

# COMP550 Natural Language Processing

## Assignment 1

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### Question 1

**Case 1:** "That's Wong on so many levels."

This is an *orthographic* ambiguity. The sentence could be interpreted as *there is a lot of peoples call Wong on all the floors* or has the common expression *that is wrong on so many levels*. The word *Wong* which could be mistaken for *wrong* is the cause of ambiguity. Knowing that Names are starting by a capital letter could prevent a system from making a mistake. For instance, a spell checker would probably change *wong* for *wrong* otherwise. Having access to the context would also disambiguate the sentence.

**Source:** <https://www.pinterest.ca/pin/360076932688489937/?lp=true>

**Case 2:** "But I know what I am and I'm glad I'm a man, and so is Lola"

This is an *Syntactic* ambiguity. The sentence could be interpreted as *I am glad to be a man and Lola is glad to be a man* or has *I am glad to be a man and Lola is glad I am a man*. The way the sentence is written: *I am glad I am [something], and so is [another person]* cause ambiguity. Without the context, knowing that Lola is more a woman name would disambiguate the passage.

**Source:** [https://www.reddit.com/r/Music/comments/2izue5/serious\\_is\\_lola\\_a\\_transvestite/](https://www.reddit.com/r/Music/comments/2izue5/serious_is_lola_a_transvestite/)

**Case 3:** "GOP Lawmakers Grill IRS Chief Over Lost Emails"

This is a *lexical* ambiguity. The sentence could be interpreted as *GOP lawmakers are grilling the chief of IRS (has in burning over a fire) for losing emails* or has *GOP lawmakers are giving a hard time (without any violence) to the chief of IRS*. The word *Grill* is the cause of ambiguity. Knowing that US government employees do not get tortured by the government disambiguate the passage.

**Source:** <https://www.wsj.com/articles/gop-lawmakers-grill-irs-chief-over-loss-emails-1403278518?mg=id-wsj>

**Case 4:** "you look like I need a drink"

This is a *pragmatic* ambiguity. The sentence could be interpreted as *I have a biological need to drink* or as *I would like a drink*. The expression *I need a drink* meaning *I would like to have a drink* is the cause of ambiguity. Knowing the expression would disambiguate the passage.

**Source:** <https://genius.com/Justin-moore-you-look-like-i-need-a-drink-lyrics>

**Case 5:** "this is a big plane"

This is a *phonological* ambiguity. The sentence could be interpreted as *this is a big plain* or as *this is a big plane*. The word *plane* cause of ambiguity, because we use the same phoneme to say *plane* or *plain*. Knowing the English level of the writer and the context would help determine the chance he or she meant *plain*.

**Source:** <http://lively.com/new-worlds-largest-plane/>