

Introduction

Words as the Basic Conceptual Unit for Language

Words: The fundamental building block of languages from the perspective of language users.

The Unit



Lexicology
(the Word)



Morphology
(the Morpheme)



Phonology
(the Phoneme)



Phonetics
(the Phone)



Syntax
(the Sentence)



Semantics
(the Proposition)

Icons: University of Waterloo

Symbolicity of Words

cat [k^hæt]
chat [ʃæt]
gato [gæto]

Signifier



Signified

Cat: wenchiaawang/iStock/Thinkstock

Symbolicity of Words

Based on convention
Arbitrariness - Motivation



Arbitrary

- Colour
 - Words
- Coffee
Starbucks

Motivation

- Central image
- Stars



Arbitrary

- Words
- Consumer
Whore

Motivation

- Dollar signs

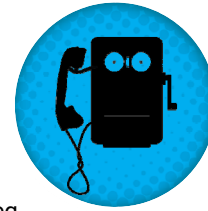
Starbucks Logo: Starbucks; Consumer Whore: Kieron Dwyer

Symbolicity of Words

Dialing a phone.

Hanging up the phone.

The **ring** of the phone.



leg

leg

Cellphone, Phone, Table: wenchiaiwang/iStock/Thinkstock; Rotary Phones: seamartini/iStock/Thinkstock; Crank Phone: University of Waterloo;
Woman: Kharlamova/iStock/Thinkstock; Hand: Noedelhap/iStock/Thinkstock

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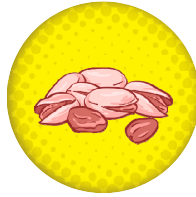


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Folk Etymologies



"pink-stachios"



"bridegroom"

bryd-guma
(‘bride-man’)



"high muck-a-muck"
(or muckety-muck)

Chinook Jargon
hayo makamak
(‘one who has plenty
to eat’)

Girt: Kharlamova/iStock/Thinkstock; Pistachios: Utrona_more/iStock/Thinkstock; Groom: mocoo/iStock/Thinkstock; Dinner: krolone/iStock/Thinkstock

Folk Etymologies

Backformation ← **no agentive**

pease → pea + s → pea

editor → edit + or → edit

swindler → swindle + er → swindle

Specific re-analysis
into component morphemes

Legitimate agentive

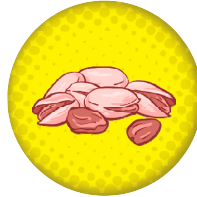
farm → farmer



Pease: mocoo/iStock/Thinkstock; Farmer: wenchiaawang/iStock/Thinkstock

Folk Etymologies

Re-analysis



pistachio → pink-stachio



écrevisse → crayfish



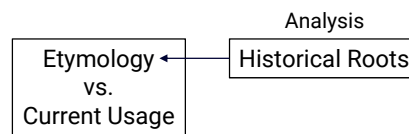
musquash → muskrat



berfry → belfry

Pistachios: Ultro_na_more/iStock/Thinkstock; Crayfish: bor-zebra/iStock/Thinkstock; Muskrat: coffee-in/iStock/Getty Images; Belfry: Educester/iStock/Thinkstock

Historical Analysis

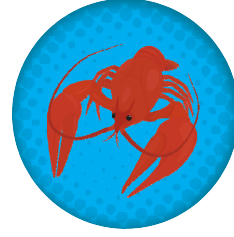
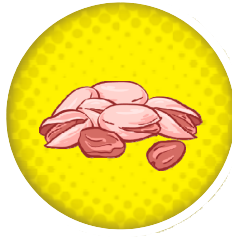


← crayfish

Crayfish: bor-zebra/iStock/Thinkstock

Wrap-up

"Arbitrary", conventional linkages
Motivations atrophied



Pease: moccoo/iStock/Thinkstock; Pistachios: Utro_na_more/iStock/Thinkstock; Crayfish: bor-zebra/iStock/Thinkstock