguished from each other by their spelling;
- ❑ **phonological words** – distinguished from each other by their pronunciation;
- ❑ **word-forms** which are grammatical variants;
- ❑ words as items of meaning, the headwords of dictionary entries, called **lexemes**.