

Word Meaning- II

HUL 243

31st Aug 2024

- Last time: the difficulties of defining a word
- Challenge of multi-words, morphemes and words like *and, a, the*
- Discuss sense relations between words

Lexeme

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- Difference between a lemma and lexeme?
 - Lemma is usually used as an entry form in a dictionary
 - A *canonical form of a lexeme that is chosen to represent it* is a lemma (in the case of RUN it comes from the non-finite *to run*)
 - Similarly BE is the lemma form for *am, is, are, was, were*

Ambiguity

- A standard example of a word with two meanings associated with a single form is *bank*
 - ▶ *bank*: land at river edge
 - ▶ *bank*: financial institution
- Here the two meanings are quite distinct
- If two meanings associated with the same phonological form are distinct— the form is **ambiguous**

Vagueness

- We can take another case of two meanings associated with a single form
 - ▶ *aunt*: father's sister
 - ▶ *aunt*: mother's sister
- However, here the meanings are more intuitively *united* rather than separate as "parent's sister"
- If two meanings associated with the same phonological form are united, and non distinguished– the form is **vague**

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- I went to the bank and so did Bill
- I went to the bank (fin institution) and so did Bill (river's edge)
- The above sentence is unacceptable— and if used, usually in a humorous/comedic sense: ambiguous sentences won't pass the test

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- ② I deposited some money with the *moneylender*
- ③ ??I deposited some money with the *embankment*

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- ① He loved sitting by the bank
 - ② He loved sitting by the *embankment*
 - ③ ??He loved sitting by the *moneylender*

- Given two words: *mole* and *publicist*, which one is vague and which is ambiguous ?

- Puns can be constructed with ambiguous but not vague structures
- *Soaring pork prices hog headlines and sow discontent*

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- ① paint a portrait in oils on canvas
 - ② paint a landscape with watercolours on paper
 - ③ paint a mural on the wall
 - ④ paint a decorative border on a wall
 - ⑤ paint the walls of a room
 - ⑥ paint the exterior of a house/fence/wall
 - ⑦ paint furniture
 - ⑧ paint stripes on the parking lot
 - ⑨ paint on a digital tablet using a pen

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- In this scenario, the senses seem very distinct, and the sentence less acceptable (or only humorously)
- Some senses of painting are closer to each other (more united in their senses) as compared to others

Polysemy

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- A criteria of 'relatedness' is used to identify polysemy

hook n. 1. a piece of material usually metal, curved or bent and used to suspend, catch, hold or pull something. 2. short fo fish-hook 3. a trap or a snare. 4. *Chiefly US* something that attracts or is intended to be an attraction

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2 lexemes	1 lexeme	1 lexeme
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