

HOMONYMY

Module I. Lecture 6

Plan

Homonymy of words and word forms

Classification of homonyms

Some peculiarities of lexical and grammatical homonymy

Sources of homonymy

Introduction



Definition: Homonyms, words sharing spelling and/or sound but differing in meaning.



Classification: Homographs (same spelling), homophones (same sound), and their combinations.

Types of Homonymy

Perfect Homonyms: Same sound and spelling, different meanings (e.g., "school" - educational institution, "school" - group of fish).

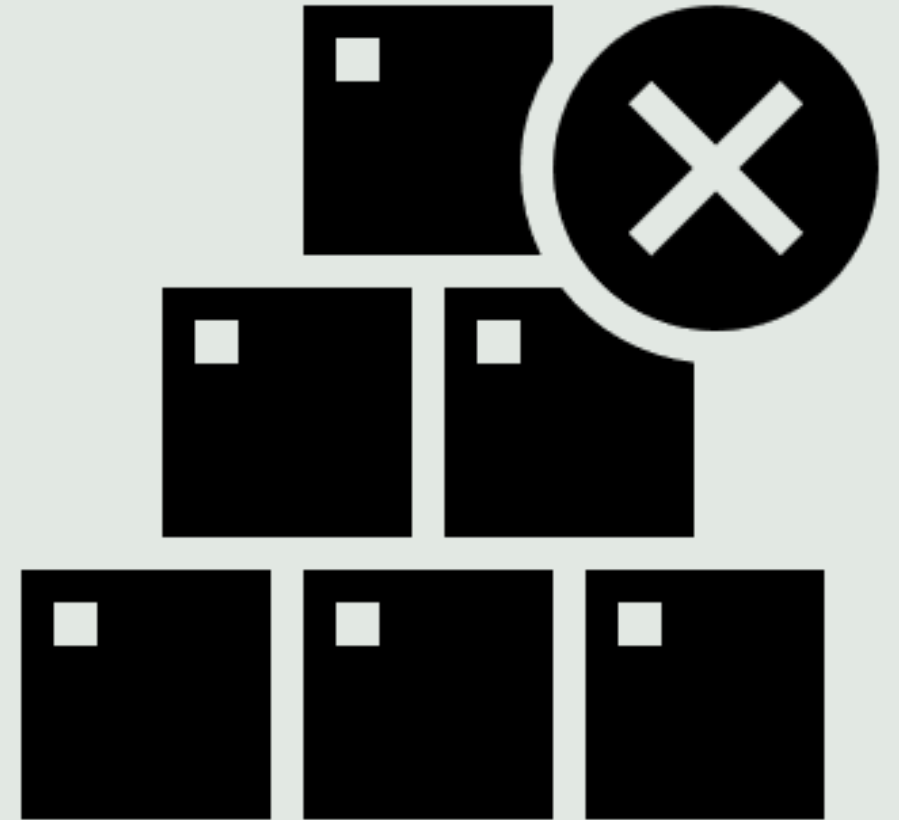
Homographs: Same spelling, different sound and meaning (e.g., "tear" - drop of water, "tear" - to pull apart).

Homophones: Same sound, different spelling and meaning (e.g., "sean" and "see," "son" and "sun").

Homonyms – words identical in their spelling or/and sound form but different in their meaning. When analyzing homonymy, we see that some words are homonyms in all their forms, i.e. we observe *full homonymy* of the paradigms of two or more different words, e.g., in seal₁ — ‘a sea animal’ and seal₂ — ‘a design printed on paper by means of a stamp’. The paradigm “seal, seal’s, seals, seals’ ” is identical for both of them and gives no indication of whether it is seal₁ or seal₂, that we are analysing. In other cases, e.g. seal₁ — ‘a sea animal’ and (to) seal, — ‘to close tightly’, we see that although some individual word-forms are homonymous, the whole of the paradigm is not identical. It is easily observed that only some of the word-forms (e.g. seal, seals, etc.) are homonymous, whereas others (e.g. sealed, sealing) are not. In such cases we cannot speak of homonymous words but only of homonymy of individual word-forms or of *partial homonymy*. This is true of a number of other cases, e.g. compare find[faind], found [faund], found[faund], and found[faund], founded[’faundid], founded[’faundid]; know[nou], knows[nouz], knew[nju:], and no[nou]; nose[nouz], noses [’nouzis]; new[nju:] in which partial homonymy is observed.

Classification by Skeat

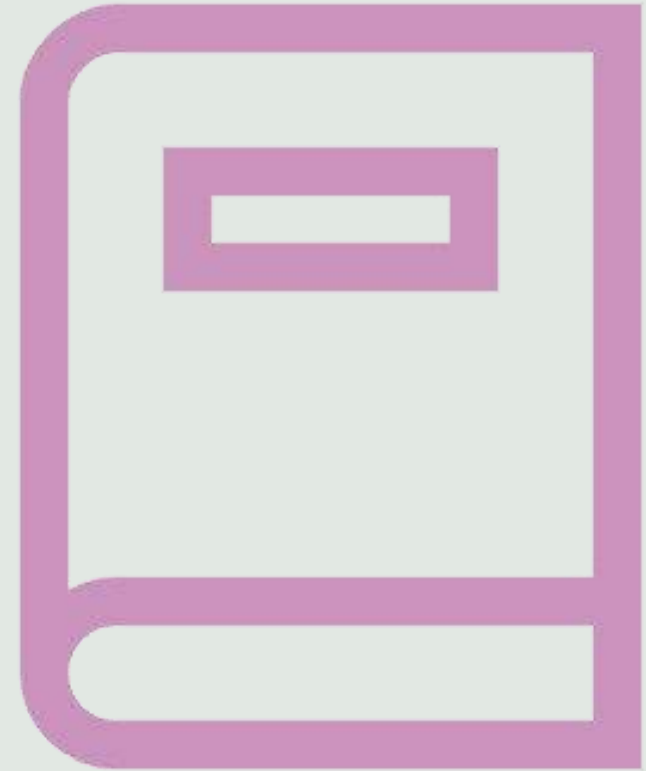
- **Perfect Homonyms:** Same sound and spelling (e.g., "spring" - season, "spring" - coiled metal).
- **Homographs:** Same spelling, different sound and meaning (e.g., "tear" - drop of water, "tear" - to pull apart).
- **Homophones:** Same sound, different spelling and meaning (e.g., "sean" and "see," "son" and "sun").



Walter Skeat classified homonyms into: 1) *perfect homonyms* (they have different meaning, but the same sound form & spelling: school - school); 2) *homographs* (Homographs are words identical in spelling, but different both in their sound-form and meaning, e.g. *tear* [tia] — ‘a drop of water that comes from the eye’ and *tear* [tea] — ‘to pull apart by force’). 3) *homophones* are words identical in sound-form but different both in spelling and in meaning, e.g. *sean* and *seev*; *son n* and *sun n*.

Classification by Smirnitsky

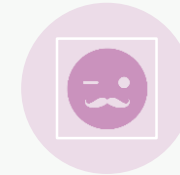
- **Full Homonyms:** Identical in spelling, sound, and grammatical meaning, different lexical meaning (e.g., "spring" - coiled metal, "spring" - season).
- **Homoforms:** Same sound and spelling, different lexical and grammatical meaning (e.g., "reading" - gerund, "reading" - verbal noun).



Classification by Arnold



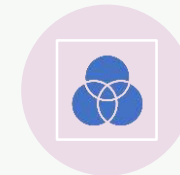
Different Lexical Meaning:
e.g., "board" - piece of wood, "board" - group of people.



Different Lexical Meaning & Paradigms: e.g., "to lie/lie/lie" - deceive, "lie/lay/lain" - recline.



Identical Only in Basic Forms: e.g., "light" - not heavy, "light" - source of illumination.



Identical Only in One of Their Paradigms: e.g., "a bit" - small amount, "bit" - to bite.

Smirnitsky classified *perfect homonyms* into: 1) *full homonyms* (identical in spelling, sound form, grammatical meaning but different in lexical meaning: spring); 2) *homofoms* (the same sound form & spelling but different lexical and grammatical meaning: “reading” – gerund, particle 1, verbal noun).

Arnold classified *perfect homonyms* by 4 criteria (lexical meaning, grammatical meaning, basic forms, paradigms) into 4 groups: 1) *different only in lexical meaning* (board - board); 2) *different in lexical meaning & paradigms* (to lie/lie/lie – lie/lay/lain); 3) *identical only in basic forms* (light /adj./- light /noun/); 4) *identical only in one of their paradigms* (a bit – bit /to bite/).

Lexical and Grammatical Homonymy Peculiarities

- Distinction between groups: Identical sound-form, different grammatical and lexical meanings.
- Subdivision into A and B: A - Different in sound-form, grammatical, and lexical meanings. B - Different in sound-form, grammatical meanings, and partly different in lexical meaning.



Sources of Homonymy

1. Phonetic Changes: Historical developments may lead to identical sound forms (e.g., "night" and "knight").

2. Shortening: Reduction of words can create homonyms (e.g., "fan" - enthusiast, "fan" - implement for waving).

3. Borrowing: Borrowed words may duplicate native words (e.g., "vice" - instead of, "vice" - evil conduct).

4. Sound Imitation: Words made by imitating sounds can create homonyms (e.g., "bang" - loud noise, "bang" - fringe of hair).



One source of homonyms is phonetic changes which words undergo in the course of their historical development. As a result of such changes, two or more words which were formerly pronounced differently may develop identical sound forms and thus become homonyms.

Night and *knight*, for instance, were not homonyms in Old English as the initial *k* in the second word was pronounced, and not dropped as it is in its modern sound form: OE. *kmht* (cf. OE *niht*). A more complicated change of form brought together another pair of homonyms: *to knead* (OE *cnedan*) and *to need* (OE *neodian*). Shortening is a further type of word-building which increases the number of homonyms. E.g. *fan*, n. in the sense of "an enthusiastic admirer of some kind of sport or of an actor, singer, etc." is a shortening produced from *fanatic*. Its homonym is a Latin borrowing *fan*, n. which denotes an implement for waving lightly to produce a cool current of air.

Split

Polysemy



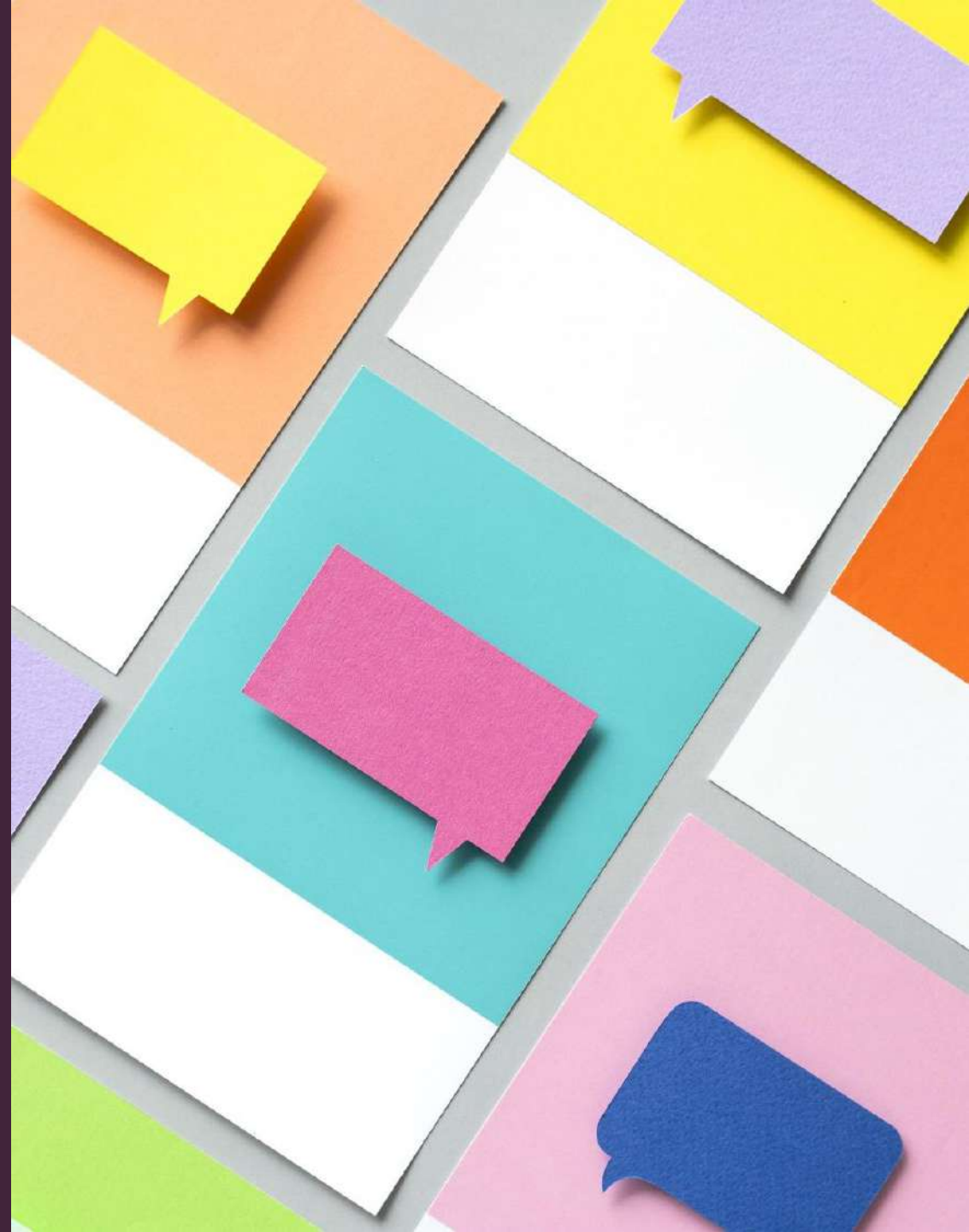
Originating from different meanings of the same word.



Split polysemy results in separate words with identical spelling.

Conclusion

- Homonyms contribute complexity and richness to language.
- Understanding various types and sources enhances linguistic comprehension.
- Language is a dynamic system with evolving patterns and relationships.



A top-down view of a desk with a spiral notebook, a green pen, black glasses, and a small plant. The spiral notebook is open, showing two lined pages. The left page has the text "Thank You For Your Attention" written in black cursive. The right page is blank. A green pen lies vertically to the left of the notebook. A pair of black-rimmed glasses is positioned in the bottom left corner. A small green plant with yellow flowers is in the top left corner.

Thank You
For Your
Attention