

SENSE RELATIONS II

POLYSEMY, HOMONYMY AND HYPONYMY

HOMONYMY

- sense relation in which **one form** has different m.; **different words** with the **same form** (treated as such in dictionaries)
- **no relatedness in meaning**

e.g. bank₁-side of a river

bank₂-financial institution

Absolute vs partial homonymy

3 criteria for absolute homonyms:

1. their forms must be unrelated in m.
2. all their forms must be identical
1. identical forms must be syntactically equi.
 - *sole, list*
 - *They found hospitals and charitable institutions.*
 - *The bell was rung at midnight. A rung of the ladder is broken.*

- Result of partial homonymy- **ambiguity**
ambiguous word-having more than one
sense

ambiguous s.- having 2 or more
paraphrases which are not themselves
paraphrases of each other

e.g. We saw her duck. (*We saw her lower
her head vs We saw the duck that belongs
to her*)

- According to some sem. a sentence cannot be ambiguous (*The chicken is ready to eat* represents 2 different s.)
- Ambiguous words or phrases- if they have 2 or more synonyms which are not themselves synonyms of each other:
trunk, coach

HOMONYMY-POLYSEMY DISTINCTION

- Homonymy-polysemy distinction: closeness or relatedness of senses of ambiguous w.
- Homonymy- different senses of an ambiguous w. are far apart from each other and not related via speaker's intuition; matter of accident or coincidence

e.g. *bank, mug; kit, bar*

POLYSEMY

- One **word** having several closely related senses
- Native speaker has clear intuition that the different senses are related to each other
- Polysemy-close relatedness in m. which is usually connected to **metaphorical extension**
- meaning relatedness has to be synchronic



e.g. *neck; loza, ogranak*

mouth (of a river; of an animal):

relatedness- opening from the interior of some solid mass to the outside, and of a place of issue at the end of some long narrow channel

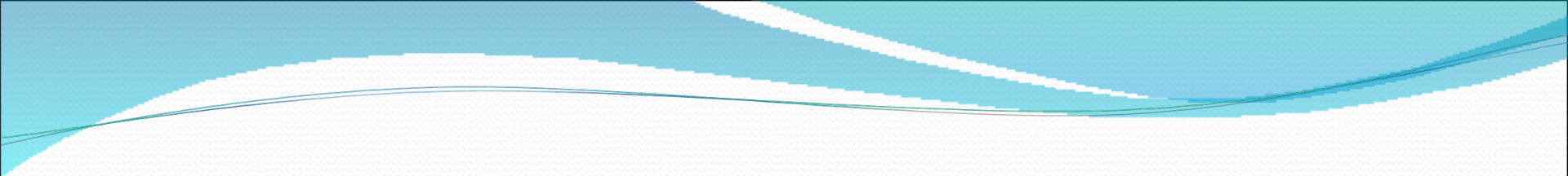
- **EAT**- literal sense of 'taking food' and derived meanings of 'use up' and 'corrode'

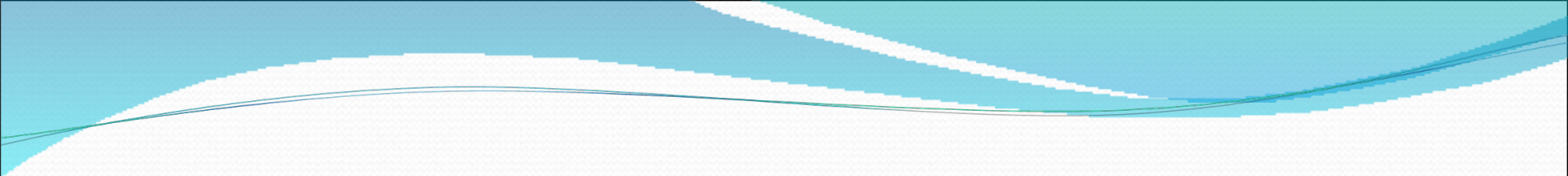
treat these as 3 different meanings?

but, distinction between eating meat and eating soup;
eating and drinking soup

is eating jelly the same as eating toffee (involving
chewing) or eating sweets (involving sucking)?

- carelessness- eat has different m. with every type of food we eat
- shouldn't look for all possible differences, but for sameness of m. as far as we can

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- Dictionary has to decide whether a particular item is to be handled in terms of polysemy or homonymy; a polysemic item will be treated as a single entry and a homonymous one will have a separate entry for each of the homonyms
 - Free to question the decisions of a dictionary-maker as they may be arbitrary

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- Dictionaries usually base their decisions upon etymology. If identical forms have different origin, they are treated as homonyms and given separate entries

If they have one origin, even if they have different m., they are treated as polysemic and given a separate entry

- Not satisfactory: history of a l. doesn't accurately reflect its present state (e.g. *pupil*)

- problematic cases- difference in spelling doesn't always indicate a difference in origin: what are today homophones may be derived from the same original form (*metal-mettle; flower-flour*)
- If semanticist relies on his historical knowledge, they are the same word (polysemy), even though they're spelt differently. Can we consider expressions that are spelt differently to be the same word?

HYPONYMY

- s.relation in which the m. of one item is included in the m. of the other; refers to the notion of **inclusion**
- the m. of *red* is included in the m. of *scarlet*
red- superordinate term (HYPERONYM)
scarlet-HYPONYM of *red* (kind of red)
tulip, rose-flower; lion, elephant-mammal/animal
flower is an immediate h. of *plant* and *tulip* is an immediate h. of *flower*. *Rose and tulip*- CO-HYPONYMS of *flower*

- no superordinate term in all situations
- Lyons: in Classical Greek a superordinate term for different professions (*carpenter, doctor, flute player, shoemaker*), but no such term in Eng.; *craftsman* (excluding *doctor* and *flute player*)
- no sup. term for all colour words (*coloured* excludes *black* and *white*; even *grey*)

- if polysemic, the same term may appear in several places in the hierarchy (in one of its m. it may be superordinate to itself in another m.)

e.g. *animal* may be used:

- in contrast with *vegetable* to include *mammals, birds, fishes, insect*
- in the sense of *mammal* to contrast with *birds, fishes* and *insects* (including *humans* and *beasts*)
- in the sense of *beast* to contrast with *human*

- *sheep* is used for all creatures of the species-it is the superordinate term of *ewe*, *lamb*, *ram*
- but, the superordinate term for *dogs* (as species) is *dog*, though *dog* is also the hyponym different from *bitch*
- *cattle* and *poultry* are odd-although superordinate, they are all used only for plural reference
- We say *those are cattle* to include *those are cows*, but no single term to put in a frame *that is a* -----.

- synonymy is a special case of hyponymy
- *mercury-quicksilver*: defined as synonyms or hyponyms of each other
- syn.- SYMMETRICAL HYPONYMY
- **If X is a hyponym of Y and if Y is a hyponym of X, then X and Y are syn.**
- Hyponymy involves **entailment**. A prop. X entails a prop. Y if the truth of Y follows necessarily from the truth of X
- to say *this is a tulip* **entails** *this is a flower*