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IRKUTSK STATE LINGUISTIC UNIVERSITY

ISSUES IN ENGLISH PHILOLOGY

Study Manual

*For advanced university students, Teachers' Training Colleges
of Foreign Languages and the general reader who wishes
to learn the problems of Modern English Philology*

Third Revised Edition

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образования и науки Российской Федерации
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CONTENTS

PREFACE.....	5
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**PART ONE
SOME ASPECTS OF DIACHRONICAL CHANGES
IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE SYSTEM**

1.1. THE TYPOLOGICAL STATUS OF ENGLISH.....	13
1.2. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SYNTAX IN THE HISTORY OF ENGLISH.....	21
1.3. FOREIGN INFLUENCES ON ENGLISH VOCABULARY. SYNTHETIC STRATUM VS. ANALYTICISED STRATUM	35
1.4. THE EMERGENCE OF STANDARD ENGLISH	42
1.5. HISTORICAL SEMANTICS	47

**PART TWO
PROBLEMS OF LEXICOLOGY**

2.1. PROPERTIES OF THE LINGUISTIC SIGN.....	53
2.2. SOME ASPECTS OF NOMINATION IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE. WORD-STRUCTURE.....	67
2.3. WORD-FORMATION WAYS. SOME DEBATABLE ISSUES OF WORD-FORMATION.....	90
2.4. WORD MEANING	126
2.5. POLYSEMY.....	137
2.6. SEMANTIC CHANGE	148
2.7. PARADIGMATIC RELATIONS IN VOCABULARY.....	165
2.8. ANTONYMY	170
2.9. ENGLISH VOCABULARY AS AN ADAPTIVE SYSTEM	192

PART THREE PROBLEMS OF GRAMMAR

3.1. THE PROBLEM OF PARTS OF SPEECH IN MODERN ENGLISH.....	223
3.2. NOUN: NUMBER.....	230
3.3. THE ARTICLE.....	239
3.4. PROBLEMS OF THE SIMPLE SENTENCE.....	247
3.5. PARADIGM OF ENGLISH SENTENCES ORGANIZED BY ONE VERB (PREDICATE).....	259
3.6. SOME PROBLEMS OF THE COMPOSITE SENTENCE	264
3.7. NON-FINITE VERB CONSTRUCTIONS IN ENGLISH SYNTAX	273
3.8. FUNCTIONAL PERSPECTIVE THEORY AS A METHOD IN STUDYING SENTENCE AND TEXT	282

PART FOUR PROBLEMS OF STYLISTICS AND TEXT INTERPRETATION

4.1. SOME ASPECTS OF LINGUISTIC STYLISTICS.....	302
4.2. PROBLEMS OF DECODING STYLISTICS.....	309
4.3. PRINCIPLES OF FOREGROUNDING.....	317
4.4. PRINCIPLES OF POETIC STRUCTURAL COHESION.....	328
4.5. TYPES OF NARRATION AND COMPOSITIONAL FORMS: AUTHOR'S NARRATIVE. DIALOGUE. INTERIOR SPEECH. REPRESENTED SPEECH. NARRATION. DESCRIPTION. ARGUMENTATION.....	335

PREFACE

The bulk of the material of this book first appeared in 1998. It was devoted to a historical event – to the jubilee of Irkutsk State Linguistic University.

The present edition is very different from the previous one – as it ought to be after fifteen years!

The improved book perhaps calls for an explanation.

The reason is that the changes were needed because general linguistics in the last few decades has been developing very quickly and new research ideas have expanded enormously. A new insight has been gained into such problems as 1) word-formation, 2) problems of the simple and composite sentence, 3) the discourse analysis of the article, 4) decoding stylistics, information theory, 5) historical pragmatics and other up-to-date topics. Therefore, in the new edition of this book several changes clarify some important issues discussed in the first publication.

The best features of the issues in the previous edition have been retained, reviewed and improved for this one.

Theme and point of view are basically the same. The contributors followed the same approach that contributed to the success of the earlier edition and pursued the major goals which remain unchanged:

- to teach the students to form their own point of view on the relevant problems;
- to improve their linguistic competence through studying the problems discussed in this study manual.

The present study manual is intended primarily for the advanced university students, but it will also prove useful for Teachers' Training Colleges of Foreign Languages. The contributors

hope that the book will be of some interest to the general reader who wishes to learn the problems of modern English Philology.

A special effort was made by the contributors to produce the book the students would enjoy reading.

The students are expected to make their own observation on the problems discussed in the book, make their own presentations at seminars and scientific conferences.

The study manual comprises four parts.

Part One – “Some Aspects of Diachronical Changes in the English Language System” – (written by Ph. D. Professor *I.V. Shaposhnikova*) contains necessary information about the character of the typological reconstruction of English in the course of its development.

A new paragraph, compiled by Associate Professor Yu.N. Karypkina, outlines the changes in the lexical subsystem of the English language from the historical point of view. It also includes the causes of semantic change such as linguistic, historical, social and psychological. Semantic changes are viewed in terms of register which refers to the degree of formality in the language employed. The basic contrast in register between formal and informal usage is transposed exactly into the historical evolution of the language.

Part Two – “Problems of Lexicology” – is enormously expanded. Associate Professor *L.V. Kulgavova* is the author of the following new topics included into this part:

- 1) Properties of the Linguistic Sign;
- 2) Some Aspects of Nomination in the English Language. Word-Structure;
- 3) Word-Formation Ways. Some Debatable Issues of Word-Formation;
- 4) Antonymy;
- 5) English Vocabulary as an Adaptive System.

The article “Properties of the Linguistic Sign” deals with the generally accepted treatment of arbitrariness, asymmetric duality, motivation and iconicity, supplied with some fresh examples. Here the author aimed at simplicity of presentation of the theoretical material. Particular emphasis is laid on motivation and its types, especially phonetic motivation. It is maintained that a word can be onomatopoeic and sound-symbolic at the same time.

“Some Aspects of Nomination in the English Language. Word-Structure” includes two issues: the act of nomination and the morphological structure of English words. In the first part of the article, the axiomatic approach to the nominative function of the language and the semantic triangle is presented. The theoretical interpretation of the act of nomination, its structure and factors influencing it is based on the works of Ye.S. Kubryakova.

The second part of the article covers a wide spectrum of the issues concerning the morphological structure of the word. The notions of morpheme and allomorph are given; the classifications of morphemes (semantic and structural) are shown schematically and exemplified; the aims of morphemic analysis and derivational analysis are outlined. Here some essential difficulties of morphemic analysis are discussed. Particular attention is paid to the synonymy of the terms.

The article “Word-Formation Ways. Some Debatable Issues of Word-Formation” is devoted to the following types of word-formation: affixation, conversion, word-composition, shortening, reversion. Their brief descriptions are based on the data of the most authoritative textbooks on English lexicology and some scientific publications of the homeland and foreign scholars. Almost each section of this article deals with some disputable points. The aim of this part of the present manual is to make a survey of the types of word-building in a concise form, which could serve just as a starting point for further reading.

In the article “Antonymy”, the author attempted to characterize some aspects of this phenomenon: a general notion of antonymy in English, distribution of antonyms among the parts of speech, the criteria for antonymy after V.N. Komissarov, occasional antonyms, etc. Antonyms appear as one of the most important expressive means of the English language. On the basis of study of various scientific and methodological publications on the semantic types of antonyms, the author gives a systematic treatment of gradable, contradictory, converse and directional antonyms and discusses some ambiguous and borderline cases of this classification. The final part of this article tells the reader about enantiosemia in English, which is usually neglected in the textbooks on lexicology.

In “English Vocabulary as an Adaptive System”, the flexible, dynamic character of the English vocabulary is revealed through the following linguistic phenomena: neologisms, nonce words, transnomination and politically correct vocabulary, changes in word-structure, obsolete words, semantic development, borrowing, fluctuations in spelling and pronunciation. Each phenomenon is illustrated by the lexical units which appeared in the last 1-4 decades. The examples are borrowed from the dictionaries of new words, on-line encyclopedias, works of fiction, newspapers and magazines, recent scientific and methodological publications. It is stressed that borrowing, shifts in word meaning and spelling may have an occasional character.

Associate Professor **S.K. Voronova** contributed to the following topics:

- 1) Word Meaning;
- 2) Polysemy;
- 3) Semantic Change;
- 4) Paradigmatic Relations in Vocabulary.

The new topics “Word Meaning” and “Semantic Change” seek to direct the students to understanding of the fundamental

questions about 1) the nature of word meaning, and 2) the way it changes, including the description of the semantic, pragmatic and systemic aspects of word meaning, the procedure of componential analysis, and, also, some essential information about the causes, nature and results of semantic change. They provide discussion of recent theoretical developments as well as numerous examples illustrating linguistic phenomena under consideration. The topic on polysemy is considerably recast.

Part Three – “Problems of Grammar” – is expanded by new issues:

- 1) The Problems of Parts of Speech;
- 2) Noun: Number (written by Associate Professor **L.V. Topka**).

In this part the progressive character of the development of the problem of parts of speech in Modern English is pointed out. It reflects different periods of the research of parts of speech as a language phenomenon as well as the different viewpoints of understanding about their (periods) essence by the representatives of different linguistic schools, both foreign and homeland ones.

The problem of the category of number and several ways of its formation, as well as the approach to its analysis are described; the noun's distribution, which can be called lexico-grammatical one, is given. The presence of the lexical constituent is caused by semantic differences in the plural forms of English nouns. These differences spring up from the interaction between the categorial meaning of English noun and the lexical meaning of concrete English noun.

The problem of the article (written by Professor **E.P. Tyukavkina** and Associate Professor **T.A. Khromova**) is revised.

The authors stress, that the article is one of the most disputable issues of the Modern English grammar. It has been a long established tradition to regard the article only in connection with the noun as a category of noun determination. In recent years,

though, the article is associated with 1) the categories of deixis; 2) the actual division of the sentence and 3) the categories of the text. The article is now proclaimed to be a category of “message representation”. Its usage is explained not only by morphological and semantic characteristics of separate words, but also by extra-linguistic, pragmatic factors of the whole linguistic context, by the so-called “human factor”.

“Problems of the Simple Sentence” and “Non-Finite Verb Constructions in English Syntax” are written by Ph. D. Professor **L.M. Kovalyova**.

“Paradigm of English Sentences Organized by One Verb (Predicate)” and “Some Problems of the Composite Sentence” are written by Associate Professor **L.V. Kulgavova**.

“Paradigm of English Sentences Organized by One Verb (Predicate)” is dedicated to the problem of classification of syntactic structures as it is viewed by L.M. Kovalyova, who worked out a manifold classification with four paradigmatic sets in which the constructions are united according to some common feature but at the same time opposed to each other according to some homogeneous features.

“Some Problems of the Composite Sentence” offers the traditional classifications of complex sentences, the types of poly-predicative sentences. It is underlined that, according to some scholars, a complex sentence is not always a transform of a simple sentence. In the concluding section of the article, compound sentences are compared to sentences with homogeneous members: modern linguists (for instance, L.M. Kovalyova) argue that sentences with a plural subject and object correlate semantically with a compound sentence.

Professor **M.V. Malinovich** contributed to “Functional Perspective Theory as a Method in Studying Sentence and Text”. This topic is revised and illustrated by new examples.