

Faculty of Education, Masaryk University in Brno
Lexicology – Spring Semester 2004

Syllabus: SEMINARS

Week 1

Introduction and bibliographical information.
Lexicology as a linguistic discipline.
The act of naming. Naming unit - conventionality and universality.
Linguistic sign, its types and properties.
Reference and denotation.

Week 2

Semantic nucleus, semantic environment, semantic/lexical field.
Classification of meaning. Conceptual and associative meaning.
Change of meaning (extension, restriction, pejoration, amelioration).

Week 3

Inflectional and derivational morphology. Morphemes - free and bound. Root, affix, stem.

Week 4

Compounding – coordinate and subordinate, endocentric and exocentric compounds.

Week 5

Derivation. Back formation. Conversion. Abbreviation: clippings, acronyms, blends.

Week 6

Collocations/word groups and phraseological units. Lexical chains.

Week 7

Semantic relationships between lexical units (sense relations): polysemy, homonymy, hyponymy, synonymy and antonymy (complementarity, converseness).

Week 8

Language figures: metaphor, metonymy, simile, taboo, euphemism, dysphemism, understatement, hyperbole, synecdoche, litotes. Loan words.

Week 9

Form classes - nouns. Number, countability, definiteness, case, gender.

Week 10

Form classes - adjectives. Central and peripheral adjectives. Stative and dynamic adjectives. Gradability.

Week 11

Form classes - pronouns. Reference - anaphora, cataphora, exophora/deixis. Adverbs.

Week 12

Form classes - verbs. Transitivity. Stative and dynamic verbs. Tense, voice, aspect, mood.

Week 13

Final test. Colloquy.

Lexicology - Spring 2004
Handout - week 1

Analyse the following signs. Are they iconic, indexical or symbolical?

III [three]

TM



AC (abbrev. for **average cost**)

BBC



Handout - week 2

**SEMANTIC NUCLEUS, SEMANTIC ENVIRONMENT, SEMANTIC/LEXICAL FIELD.
CLASSIFICATION OF MEANING. CONCEPTUAL AND ASSOCIATIVE MEANING.
CHANGE OF MEANING (EXTENSION, RESTRICTION, PEJORATION, AMELIORATION).**

1. What are the differences in the semantic nucleus (i.e. the denotative/cognitive/conceptual meaning) between the following English and Czech expressions?

morning	-	ráno
take	-	vzít
settle	-	usadit (se)
car	-	auto
wood	-	les
power	-	?
cow	-	kráva
lid	-	víko/víčko
cap	-	?
house	-	dům
cottage	-	chalupa
clock	-	hodiny
?	-	
engineer	-	inženýr
trade	-	obchod

2. What are the differences in the semantic environment (the connotative and stylistic meaning) between the following English and Czech expressions?

ivy	-	břečťan
shaggy dog story	-	rozvláčná povíadačka
porch	-	(Am) veranda
it's all Greek to me	-	?
to have guts	-	?
heath, moorland	-	vřesoviště

Notes: saucepan lid, lid on a jar, piano lid, dustbin lid; bottle cap, pen cap (*Br* pen lid), lens cap (on a camera); grandfather clock, alarm clock, wall clock, sundial, hourglass, egg timer

Handout - week 3

1. Are the following statements true? If not, how can you modify them to make them true?

- One morpheme can also be one word.
- Morph is a minimal unit of meaning.
- A root is a bound morpheme.
- A free morpheme is the one added to the root in derivation.
- English words are the largest elements between which other elements can be inserted with relative freedom.
- DRIVER and DRIVERS are two different words.
- DRIVER and DRIVERS are two different lexemes.
- DRIVER and DRIVE are two different lexemes.
- New lexemes can be created by derivation.
- Collocations, word groups and idioms are roughly the same.

2. What is the difference between a stem and a root?

3. How many allomorphs of the indefinite article can you find in the following sentences? How are they conditioned?

- We have a dog.
- She passed me an apple.
- He isn't just an architect, he's the best architect you can get.
- There's a pen next to the computer.

4. Can the following be classified as one word? And lexeme?

Oilfield	red-handed
old-timer	red-light district
fishburger	better
workaholic	to be given
-ing	to set st./sb. aside
hyper-	wristwatch
redcurrant	an expensive watch
red wine	persona non grata

5. a) How can you classify the following differences between singular and plural forms of nouns, between infinitive/present and past tense forms of verbs, and positive and comparative forms of adjectives? How are they conditioned?

Do the two words in a pair belong to the same lexeme?

Which of them are instances of suppletion?

- wife - wives
- goose - geese
- chamois - chamois
- phenomenon - phenomena
- larva - larvae
- spectrum - spectra
- bacillus - bacilli
- shelf - shelves
- child - children
- bad - worse

go - went
speak - spoke
be - was/were

b) How about plurals of the following?

cabbage
calculus
fish
antenna
person

6. Analyze the following words. What are their morphological components?

Prepare	half-witted
preparatory	bad-mouthed
preschooler	switchboard
prescriptive	swordsmanship
sycophantic	nation
turntable	donation
syllable	donkey
impeccable	turnkey
imbalance	frightfully
imbibe	get-together
irrevocable	atonement

7. List some English noun-forming suffixes and some nouns having the suffixes.

List some English adjective-forming suffixes and some nouns having the suffixes.

List some English verb-forming suffixes and some nouns having the suffixes.

*Now do the same for Czech:
noun-forming suffixes*

adjective-forming suffixes

verb-forming suffixes

Which of them are still productive?

8. Can you adduce three examples of grammatical morphemes and lexical morphemes? How do they differ?

9. Can you give three examples of grammatical morphemes (-s) and lexical morphemes (-ship, -ness)? How do they differ?

Handout - week 4

COMPOUNDS

1. Give some examples, if there exist, of compound conjunctions

compound numerals

compound prepositions

compound adverbs

compound nouns of the following make-up:

noun + noun

adjective + noun (so-called Germanic type)

noun + adjective (so-called French type)

noun + verb

verb + noun

verb + adverb

adverb + verb

compound verbs consisting of a **verb + verb**

formally endocentric compounds

semantically endocentric compounds (so-called modifying compounds)

formally exocentric compounds

semantically exocentric compounds (so-called bahuvrihi compounds)

2. Are the following lexemes compounds, derivatives, or something else?

(to) make up

(to) give away

make-up

easternmost

miniskirt

automatic

auto-destruction

childish

childless

childlike

childproof

off-the-peg

offset

oddball

(to) outnumber

Handout - week 5

DERIVATION. BACK FORMATION. CONVERSION. ABBREVIATION.

1. Discuss the make-up of the following derivatives:

cronyism
payee
underdeveloped
superheat
superordinate
advertiser
talkativeness
nightmarish
Kafkaesque
outlandish
pre-reader

2. Can conversion take place in the following lexical units? Which word classes are involved?

want
black
make
make-believe
fat
store
petition
back
cake
lose
police
stone
but
open
loan
echo

3. What do the following expressions mean? How were they formed?

recap
biz
union
the Olympics
Aussie
Fed
motor show
O.K.
fries
Beth
IOU
dot com
mike

Handout - week 6

COLLOCATIONS/WORD GROUPS. PHRASEOLOGICAL UNITS. LEXICAL CHAINS.

Exercise 1:

How do the following adjectives collocate with the nouns? Indicate normal collocations with a tick, doubtful or unusual ones with a question mark, and unacceptable ones with a cross.

	problem	amount	shame	man
large				
great				
big				
major				

(According to Michael McCarthy: *Vocabulary*)

Exercise 2:

Fill in the following matrix in the same way:

	breakfast	a bath	exercises	(a ...) time
give				
make				
have				
take				
bring				
do				

Lexical chains - in written and spoken discourses, vocabulary items re-occur in different forms across boundaries (clause-, sentence-, or turn-boundaries), creating regular patterns.

Exact repetition x reiteration/relexicalization

Negotiation of meaning - meanings become fixed in context by the lexical environment created around them by the different speakers or by a writer varying lexical choice.

Exercise 3:

How is the meaning negotiated in the following conversations using lexical variation?

- I didn't know he can't speak English.
- Actually, he can't speak any foreign language.

- She looks beautiful in the new dress.
- Yeah, she looks totally awesome!
- As pretty as a picture.

- And the people were very polite.
- Yes, not at all rude. Even the kids were well-behaved.

Exercise 4:

*Find repetitions and relexicalizations in the written extract and label them as **exact repetition**, **synonym** and **superordinate**:*

From a distance, Bangkok's skyline looks impressive. Monumental apartment blocks and office towers rise heavenwards all over the city. Even the elevated Skytrain seems boxed in amid the serried ranks of skyscrapers. The city seems so upwardly mobile, it is hard to believe it is stuck in a five-year slump.

But on close inspection, many of the buildings are empty and unfinished. Some are glaring, hollow hulks; others seem tantalisingly close to completion. Some already look occupied; it is only when night falls and no lights come on that you realise they are vacant. It turns out that Bangkok is only half the city it seems.

Those buildings make an apt metaphor for Thailand's economy; after all, property speculation played a big part in the crash of 1997.

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Handout - week 7

SEMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN LEXICAL UNITS (SENSE RELATIONS): POLYSEMY, HOMONYMY, HYPONYMY, SYNONYMY AND ANTONYMY (complementarity, converseness).

Semantic fields - every word is determined in its meaning by the presence of other words in the vocabulary (those that are related to the same or associated ranges or phenomena).

J. Trier: „Fields are linguistic realities existing between single words and the total vocabulary; they are parts of a whole and resemble words in that they combine into some higher unit“.

Items in the field occur in **sequences** or **cycles**, some exhibit a **part-whole relationship**, some are ordered **hierarchically** or by **taxonomy**.

Polysemy (Greek *polúsémos* = having many meanings) - words with two or more senses.

Hyperlexeme (Filipec) - a polysemic lexeme with several meanings.

Homonymy

Homonyms - two or more words that are identical in form but different in meaning.

Real homonyms - sound and look (in written form) identical:

bank (= slope), *bank* (= an institution where people deposit or borrow money)

Homophones - they sound identical, but are spelled differently:

through x *threw*

Homographs - they have identical spelling, but different pronunciation:

lead [li:d] x [led], *wind* [wind] x [waɪnd]

Exercise 1: *Are the following expressions real homonyms, homophones, homographs, or polysemous lexemes?*

dear - deer

bank (of a river) - bank (financial institution)

bar (of chocolate) - bar (of metal) - bar (room) - bar (unit of pressure) - to bar

fair - fare

lie (be in a horizontal position) - lie (not tell the truth)

cue (a tool) - cue (hint) - queue

bear - bare

peace - piece

tap (for water) - tap (on barrel) - tap (light knock or blow)

head (someone in charge) - head (part of the body) - head (in a tape/video recorder)

no - know

reed - read

read (*pres.*) - read (*past*)

Exercise 2: *Can you give more examples of English homonyms?*

Exercise 3: *Can you adduce any homonyms from different word classes?*

Exercise 4: *Why are homonyms apparently more numerous in English than in Czech?*

False friends (*faux amis*) - interlanguage homonyms.

Exercise 5: *Examples of Czech-English false friends:*

Paronymy - words similar in form, but totally different in meaning.

Exercise 6: *Examples of paronyms:*

Hyponymy

Exercise 7: Can you list any hyponyms or hyperonyms of the following expressions (if applicable)?

dog thing vehicle black

Meronymy - the semantic relation between a lexical item denoting a **part** and that denoting the corresponding **whole**.

Special types of the part-whole relation - the **group-member** relation, **substance - particle** relation, the **feature - whole** relation, **class - member** relation → **hyponymy/hyperonymy**.

Taxonomy - a subspecies of hyponymy.

Synonymy

Synonyms - words or phrases with the same or nearly the same meaning.

Few true synonyms; most pairs or rows of synonyms have nearly the same denotation and a different connotation.

Exercise 8: Give examples of the following types of synonyms:

Absolute synonyms - words agreeing in denotation, connotation and distribution.

Close synonyms differing in a single **sense**:

Synonyms differing in intensity

Stylistic synonyms

Near-synonyms - words which are closely related with the members of a synonym group (or a semantic field)

Antonymy

Oppositeness (Lyons) - two words have opposite meanings.

Exercise 9: List some words which, in your opinion, have no antonyms:

Exercise 10: What are the antonyms of:

old soft short

- **antonymy (contrary antonyms)**

- **complementarity (contradictory/complementary antonyms)**

- **converseness**

Exercise 11: Which of the following are gradable antonyms, which are complementary pairs and which are converses?

alive - dead

dark - light

beautiful - ugly

day - night

fall - rise

simple - difficult

lend - borrow

give - get

give - take

absent - present

Exercise 12:

A polysemous word has more than one antonym.

What are the antonyms of the following polysemous words?

catch

smart

hard

right

Handout - week 8

LANGUAGE FIGURES: METAPHOR, METONYMY, SIMILE, TABOO, EUPHEMISM, DYSPHEMISM, UNDERSTATEMENT, HYPERBOLE, SYNECDOCHE, LITOTES. LOAN WORDS.

Exercise 1: *Complete the following definitions where necessary and give examples.*

Figurative language - an expressive use of language when words are used in a non-literal way to suggest illuminating comparisons and resemblances (**figures of speech**).

Metaphor - a figurative expression in which one notion is described _____
_____.

Metonymy - a semantic change where an _____ is used for the whole.

Simile - a figurative expression that _____.

Taboo - expressions which people _____ using in polite society because they believe them _____.

Euphemism – a figure of speech in which an unpleasant, offensive, harsh or blunt word or expression is avoided and _____ is used instead.

Dysphemism – the substitution of _____ for a _____.

Understatement – (an unduly) restrained statement or expression, representing the facts as being _____.

Hyperbole – a figure of speech consisting in _____.

Synecdoche - a figure of speech in which the part is used _____
or _____.

Litotes - a figure of speech where something is _____.
E.g. an affirmative is expressed by the negative of the contrary.

Irony - language that expresses a meaning other than _____.

Paradox - an _____ that contains a truth.

Exercise 2: Which figure of speech is represented by the following expressions?

adult video

outplacement

to downsize

tax haven

a dead good book

The new boss' task is to **break the ice** with staff.

It's unwise of you to **take a step** like that without discussing it with me first.

the tip of the iceberg

Argentina shares with Venezuela the memory of past wealth.

Denmark will take its turn as the EU's president in the second half of this year.

to stage Stoppard

They have **kept us in the dark** about their intentions. Now, however, they'll have to **put us in the picture**.

Well, this is a really cosy flat. (*when I'm thinking of moving away*)

He's a little fish.

ladies' man

to have teeth like pearls

She's out of form. (*when she's totally exhausted*)

He isn't poor. (*said of a millionaire*)

not to escape the long arm of the law

She will never be as good as her older sister.

(That was) an absolutely gorgeous meal.

I don't know what she sees in a gorilla like the guy at the bar.

political storm

I'm as fit as a fiddle again.

as good as gold

put your John Hancock at the bottom of the list

Exercise 3: Identify the source area of the following metaphors (and their current use).

The electronics industry **is blossoming** in the south of Bavaria.

They can never **win a price war** since we have enough reserves to **retaliate**.

Companies have to be able to cope with the **ebb and flow** of demand.

It's necessary to **branch out** into new activities.

The government is criticised for **moving the goalposts**.

The **ailing** manufacturer does not seem to benefit from the recent **recovery** in the industry.

The young actress is going to use all **the weapons in her arsenal** to **win**.

The funding has **dried up**.

The market is already **saturated**.

Since the coup last year, the country has been completely **paralysed**.

Very soon Italy and Spain will **be flooded** with North African immigrants.

If fares are raised, it could be a **knockout blow** for smaller agencies.

My brother is **a casualty** of a recent **wave** of delaying.

European producers have already **launched their counter-offensive**.

They are expected to **join forces** with ecological activists.

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Handout – week 9

FORM CLASSES: NOUNS

How can nouns be classified?

List some suffixes used to form concrete nouns:

abstract nouns:

Nouns - number

List some English nouns ending in –s which are considered as singular (i.e. take the singular form of a verb):

List some English nouns not ending in –s which are considered as plural:

Are there any nouns which can be both singular and plural (without any change in form)? Classify at least three types of such nouns and give examples.

Nouns - countability

The main grammatical differences between count and noncount (mass) nouns are:

List some nouns which are noncount in English and count in Czech:

What is the function of partitives?

Nouns - definiteness

Nouns - case

What different meanings are expressed by the following genitive cases?

my mother's plates

my mother's cake

Beethoven's piano concertos

Miss Kožená's concert

the president's resignation

the president's assassination

a three days' work

a children's home

Nouns - gender

What is dual gender?

Will you use it/which or they/who with the following nouns?

government

committee

police

family

headquarters

team

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Handout – weeks 10 & 11

FORM CLASSES: ADJECTIVES, PRONOUNS

ADJECTIVES

Adjectives - central and peripheral

What are the basic properties of adjectives?

-
-
-
-

Adjectives - stative and dynamic

Adjectives - gradability

PRONOUNS

Pronouns - subclasses

Complete the following dictum:

Central pronouns (i.e. _____, _____ and _____ pronouns)
express contrasts of _____, _____ and _____.

What are compound indefinite pronouns?

How many forms do personal pronouns have? What system of cases do they have, compared with that of nouns?

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Handout - week 12

FORM CLASSES: VERBS. Transitivity. Stative and dynamic verbs. Tense, voice, aspect, mood. ADVERBS. PREPOSITIONS. CONJUNCTIONS.

Three classes of verb that can occur within the verb phrase: **lexical (full), modal** and **primary** verbs.

Which of them function as main verbs?

Which of them function as auxiliary verbs?

What is special about the function of primary verbs?

List the primary verbs:

Two basic grammatical differences between the modal verbs and the primary verbs:

- (in terms of non/finiteness)

- (in terms of person)

How many forms are there of the finite verb?

And nonfinite?

ADVERBS

Three types of adverbs can be distinguished morphologically:

- simple (e.g. _____)

- _____ (e.g. *somewhere*, _____)

- _____ (e.g. *nicely*, *methodology-wise*, _____)

Syntactic functions of adverbs:

adjuncts

subjuncts

disjuncts

conjuncts

How can the distinction between a-adjectives, such as *afraid*, *asleep*, *aware*, *awake*, *ashamed*, and a-adverbs, such as *abroad*, *away*, and other adverbs be proved via the use of copular verbs?

PREPOSITIONS

Single-word prepositions:

Multi-word prepositions:

CONJUNCTIONS

Coordinating conjunctions: types of meaning + examples

Subordinating conjunctions: types of meaning + examples