

高等学校英语专业系列教材  
Textbook Series for Tertiary English Majors

STEM | 求知

总主编: 石坚

副总主编: 黄国文 陈建平 张绍杰 蒋洪新

# 现代英语词汇学

# M

# Modern English Lexicology

⊕ 主编 丁建新



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王 立 群

北京语言文化大学出版社

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## 内 容 提 要

本书是《求知高等学校英语专业系列教材》之一,它面向英语专业本科学生,对词汇学的一些传统内容进行了合理的整合,同时又吸收了近年来词汇研究的诸多新成果,涵盖了词汇与语法的关系、英语词汇的词源学研究、构词法、词的意义及意义关系、词的语用研究、多词表达(含搭配、词组和习语等)及利用语料库考察词汇型式等主要论题,还附有对中国英语学习者学习词汇十分有用的一些工具性内容,如常用词根表、词缀表等。各章练习力图式样灵活,使学生无须死记硬背就可以巩固所学知识。全书既有共时的研究,又有历时的视角,试图使学生在掌握词汇学的基本概念和内容的同时,将他们引导到词汇这一英语语言中最具人文色彩的部分。

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西安交通大学

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华中师范大学

策 划 张鹤盛 饶邦华 周小群

## 总序

进入 21 世纪,高等教育呈现快速扩展的趋势。我国高等教育从外延式发展过渡到内涵式发展后,“质量”已成为教育改革与发展的关键词。由国务院颁布的《国家中长期教育改革和发展规划纲要(2010—2020)》(以下简称《纲要》)明确要求狠抓本科教育人才培养存在的主要问题,厘清高等教育人才培养目标、理念和社会需求,制订本科教学培养模式、教学内容和方法、质量保障与评估机制,切实提高人才培养的质量。我国英语专业在过去的数十年中经过几代人的努力,取得了显著的成绩和长足的发展。特别是近年来随着经济社会的快速发展和对外交流活动的增多,“一带一路”倡议的提出和“讲好中国故事”需要,英语专业的学科地位也随之大大提升,其规模目前发展得十分庞大。英语专业虽然经历了一个“跨越式”“超常规”的发展历程,但规模化发展带来的培养质量下滑、专业建设和人才需求出现矛盾、毕业生就业面临巨大挑战等严峻的现实表明,英语专业的教育、教学与育人又走到了一个不得不改革的关键时刻。

《纲要》在强调狠抓培养质量的同时,也提出了培养“具有国际视野、通晓国际规则、能参与国际事务和国际竞争”人才战略方针。基于这样的战略需求,外语专业教学指导委员会明确提出了人才“多元培养,分类卓越”的理念。基于这样的理念,即将颁布的《英语专业本科教学质量国家标准》(以下简称《国标》)对英语专业本科的现有课程设置提出新的改革思路:英语专业课程体系包括公共课程、专业核心课程、专业方向课程、实践环节和毕业论文(设计)五个部分;逐步压缩英语技能课程,用“内容依托式”课程替代传统的英语技能课程,系统建设语言学、文学、文化、国别研究等方面的专业课程。

自 2001 开始,在重庆大学出版社的大力支持下,我们成立了由华中、华南、西南和西北以及东北地区的知名专家、学者和教学一线教师组成的《求知高等学校英语专业系列教材》编写组,以《高等学校英语专业英语教学大纲》为依据,将社会的需求与培养外语人才的全面发展紧密结合,注重英语作为一个专业的学科系统性和科学性,注重英语教学和习得的方法与规律,培养学生能力和育人并举,突出特色和系列教材的内在逻辑关系,反映了当时教学改革的新理念并具有前瞻性,建立了与英语专业课程配套的新教材体系。《求知高等学校英语专业系列教材》经历了 10 余年教学实践的锤炼,通过不断的修订来契合教学的发展变化,在教材的整体性和开放性、学生基本技能和实际应用能力的培养、学生的人文素质和跨文化意识的培养这三方面上有所突破。通过这套系列教材的开发建设工作,我们一直在探讨新的教学理念、模式,探索英语专业人才培养的新路子。今天,我们以《国标》为依据,回顾过去十多年来在教学改革上所做的努力,我们欣慰地看到我们的方向是契合英语专业学科定位和

发展的。随着《国标》指导思想的明确,为了适应英语专业学科课程设置的进一步调整,我们对《求知高等学校英语专业系列教材》进行了最新一轮的建设工作。

全新的系列教材力求在以下方面有所创新:

第一,围绕听、说、读、写、译五种能力的培养来构建教材体系。在教材内容的总体设置上,颠覆以往“以课程定教材”的观念,不再让教材受制于刻板的课程设置体系,而是引入 Program 理念,根据《国标》中对学生的能力要求,针对某方面的具体能力编写对应的系列教材。读写和听说系列不再按照难度区分混合编排题材,而是依据文体或专业性质的自然划分,分门别类地专册呈现,便于教师在教学中根据实际需要搭配组合使用。例如,阅读教材分为小说类、散文类、新闻类等;口语教材分为基本表述、演讲、辩论等专题成册。

第二,将五种能力的提升融入人文素养的综合提升之中。坚持英语专业教育的人文本位,强调文化熏陶。在跨学科新专业不断涌现的背景下,盲目追求为每种新专业都专门编写一套教材,费时费力。最佳的做法是坚持英语专业核心教材的人文性,培养学生优秀的语言文化素养,并在此基础上依照专业要求填补相关知识上的空缺,形成新的教材配比模式和体系。

第三,以“3E”作为衡量教材质量的标准。教材的编写上,体现 Engaging, Enabling, Enlightening的“3E”功能,强调教材的人文性与语言文化综合能力的培养,淡化技能解说。

第四,加入“微课”“翻转课堂”等元素,便于课堂互动的开展。创新板块、活动的设计,相对减少灌输式的 lecture,增加学生参与的 seminar。

我们希望通过这套系列教材的全新修订和建设,落实《国标》精神,继续推动高等学校英语专业教学改革,为提高英语专业人才的培养质量探索新的实践方法,为英语专业的学生拓展求知的新空间。

《求知高等学校英语专业系列教材》编委会

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## 前言

20 世纪的语言研究中,词汇研究一直难登大雅之堂。句法几乎成为所有重要语言学派热衷研究的对象。一般认为,导致这种失衡现象的原因是,词汇不具有生成性,只有句法才具有生成性和创造性,是语言的本质之所在。其实,这种认识是有失公允的,这种研究上一边倒的做法对于语言本质的揭示有害而无害。事实上,词汇和语法只不过是语言的两种不同形式而已,它们都是体现意义的方式,是同一问题的两个方面、两种视角。词汇之于语法,有如砖之于混凝土,它们共同构筑意义的大厦。语言研究,就像从山的两端同时挖一条隧道,一端是词汇研究,另外一端是语法研究。挖的是同一座山,这座山,就是语言研究的终极目标——意义。语言研究重句法、轻词汇的状况在 20 世纪下半叶有所转机。这是由于计算机技术的发展使得在短时间内处理大量语料成为可能。语料库语言学家们开始利用计算机来考察词汇形式,使通过词汇来研究语言最终成为现实,并取得句法研究从未有过的新成果。这种以词汇为出发点的语言研究方法尽管仍未成为主流,但它却孕育着一种全新的语言研究方法,具有可观的研究前景。有人甚至预言,传统句法研究的领地,正逐渐被词汇研究这支游牧部落所占领。

我们在过去的几年是在这样的学术背景下从事英语词汇研究,并接受重庆大学出版社关于编写《现代英语词汇学》的稿约的。教材的编写需要以理论研究为前提,但与理论文章的撰写又不尽相同,二者有着不同的话语方式。因此,对于一个从事理论研究、论文撰写为主的团队来说,编写这一教材不能不算是一种挑战。在编写的过程中,我们力图深入浅出,使之适合课堂教学的使用。但是,正如我们的读者将要看到的一样,理想与现实实际上总是有一定的距离。词汇学是我国大学英语系的一门传统课程,国内现有的几本教材对于这一课程传统的建立可谓功不可没。对于这些教材,以及国外这一方面的最新教材,我们都多有参考,并在参考书目中一一列出。

词是物的表征,是思想的载体,是意义的源泉,是历史的见证,是文化的积淀。《现代英语词汇学》面向英语专业本科学生,对词汇学的一些传统内容进行了合理的整合,同时又吸收了近年来词汇研究的诸多新成果,涵盖了词汇与语法的关系、英语词汇的词源学研究、构词法、词的意义及意义关系、词的语用研究、多词表达(含搭配、词组和习语等)及利用语料库考察词汇型式等主要论题,还附有对中国英语学习者学习词汇十分有用的一些工具性内容,如常用词根表、词缀表等。各章练习力图式样灵活,使学生无需死记硬背就可以巩固所学知

识。全书既有共时的研究,又有历时的视角,试图使学生在掌握词汇学的基本概念和内容的同时,将他们引导到词汇这一英语语言中最具人文色彩的部分。

感谢中山大学黄国文教授向出版社推荐本人主持编写这一教材。提携后学,他总是不遗余力,用心良苦。广东外语外贸大学陈建平教授作为《求知高等学校英语专业系列教材》的副总主编之一,提出过许多建设性的意见,使我们获益良多。厦门大学杨信彰教授长期以来对我们的学术研究也有许多的关注和鼓励。中山大学外语学院硕士研究生朱丽娜、许伊、谢芳在本书的编写过程中也给予了不少帮助。在此,我们一并表示感谢。

由于编写时间仓促,书中疏漏之处在所难免,希望广大读者不吝赐教。

编者

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Polonius: What do you read, my lord?

Hamlet: Words, words, words.

(W. Shakespeare. *Hamlet*)

## Introduction: Word, Vocabulary and Lexicology

Lexicology can be defined as the study of lexis, understood as the stock of words in a given language. This definition shows that the notion of “word” is central in the study of lexicology. So in this chapter we will first deal with this notion in general, and then we will explore the internal organization of the total stock of words in the English language. Lexicology is one of the levels of language analysis, others being phonology, grammar and semantics. An attempt will be made in this chapter to see how lexicology interacts with all these levels.

### I. THE NOTION OF “WORD”

#### 1. Do Words Exist?

Before we try to define the category of “word”, let us examine whether or not words really exist in language. How many words does the following sentence contain:

Do words exist?

Obviously, three. This task seems very easy; in fact, almost simple-minded. This is because it is so natural for us to pick out words from a speech signal that we do not even realize what is required to accomplish such a task. To understand this process, let us first look at the speech signal itself:

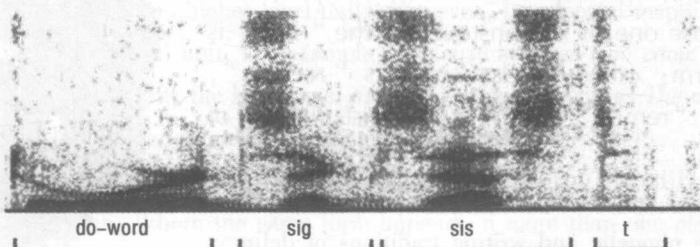


Fig.1.1 Spectrogram of *Do Words Exist?*

Notice that there is nothing in the speech signal to indicate where one word ends or another begins. Thus, the sentence that we hear as:

There are no spaces between spoken words.

could be represented on the level of the acoustic signal as something like this:

There are no spaces between spoken words.

Beginning students of a language often assume that words are conveniently demarcated by the writing system, and wonder what more evidence for their identification of word is needed. But we have already seen that the spelling system is misleading as far as the phonetic properties of lexical items are concerned, so there is no reason to take the boundaries imposed by the writing system too seriously. Moreover, the separation of words by spaces does not always correspond to functional realities. For example, in *a new waste paper basket*, the first two spaces do not have the same value as the last two because the group *waste paper basket*, although represented by three words, constitutes a semantic unit, while such a unit does not exist for the group *a new waste*. This point can be further illustrated by compound expressions such as *attorney general*. Although written as two “words”, many speakers pluralize the form as *attorney generals* (as in *Kenney and Reno were two attorney generals*). For these speakers the expression functions as a single word. Consequently, a definition based on writing traditions cannot be entirely satisfactory, either.

## 2. Bloomfield's Definition of Word

Of course, words “really” exist. Although there are some difficulties in defining “word” from phonetic and orthographical perspectives, most fluent speakers of English seem to know what a word is. They know, for example, that words are listed in dictionaries, that they are separated in writing by spaces, and they may be separated in speech by pauses. For linguists, word is an intermediate structure smaller than a whole phrase and yet generally larger than a single sound segment. Leonard Bloomfield, an influential linguist writing in the 1930s, defines the word as follows:

A free form that does not consist entirely of lesser free forms is a word. Thus, “boy”, which admits of no further analysis into meaningful parts, is a word; “boyish”, although capable of such analysis, is a word, because one of its constituents, the “-ish”, is a bound form; other words, such as “receive”, “perceive”, “remit”, “permit”, consist entirely of bound forms.

(Bloomfield 1933)

Giving up the phonetic and writing traditions of defining the word, Bloomfield relies on purely formal criteria. He is the first to suggest a formal definition of the word. He contrasts the



Leonard Bloomfield (1887–1949)

word with other significant units: the morpheme or minimal meaningful unit and the syntagm or structure, consisting potentially of more than one word. For him, a minimal is a **morpheme**. A form which may occur alone is free. A form which may not occur alone is bound. For example, *dog* and *plant* are free; *-er* and *-ing* as in *worker* and *singing* are bound forms. A **word** is a minimal free form. Hence, a word is viewed as a form which can occur in isolation and have meaning but which cannot be analyzed into elements which can all occur alone and also have meaning.

### 3.Characteristics of Words

Although it is difficult for us to develop a perfect definition for “word”, we can work out some essential characteristics for it. Jackson & Amvela (2000: 50-52) consider that four characteristics are essential in the definition of the word in English.

First, the word is an uninterruptible unit. When elements are added to a word to modify its meaning, they are never included within that word. They respect the internal stability of the word and are added either at the beginning as prefixes of the word or at the end as suffixes. For example, the prefix *un-* and the suffix *-able* may be added to the words *lock* and *read* and give *unlock* and *readable* respectively. The word to which affixes are added and which carries the basic meaning of the resulting complex word is known as the “stem”, which may consist of one or more morphemes. The label “root” is used to refer to a stem consisting of a single morpheme.

Second, the word may consist of one or more morphemes. When it consists of one morpheme only, then it cannot be broken down into smaller meaningful units, e.g. *dog*, *hand*, *man*, *out*, *work*. These are called “simple” words, which are typically “minimum free forms”, in the sense that they may stand by themselves and yet act as minimally complete utterances, e.g. in answer to a question. When words consist of more than one morpheme, they may be either complex or compound. Complex words may be broken down into one free form and one or more bound forms, e.g. *dogs*, *happily*, *quicker*, whereas compound words consist of more than one free form, e.g. *birth + day*, *black + bird*, *candle + stick*. Some cases incorporate the characteristics of both complex and compound words, e.g. *gentle + man+ly*.

Third, the word occurs typically in the structure of phrases. Morphemes are used to build words, words to build phrases, phrases to build clauses, and clauses to build sentences. This is the typical mapping of lower level into higher level units. However, in a typical mapping, a higher level unit may be used in a lower level unit. For example, a clause such as *who came late* may be used like an adjective (word) to modify the head noun *man* in a sentence such as *The man who came late was my brother*. This phenomenon is called “**rank shift**” by Halliday (1994).

Finally, it is also an important characteristic of each word that it should belong to a specific word class or part of speech. Where the same form appears in more than one class, as frequently happens in English, we regard the various occurrences as separate words (e.g. the verb *smoke* as distinct from the noun *smoke*). It may even be suggested that a word is defined by two factors: its semantic “nucleus” and the class to which it belongs.

## II. THE ORGANIZATION OF ENGLISH VOCABULARY

**Vocabulary** can be defined as the total word stock of a language. It is more or less synonymous with “lexis” and “lexicon”, with the first more colloquial, the third more learned and technical, and the second situated half-way between the other two. It is generally agreed that the vocabulary of a given language is not simply a listing of independent items (as the headwords in a dictionary would suggest), but is organized internally in one way or another. In this section, we will explore the ways in which English vocabulary is organized.

### 1. The Syntagmatic and Paradigmatic Relations

The **syntagmatic/paradigmatic** distinction is one of the Saussurean distinctions that have been of great importance in the development of structuralism. This dichotomy deals with the relationships that hold between units in the language-system. The former is called relations “in praesentia” while the latter relations “in absentia”. The syntagmatic relations which a unit contracts are those which it contracts by virtue of its combination with other units of the same level. For example, the word “old” is syntagmatically related with the definite article *the* and the noun *man* in the expression *the old man*. The paradigmatic relations contracted by units are those which hold between a particular unit in a given syntagm and other units which are substitutable for it in the syntagm. For example, *old* is paradigmatically related with *young*, *tall*, etc. in expressions like *the old man*, *the young man*, *the tall man*, etc. as *man* is paradigmatically related with *woman*, *dog*, etc. in expressions like *the old man*, *the old woman*, *the old dog*, etc.

The notion of “paradigmatic relation” is of special relevance here. According to de Saussure, every word is involved in a network of associations which connect it with other terms in the language. Some of these associations are based on similarity of meaning, others are purely formal, still others involve both form and meaning. In de Saussure’s graphic formula, a given term is like the center of a constellation, the point where an infinite number of co-ordinated terms converge. De Saussure tried to represent these associations in the form of diagram using the French word *enseignement* (“teaching”) (de Saussure 1959: 126). Jackson & Amvela (2000: 13) modifies the form of the diagram by giving one word a more central position and used English words to illustrate the problem. Their diagram is reproduced below.

In the above diagram, four lines of association radiate from the noun *lecturer*. (1) connects it with the verb forms *lectured* and *lecturing* by formal and semantic similarity based on the common stem *lecture*; (2) connects it with *teacher* and *tutor* by semantic similarity; (3) associates it with *gardener* and *laborer* because they all have the suffix *-er* forming agent nouns from verbs; (4) associates it with the adjective *clever* and the inflected adverb *quicker* by accidental similarity in their endings. In this way, any word chosen from a given context will suggest other words to us, because they either resemble or differ from each other in form, meaning or both. De Saussure’s