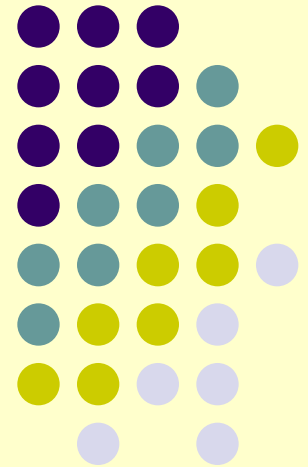
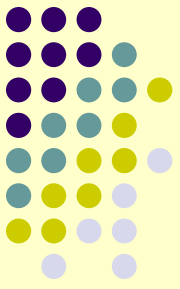


Polysemy in Modern English

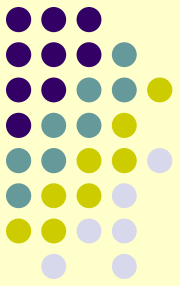


Polysemy



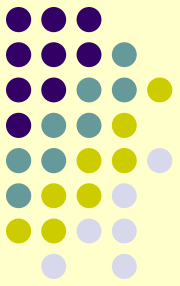
- Is the plurality of meanings
- A word that has more than one meaning is called **polysemantic**

Polysemy



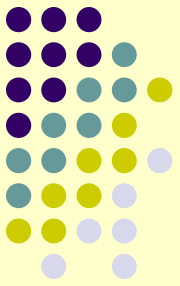
- **Monosemantic words** (words having only one meaning) are few in number (mainly, **scientific terms**)
- The majority of English words are polysemantic (the number of meanings ranging from 5 to over 100)
- The commoner the word, the more meanings it has

Polysemy is typical of English

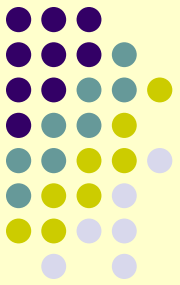


- due to the **monosyllabic character** of the English vocabulary
- due to the **predominance of root words**

Polysemy



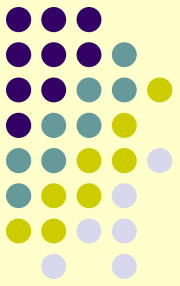
- Exists in the language, not in speech
- Any word used actually has only one meaning which is referred to as contextual



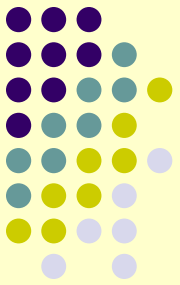
Polysemy

- The sum total of many contexts in which the word may occur permits to observe and record cases of identical meaning and cases that differ in meaning
- The analysis of the word's recurrent meanings enables to make up its **semantic structure**

Semantic structure



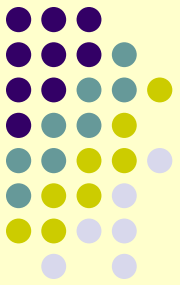
- Is a structured set of interrelated meanings which come together due to the proximity of notions they express



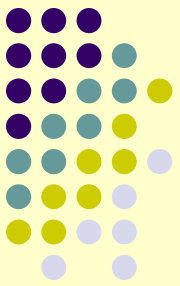
Table

- a piece of furniture
- the persons seated at a table
- the food put on a table, meals
- a thin flat piece of stone, metal, wood, etc.
- an orderly arrangement of facts, figures, etc.
- Etc.

Semantic structure

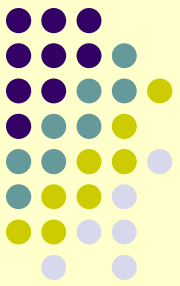


- In every language the combination of meanings is specific and often depends on the grammatical categories characteristic of the part of speech to which the word belongs:
- English nouns combine individual and collective, countable and uncountable variants
- English verbs – transitive and intransitive lexico-semantic variants,
- Etc.



Semantic structure

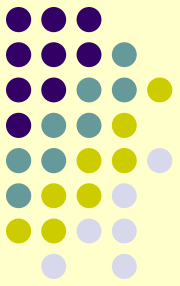
- An organized set of recurrent variants and shades of meaning a given sound complex can assume in different contexts together with their emotional colouring, stylistic peculiarities and other typical connotations



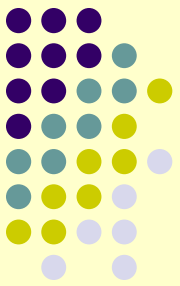
Polysemy

- Is inherent in the very nature of words and notions as they always contain a **generalization of several traits of the object**
- Some of the traits prove to be **common** with other objects
- There is a possibility of **identical names for objects possessing common features**

Approaches to the Study of Polysemy

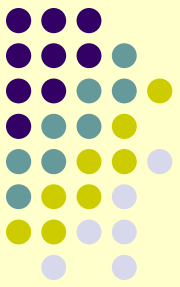


- Diachronic
- Synchronic



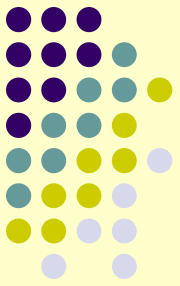
Diachronically

- Polysemy is the growth and development (change, in general) of the word's semantic structure
- A word may retain its previous meaning(s) and acquire one or several new meanings at the same time



Diachronically

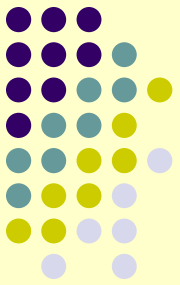
- The **primary meaning** is the source (often **etymological**) meaning of the word which gave rise to the secondary meanings
- The **secondary meaning** is the meaning **derived** from the primary meaning, dependent on it and somehow subordinate to it



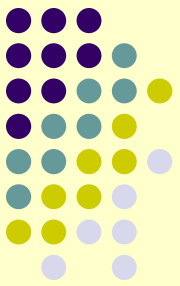
Table

- **Primary (Etymological, Old English):** a flat slab of stone or wood
- **Secondary:** all the rest

Semantic development of a word

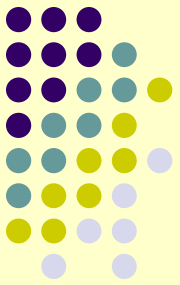


- **Radiation** (радиальное развитие, расхождение)
- **Concatenation** (последовательное соединение, сцепление, каскад)



Radiation

- The primary meaning stands in the centre and the secondary meanings proceed out of it like rays (each secondary meaning may be traced to the primary meaning)

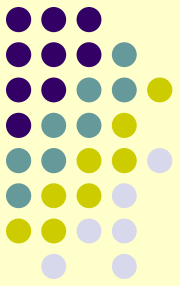


Radiation

Face, n

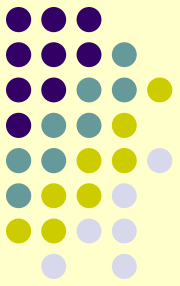
- **Primary:** the front part of the human head
- **Secondary:**
 - the front part of a building,
 - the front part of a watch,
 - the front part of a playing card, etc.

Concatenation



- Secondary meanings of a word develop like a chain, which makes it difficult to trace some of the meanings to the primary one

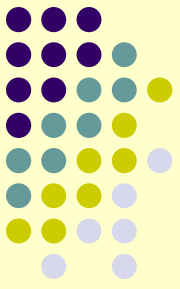
Concatenation



Crust, n

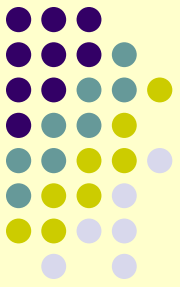
- **Primary:** hard outer part of bread
- **Secondary:**
 - Hard part of anything (a pie, a cake, etc.)
 - Harder layer over soft snow
 - A sullen gloomy person
 - Impudence (дерзость, наглость, нахальство, бесстыдство, etc.)

Polysemy

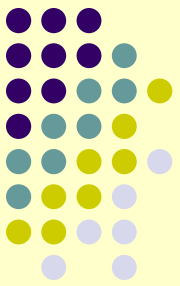


- In most cases both ways of semantic development are combined
- When the word meanings diverge so much that the logical link is lost, there develops the so called **split polysemy** which gives rise to **homonymy** in the language

Polysemy: the Synchronic Approach



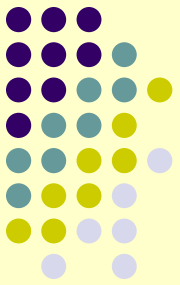
- Synchronically polysemy is defined as the coexistence of various meanings of the same word at a certain historical period of the development of the language



Synchronically

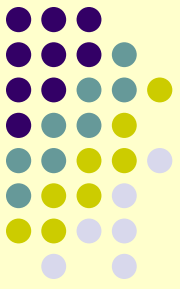
- **The basic (central) meaning** (criteria of differentiation):
 - occurs in various and widely different contexts
 - is frequent in speech
 - is stylistically neutral
- **Table: a piece of furniture**

Synchronically

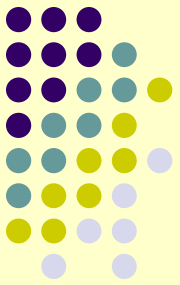


- **Minor (marginal) meanings** (criteria of differentiation):
 - occur in only a few contexts
 - are infrequent in speech
 - may have a stylistic colouring
- **Table: a group of people seated at a table (to keep the table amused)**
- **Table: an orderly arrangement of facts, figures, etc. (table of contents)**

Polysemy

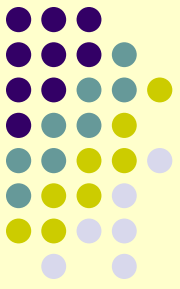


- The problem of interrelation and interdependence of various meanings of the same word
- The semantic structure of a polysemantic word is not homogeneous: some of the word meanings are recognized in isolation, others are perceived only in certain contexts
- The semantic structure of correlated polysemantic words of different languages is never identical: the basic meanings coincide, while the marginal meanings diverge

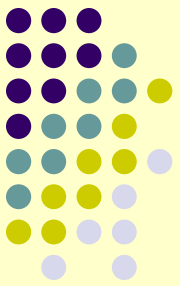


Homonymy in Modern English

Homonyms



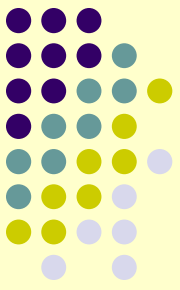
- Words different in meaning but identical in sound and spelling



Sources of Homonymy

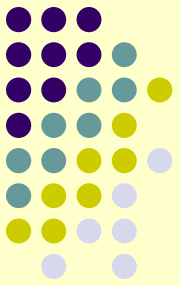
- **Split polysemy** (divergence of word meanings so that the logical link is lost)
- **Leveling of grammar inflexions** (different parts of speech become identical in their outer aspect : **care**, n from «*caru*» and **care**, v from «*carian*»)
- **Conversion** (slim – to slim, water – to water, etc.)

Sources of Homonymy



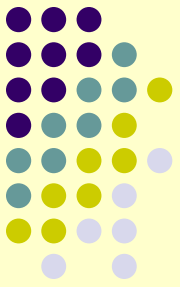
- Affixation (the same affix is added to the same stem twice to form two different words: **read-er** – *a person who reads* vs **read-er** – *a book for reading*)
- Shortening (abbreviation):
 - **bio-** (a combining form with the meaning of «life») in «*biology*», «*biometrics*» vs **bio** (a shortening from «*biography*»)
 - **cab** (a shortening from «*cabriolet*», «*cabbage*», «*cabin*»)
 - **COD** («*Concise Oxford Dictionary*» and «*cash on delivery*»)

Sources of Homonymy



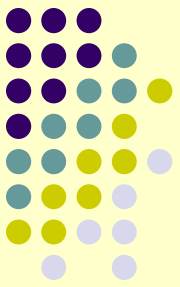
- By accident (two words coincide in their development):
 - **bear** (from OE *beran*, to carry) vs **bear** (from OE *bera*, an animal)
 - **fair** (from Latin *feria*) vs **fair** (from OE *fager*, blond)
 - **base** (from French *base*, Latin *basis*) vs **base** (from Italian *basso*, Latin *bas*)

Classification of Homonyms: according to the spelling and sound form



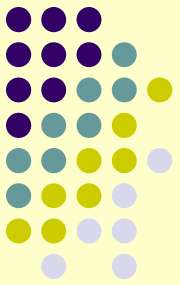
- Perfect homonyms
- Homophones
- Homographs

(classified by Walter Skeat)



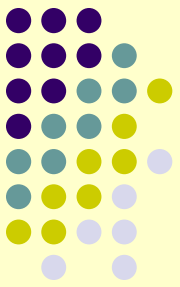
Perfect homonyms

- Words identical both in sound and spelling
 - **School** – школа **vs school** – косяк рыбы
 - **Flounder** – камбала **vs flounder** – затруднительное положение



Homophones

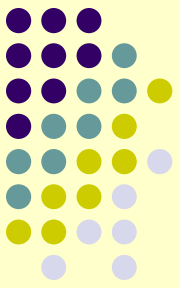
- Words identical in their phonetics but different in their spelling
 - Night vs knight
 - Nose vs knows
 - I vs eye



Homographs

- Words identical in their spelling but different in their phonetics
 - **Bow** [bau] – поклон vs **bow** [bou] – лук
 - **Tear** [tia] – слеза vs **tear** [tea] – рвать на части

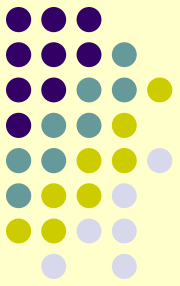
Classification of homonyms: according to the grammatical meaning



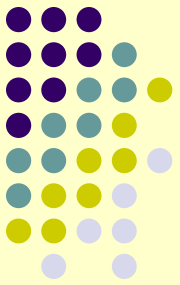
- Perfect (absolute)
- Homofoms

(classified by A. Smirnitsky)

Perfect (absolute) homonyms

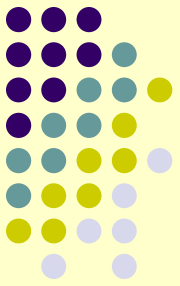


- Words which are identical in spelling, pronunciation and grammar form (such homonyms always belong to the same part of speech)
- **Spring** (the season of the year) vs **spring** (a leap) and **spring** (a source)



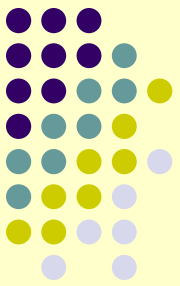
Homofoms

- Words coinciding in their spelling and phonetics but having different grammatical meaning (such words always belong to different parts of speech or different categories of the same part)
- Reading (Participle 1, gerund, verbal noun)
- Lobby (v) vs lobby (n)
- Etc.



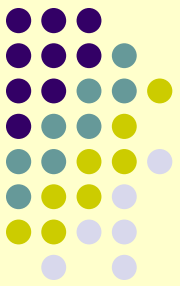
Classification of perfect homonyms by I. Arnold

- Criteria:
 - Lexical meaning
 - Grammatical meaning
 - Basic forms
 - Paradigms



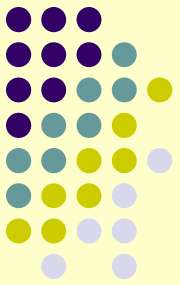
Group 1

- Homonyms identical in their grammatical meanings, basic forms and paradigms but different in their lexical meanings:
- Board (council) vs board (a piece of wood sawn thin)



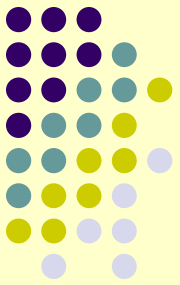
Group 2

- Homonyms identical in their grammatical meanings and basic forms but different in their lexical meanings and paradigms :
- Lie – lied – lied vs lie – lay – lain



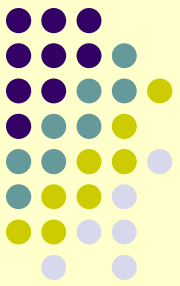
Group 3

- Homonyms identical in their basic forms but different in their lexical meanings, grammatical meanings and paradigms:
- Light, n (lights) vs light, adj (lighter, lightest)



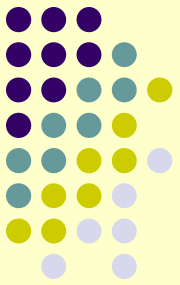
Group 4

- Homonyms different in their basic forms, their lexical meanings, grammatical meanings and paradigms but identical in one of the forms of their paradigms:
- Bit, n vs bit, v (from bite)



Patterned homonyms

- Homonymous words having a common component in their lexical meanings (homonyms formed by conversion or leveling of grammar inflexions)
- Such homonyms are different in their grammatical meanings and paradigms but identical in their basic forms: **warm – to warm**



**Thank you for your
attention!**