**Практическое руководство по УРС по лексикологии**

**по теме: «Лексическая сочетаемость в современном английском языке»**

**Вопросы для изучения:**

1 Условия и правила сочетаемости слов.

2 Свободные и устойчивые словосочетания.

3 Фразеологические единицы и их свойства.

4 Происхождение фразеологических единиц.

1.

The aptness of a word to appear in various combinations is described as **lexical valency orcollocability**. The *noun job,* for example, is combined with such adjectives as *backbreaking, difficult, hard; part-time, summer; cushy, easy; demanding; menial,* etc. The noun *myth* may be a component of a number of word-groups, e.g.

*To create a myth, to dispel a myth, to explode a myth, myths and* etc.

**Lexical valency** acquires special importance in case of polysemy as through the lexical valency different meanings of a polysemantic word can be distinguished, for instance, cf.: *heavy table ( sefe,luggage); heavy snow {rain, storm); heavy drinker (eater); heavy sleep(sorrow, disappointment); heavy industry (tanks).*

The range of the lexical valency of words is linguistically restricted by the inner structure of the English word-stock. Though the verbs *lift* and *raise* are usually treated as synonyms, it is only the latter that is collocated with the noun *question.*

The restrictions of lexical valency of words may also manifest themselves in the lexical meanings of the polysemantic members of word groups. For example, the adjective *heavy* in the meaning 'rich and difficult to digest' is combined with the *words food, meals, supper.*But it cannotbe used with the words *cheese* or *sausage* (the words with more or less the same component of meaning) implying that the *cheese* or the *sausage* is difficult to digest.

Words habitually collocated in speech tend to constitute a cliché, for instance, the noun *arms* and the noun *race.* Thus, *arms race* is a cliché.

The lexical valency of correlated words in different language is different, cf.: in English *pot flowers —* in Russian комнатныецветы.

**Grammatical valency** is the aptness of a word to appear in specific grammatical (or rather syntactic) structures. The minimal grammatical context in which words are used when brought together to form word groups is usually described as the pattern of the word-groups. For instance, the verb *to offer*can be followed by the infinitive *(to* offer to *do smth.)* and the noun *(to offer a cup of tea).* The verb *to suggest can* be followed by the gerund *(to suggest doing smth.)* and the noun ( to*suggest an idea).* The grammatical valency of these verbs is different.

The adjectives *clever* and *intelligent* are seen to possess different grammatical valency as *clever* can be used in word-groups having the pattern: adjective + preposition 'at' + noun *(clever at mathematics),* whereas *intelligent* can never be found in exactly the same word-group pattern.

The grammatical valency of correlated words in different languages is not identical, cf.: in English *to influence a person, a decision,a choice* (verb + noun) – in Russian влиятьначеловека, на*peшeнue,,навыбор* (verb + preposition + noun).

##### 2.

##### How to Distinguish Phraseological Units from Free Word-Groups

This is probably the most discussed – and the most controversial – problem in the field of phraseology. The task of distinguishing between free word-groups and phraseological units is further complicated by the existence of a great number of marginal cases, the so-called *semi-fixed* or *semi-free word-groups,* also called *non-phraseological word-groups* which share with phraseological units their structural stability but lack their semantic unity and figurativeness (e. g. *to go to school, to go by bus, to commit suicide).*

There are two major criteria for distinguishing between phraseological units and free word-groups: semantic and structural.

Compare the following examples:

A Cambridge don: I'm told they're inviting more American professors to this university. Isn't it rather carrying coals to Newcastle?*(To carry coals to Newcastle* means "to take something to a place where it is already plentiful and not needed". Cf. with the R. *В Тулусосвоимсамоваром.)*

B This cargo ship is carrying coal to Liverpool.

The first thing that captures the eye is the semantic difference of the two word-groups consisting of the same essential constituents. In the second sentence the free word-group is *carrying coal* is used in the direct sense, the word *coal* standing for real hard, black coal and *carry* for the plain process of taking something from one place to another. The first context quite obviously has nothing to do either with coal or with transporting it, and the meaning of the whole word-group is something entirely new and far removed from the current meanings of the constituents.

Academician V. V. Vinogradov spoke of the semantic change in phraseological units as "a meaning resulting from a peculiar chemical combination of words". This seems a very apt comparison because in both cases between which the parallel is drawn an entirely new quality comes into existence.

The semantic shift affecting phraseological units does not consist in a mere change of meanings of each separate constituent part of the unit. The meanings of the constituents merge to produce an entirely new meaning: e.g. *to have a bee in one's bonnet* means "to have an obsession about something; to be eccentric or even a little mad". The humorous metaphoric comparison with a person who is distracted by a bee continually buzzing under his cap has become erased and half-forgotten, and the speakers using the expression hardly think of bees or bonnets but accept it in its transferred sense: "obsessed, eccentric".

That is what is meant when phraseological units are said to be characterised by semantic unity. In the traditional approach, phraseological units have been defined as word-groups conveying a single concept (whereas in free word-groups each meaningful component stands for a separate concept).

It is this feature that makes phraseological units similar to words: both words and phraseological units possess semantic unity (see Introduction). Yet, words are also characterised by structural unity which phraseological units very obviously lack being combinations of words.

Most Russian scholars today accept *the semantic criterion* of distinguishing phraseological units from free word-groups as the major one and base their research work in the field of phraseology on the definition of a phraseological unit offered by Professor A. V. Koonin, the leading authority on problems of English phraseology in our country:

"A phraseological unit is a stable word-group characterised by a completely or partially transferred meaning."

The definition clearly suggests that the degree of semantic change in a phraseological unit may vary ("completely or partially transferred meaning"). In actual fact the semantic change may affect either the whole word-group or only one of its components. The following phraseological units represent the first case: *to skate on thin ice (~ to* put oneself in a dangerous position; to take risks); *to wear one's heart on one's sleeve1* (*~* to expose, so that everyone knows, one's most intimate feelings); *to have one's heart in one's boots (~* to be deeply depressed, anxious about something); *to have one's heart in one's mouth (~* to be greatly alarmed by what is expected to happen); *to have one's heart in the right place (~* to be a good, honest and generous fellow); *a crow in borrowed plumes* (£ a person pretentiously and unsuitably dressed; cf. with the R. *ворона в павлиньихперьях); a wolf in a sheep's clothing2 (~* a dangerous enemy who plausibly poses as a friend).

The second type is represented by phraseological units in which one of the components preserves its current meaning and the other is used in a transferred meaning: *to lose (keep) one's temper, to fly into a temper, to fall ill, to fall in love (out of love), to stick to one's word (promise), to arrive at a conclusion, bosom friends, shop talk* (also: *to talk shop), small talk.*

Here, though, we are on dangerous ground because the borderline dividing phraseological units with partially changed meanings from the so-called *semi-fixed* or *non-phraseological word-groups* (marginal cases) is uncertain and confusing.

The term "idiom", both in this country and abroad, is mostly applied to phraseological units with completely transferred meanings, that is, to the ones in which the meaning of the whole unit does not correspond to the current meanings of the components. There are many scholars who regard idioms as the essence of phraseology and the major focus of interest in phraseology research.

*The structural criterion* also brings forth pronounced distinctive features characterising phraseological units and contrasting them to free word-groups.

Structural invariability is an essential feature of phraseological units, though, as we shall see, some of them possess it to a lesser degree than others. Structural invariability of phraseological units finds expression in a number of restrictions.

First of all, restriction in substitution. As a rule, no word can be substituted for any meaningful component of a phraseological unit without destroying its sense. *To carry coals to Manchester* makes as little sense as *В* *Харьков со своим самоваром.*

The idiom *to give somebody the cold shoulder* means "to treat somebody coldly, to ignore or cut him", but a *warm shoulder* or *a cold elbow* make no sense at all. The meaning of *a bee in smb's bonnet* was explained above, but *a bee in his hat* or *cap* would sound a silly error in choice of words, one of those absurd slips that people are apt to make when speaking a foreign language.

At the same time, in free word-groups substitution does not present any dangers and does not lead to any serious consequences. In *The cargo ship is carrying coal to Liverpool* all the components can be changed:

*The ship/vessel/boat carries/transports/takes/brings coal to (any port).*

The second type of restriction is the restriction in introducing any additional components into the structure of a phraseological unit.

In a free word-group such changes can be made without affecting the general meaning of the utterance: *This big ship is carrying a large cargo of coal to the port of Liverpool.*

In the phraseological unit *to carry coals to Newcastle*no additional components can be introduced. Nor can one speak about *the big white elephant* (when using *the white elephant* in its phraseological sense) or about somebody *having his heart in his brown boots.*

Yet, such restrictions are less regular. In *Vanity Fair* by W. M. Thackeray the idiom *to build a castle in the air* is used in this way:

"While dressing for dinner, she built *for herself* a *most magnificent* castle in the air *of which she was the mistress ..."*

In fiction such variations of idioms created for stylistic purposes are not a rare thing. In oral speech phraseological units mostly preserve their traditional structures and resist the introduction of additional components.

The third type of structural restrictions in phraseological units is grammatical invariability. A typical mistake with students of English is to use the plural form of *fault* in the phraseological unit to *find fault with somebody* (e. g. *The teacher always found faults with the boy).* Though the plural form in this context is logically well-founded, it is a mistake in terms of the grammatical invariability of phraseological units *>.* A similar typical mistake often occurs in the unit *from head to foot* (e. g. *From head to foot he was immaculately dressed).* Students are apt to use the plural form of *foot* in this phrase thus erring once more against the rigidity of structure which is so characteristic of phraseological units.

Yet again, as in the case of restriction in introducing additional components, there are exceptions to the rule, and these are probably even more numerous.

One can *build a castle in the air,* but also *castles.* A shameful or dangerous family secret is picturesquely described as *a skeleton in the cupboard,* the first substantive component being frequently and easily used in the plural form, as in: *I'm sure they have skeletons in every cupboard! A black sheep* is a disreputable member of a family who, in especially serious cases, may be described as *the blackest sheep of the family.*

**3**

STRUCTURE AND CLASSIFICATION OF WORD-GROUPS

The term 'syntactic structure (formula)' implies the discription of the order and arrangement of member-words in word-groups as parts of speech. For instance, the syntactic structure of the word-groups *a clever man, a red flower* may be described as made up of an adjective and a noun, i. e. A + N; of the word-groups *to take books, to build houses —* as a verb and a noun, i. e. V + N.

The structure of word-groups may also be described in relation to the head-word. In this case it is usual to speak of the pattern but not of formulas. For example, the patterns of the verbal groups *to take books, to build houses* are to take + N, to build + N. The term syntactic pattern' implies the description of the structure of the word group in which a given word is used as its head.

According to the syntactic pattern word-groups may be classified into predicative and non-predicative. Predicative word-groups have a syntactic structure similar to that of a sentence, e.g. *he went, John works. All* other word-groups are called non-predicative. Non-predicative word-groups may be subdivided into subordinative (e.g. *red flower, a man of wisdom)* and coordinative (e.g. *women and children, do or die)*

Structurally, all word-groups can be classified by the criterion of distribution into two extensive classes: endocentric and exocentric

Endocentric word-groups are those that have one central member functionally equivalent to the whole word-group, i. e. the distibution of the whole word-group and the distribution of its central member are identical. For instance, in the word-groups *red flower, kind to people,*thehead-words are the *noun flower* and the adjective *kind* correspondingly. These word-groups are distributionally identical with their central components. According to their central members word groups may be classified into: nominal groups or phrases (red *flower),* adjectival groups (e.g. *kind to people),* verbal groups (*speak well),* etc.

Exocentric word-groups are those that have no central component and the distribution of the whole word-group is different from either of its members. For instance, the distribution of the word-group *side by side is not identical* with the distribution of its component-members, i.e. the component-members are not syntactically substitutable for the whole word group

TYPES OF MEANING OF WORD-GROUPS

The meaning of word-groups can be divided into: 1) lexical and 2)structural (grammatical) components.

1) The lexical meaning of the word-group may be defined as the combined lexical meaning of the component words. Thus, the lexical meaning of the word-group *red flower* may be described denotationally as the combined meaning of the words *red* and *flower.* However, the term combined lexical meaning' is not to imply that the meaning of the word-group is a mere additive result of all the lexical meanings of the component members. The lexical meaning of the word-group predominates over the lexical meanings of its constituents.

2) The structural meaning of the word-group is the meaning conveyed mainly by the pattern of arrangement of its constituents. For example, such groups as *school grammar* (школьнaяграмматика) and (*grammar school*) are semantically different because of the difference in the pattern of arrangement of the component words. The structural meaning is the meaning expressed by the pattern of the word- group not either by the word *school* or the word *grammar.* It follows that it is necessary to distinguish between the structural meaning of a given type of a word-groups as such and the lexical meaning of its constituents.The lexical and structural components of meaning in word-groups are interdependent and inseparable. For instance, the structural pattern of word-groups *all day long, all night long, all week long* in ordinary usage and the word-group *all the sun long* is identical. The generalized meaning of the pattern may be described as 'a unit of time'. Replacing *day, night, week* by another noun – the *sun* the structural meaning of the pattern does not change. The group *all the sun long* functions semantically as a unit of time. But the noun *sun* included in the group, continues to carry the semantic value, i. e. the lexical meaning that it has in word-groups of other structural patterns, e.g.*the sun rays, African sun .*Thus, the meaning of the word-group is derived from the combined lexical meanings of its constituents and is inseparable from themeaning of the pattern of their arrangement.

MOTIVATION IN WORD-GROUPS

Semantically all word-groups can be classified into motivated non-motivated. A word-group is lexically motivated if the combined lexical meaning, of the group is deducible from the meanings of its components, e-g.red*flower, heavy weight, teach a lesson.*

If the combined lexical meaning of a word-group is not deducible from the lexical meanings of its constituent components, such a word-group is lexically non-motivated, e.g. *red tape* ('official bureaucratic methods'), *take place* ('occur').

The degree of motivation can be different. Between the extremes of complete motivation and lack of motivation there are innumerable intermediate cases. For example, the degree of lexical motivation in the nominal group *black market* is higher than in *black death,* but lower than in *black dress,* though none of the groups can be considered completely non-motivated. This is also true of other words-groups, e.g*old man* and *old boy* both of which may be regarded as lexically motivated though the degree of motivation in old man is noticeably higher.It should be noted that seemingly identical word-groups are sometimes found to be motivated or non-motivated depending on their semantic interpretation. Thus, *apple sauce* is lexically motivated when it means 'a sauce made of apples' but when used to denote ‘nonsense’ it is clearly non motivated.

Completely non-motivated or partially motivated word-group are described as phraseological units or idioms.

**4.**

The sources of origin of phraseological units in modern English are very diverse. According to the etymological principle, PhU are classified in accordance with their original sources.

In origin of English idioms can be divided into two classes:

1) nativeEnglish,

2) borrowed.

Borrowed FE are divided into interlingual and intralingual. In the special group are allocated to borrowing in the foreign language form. Thus, it is possible to distinguish four groups:

1) native English ;

2) cross-language borrowing, borrowed from foreign languages through some type of translation;

3) intralingualborrowin, borrowed from the American version of English;

4) borrowed in a foreign form.

1. Phraseological units, reflecting the traditions and customs of the English people. 2. Phraseological units connected with beliefs.

3. Phraseological units taken from fairy tales and fables.

4. Phraseological units associated with the legends.

5. Idioms related to historical facts.

6. The most important source of FE - professional speech.

7. Biblical equivalents of some of these turns are used in the Russian language.

8. A large number of English phraseological units borrowed from other languages and are international in nature.

**Контрольные мероприятия для проверки УСР**

**по теме «Лексическая сочетаемость в современном английском языке»**

**Задания для контрольной работы:**

1Provide a brief overview of the lexical valency or collocability.

2 Characterize the structure of word-groups

4 Provide a brief overview of some basic features of word-groups.

**Темы рефератов по УСР:**

1 Как разграничить свободные и устойчивые словосочетания.

2 Основные теоретические подходы в исследовании фразеологии.

3 Основные типы фразеологизмов.

4 Этимологическая характеристика фразеологизмов в английском языке

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