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Student

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CHAPTER II: HOMONYMS IN ENGLISH

ABBREVIATION

Adj or A	Adjective
Adv	Adverb
Cf.	Confer
Cj	Conjunction
N	Noun
O.E.	Old English
O.F.	Old French
Prp	Preposition
Past indef.	Past indefinite
Past part.	Past participle
V	Verb

PART I: INTRODUCTION

I. Rationale

There are many special phenomena in English, for example: "She is a bee". It does not mean she is a bee - one kind of animal but here, it does mean she is a very hard-working person. This phenomenon is called metaphor. It borrows characteristic of animal to show personalities of persons. Similarly, in daily life, there are some cases which make us have confusion or misunderstanding like the following funny story:

Policeman: (holding up his hand) Stop!

Visitor: What is the matter?

(P: policeman; V: visitor)

P: Why are you driving on the <u>right</u> side of the road?

V: Do you want me to drive on the wrong side?

P: You were driving on the wrong side.

V: But you said that I was driving on the <u>right</u> side.

P: That is right! You are on the <u>right</u> and that is wrong.

V: A strange country! If <u>right</u> is wrong, I am <u>right</u> when I am on the wrong side, so why did you stop me?

P: My dear sir! You must keep to the left. The <u>right</u> is the left.

V: It is like a looking glass. Could you tell me the way to Bellwood?

P: Certainly! At the end of this road, then turn left.

V: Let me think! In England, left is <u>right</u> and <u>right</u> is wrong. Am I <u>right</u>?

P: You will be <u>right</u> if you turn left but if you turn <u>right</u>, you will wrong.

<div align="right">(Truong, 1993: 89)</div>

The funny story above have just shown us a very interesting phenomenon in English – homonymy. Only one word "right" has the same sound and spelling but different in meaning. One is right side and one is correct, it caused confusion in communication between Policeman and Visitor. The phenomenon, which sometimes makes us confusing and misunderstanding in communication by the same spelling and may be the same sound but different meaning, is the reason explaining why the writer of this graduation paper decided to choose the study "homonyms in English" and hopes that it will be useful to learners of English.

II. Aims of the study

This paper tried to provide English learners information about:

1. Definitions of homonyms in English.

2. Classification of homonyms.

3. Sources of homonyms

4. Problems of homonyms

5. Some pairs of homonyms which English learners often make mistake.

6. Some exercises. (with keys)

7. Homonyms list

III. Scope of the study

Homonyms is a problem that learners concern about in which there are many typical aspects such as equivelances of English and Vietnamese homonyms, misused pairs of homonyms... However, due to the limit of time and knowledge, the writer cannot study all the matters relating to homonyms. As mentioned above, in this paper, the writer only studies on definitions, classification, sources and its problems. Especially, the author pays much attention to classification of homonyms.

IV. Methods of the study

To achieve the aims of the study successfully and effectively, in the studying

process, the author stored knowledge from a lot different kinds of sources specialized in English homonyms. This study is fulfilled due to the information collected from different sources to give the theorical background such as introduction about words and word meaning. Then, an analysis on homonymy in English including definitions of homonyms, classification, sources and its problems is used. After that, the implication is discussed for a better knowledge of homonyms to avoid misunderstanding when learning especially in communication.

V. Design of the study

This study consists of three parts in which the second is the most important.

Part I: Introduction, which states the reason of the study, the aims of the study, the scope of the study, the methods of the study and the design of the study.

Part II: Development: The main content including three chapters:

The first chapter is the theoretical background. It focuses on some general definitions about lexicology, words, and word meaning which relate to homonyms.

The second chapter stresses on homonyms in English including definitions, classification, sources and its problems.

The last one gives some pairs of homonyms which English learners easily make mistakes. In this chapter, some exercises are also provided to help learners avoid ambiguity when seeing them.

Part III: is the conclusion of the whole study that summarizes the topic discussed in Part II.

In addition, homonyms list is also given in appendix part at the aims of helping learners refer them in studying process.

PART II: DEVELOPMENT

CHAPTER I: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

I. WORDS

1. Definitions of the words

In order to understand what is a word? At first, we need to know what is lexicology? Lexicology (from Lexiko-, in the Late Greek Lexicon) is the part of linguistics, which studies words, their nature and meaning, words' elements, relations between words (semantical relations), words groups and the whole lexicon.

<div align="right">(from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia)</div>

According to Greek, lexis means words and logos means study or science of words. So, lexicology is a study or science of words. The word is, therefore, the central important element in lexicology.

The term "word" is used to specify an intermediate structure which is smaller than a whole phrase and yet generally larger than single sound segment. Therefore, word may be defined differently.

First, word is a unit of speech that, as such, serves the purposes of human communication. Thus, word can be defined as a unit of communication.

Secondly, the word, viewed structurally, possesses several characteristics.

According to Jackson and Amvela (2005:50), word is considered "an uninterruptible unit of structure consisting of one or more morphemes and which typically occurs in the structure of phrase". The morphemes are the ultimate grammatical constituents, the minimal meaningful units of language. For example, the different forms of the verb "learn", i.e. learn, learns, learning, learnt are separated words grammatically; similarly, the plural, the plural possessive and the possessive of the word "baby", all are represented by the pronunciation /beibiz/ but spelt babies, babies', baby's respectively.

According to Hung (2006:3), word is defined as "a speech unit used for the purposes of human communication, materially representing a group of sounds, possessing a meaning, susceptible to grammatical employment and characterized by formal and semantic unity".

According to Truong (1993:11), word is defined "A word is a dialectical unit of form and content, independent unit of language to form a sentence by itself"; for example, "book, bookish, go, eat,..." and so on. Each word here can stand independently and it still has meaning.

In general, there are many ways to define word. Word may be defined differently depending on whether the focus on its representation, the thought which it expresses or purely formal criteria. Word can be defined basing on the phonological, lexical, grammatical points of view and semantics. However, the definition of word according to Truong (1993:11) seems to be the most satisfactory.

Words in English can be classified the lexical and grammatical words. Lexical words including nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs have fairly independent meaning and may be meaningful even in isolation or in a series. It also referred to a "lexeme". A lexeme is a lexical unit of the vocabulary. The term "lexeme" is sometimes used to denote a lexical word and this helps avoiding confusion with the term "word" in general. In contrast, grammatical words including articles, prepositions, and conjunctions, forms indicating number or tense and so on do not automatically suggest any identifiable meaning.

2. Types of words

Truong can classify Word into three types: simple words, derived words and compound words.

2.1. Simple words

A simple word is one that only consists of a root morpheme:

  E.g.: Table, boy, small...

2.2 Derived words

A derived word is one that consists of a root and one or more derivational morphemes:

E.g.: Teacher, interesting...

2.3. Compound words

A compound word is one that has at least two roots, with or without affixational morphemes:

E.g.: blackboard, lady-killer, merry-go-round...

Words are often considered linguistic sign, similar to natural and conventional signs. They do not have meaning but rather are capable of conveying meanings to those who can perceive, identify and interpret. Words go together to form sentences which are capable of conveying meanings-the meanings of the individual words and the meaning that comes from the relation of those words to one another. According to De Saussure (1959), the linguistic "sign" is a mental unit including two faces, which cannot be separated: a concept and an acoustic image. The term "sign" is quite a general expression that can refer to sentences, clauses, phrases, words or morphemes. De Saussure pointed out that an alteration in the acoustic image must make a difference in the concept and vice versa. Since the word is a linguistic sign, a discussion of "word meaning" focuses on the relationship between the two faces of the sign.

II. WORD MEANING

1. Definitions of meaning

The question "What is meaning" is one of those questions that are easier to ask than answer. The linguistic science at present is not able to put forward a definition of meaning which is conclusive.

However, there are certain facts of which we can be reasonably sure, and one of them is that the very function of the word as a unit of communication is made

possible by its possessing a meaning. Therefore, among the world's various characteristic, meaning is certainly the most important.

Generally speaking, meaning can be more or less described as a component of the word through which a concept is communicated, in this way endowing the word with the ability of denoting real objects, qualities, actions and abstract notions.

<div align="right">(Hung, 2006:43)</div>

More carefully analyzed, the word "meaning" is derived from the verb "mean" and both of them are used like many other English words, in a wide range of contexts and in several distinguishable senses. For example, to take the case of the verb, if somebody says:

(1) Smith means well

<div align="right">(Hoa, 2001:7)</div>

She or he implies that Smith is well intentioned, that he intends to harm.

(2) That red flag means danger

<div align="right">(Hoa, 2001:7)</div>

In saying this, one would not normally be implying that the flag had plans to endanger anyone; one would be pointing out that it is being used to indicate that there is danger in the surrounding environment, such as the use of explosives in a nearby quarry or deep lakes. Similar to the red flag use of the verb "mean", in one respect at least is its use in:

(3) Smoke means fire

<div align="right">(Hoa, 2001:8)</div>

In both (2) and (3) one thing is said to be a sign of something else: from the presence of the sign, are flag or smoke, anyone with the requisite knowledge can infer the existence of what it signifies, danger or fire, as the case may be.

However, there is also an important difference between (2) and (3). Whereas smoke is a natural sign of fire, causally connected with what is signifies, the red flag is a conventional sign of danger: it is a culturally established symbol.

(4) 'Soporific' means 'tending to produce sleep'

<div align="right">(Hoa, 2001:8)</div>

The word 'soporific' is narrowly used and in this saying, the speaker wants to use common words in the phrase 'tending to produce sleep' to help the others understand easily the meaning of 'soporific'. Therefore, this is quite important in giving the meaning of a word. Like in this case:

(5) What does 'capitalist' mean to you?

<div align="right">(Hoa, 2001:8)</div>

'Mean' in this sentence implies that 'what does 'capitalist' convey to you'. After all, we can see that there are many different meanings of the word 'mean'. It follows that, if semantics is defined as the study of meaning in language, there will be many differences but interesting, branches of semantics.

2. Types of meaning

Some tigers are roaring at the mouth of the cave.

<div align="right">(Truong, 1993:86)</div>

The above is a meaningful part. One of the smaller parts is the word 'tiger' that refers to a certain animal. We call it is a referring expression. A referring expression is a piece of language that is used as if it is linked something outside language, some living or dead entities or concepts. Another meaningful part is the verb 'roar' which is also linked to something outside of language, an activity here associated with the referring expression 'tiger'. We call this meaningful part a predicate that clarify something about that entity. Besides, the plural form of the noun 'tiger' indicating that there is more than a tiger and the tense of the verb 'roar' pointing out the time of this action. Obviously, in a sentence, two kinds of meaning are remained: lexical meaning, in case of the noun 'tiger', the

verb' roar' and grammatical meaning (also called functional meaning) in the plural form of the noun as well as the tense of the verb.

2.1. Lexical meaning

Lexical meaning is one of two types of meanings found in words. Lexical meaning is the individual meaning each word has in the system of language. It is the realization of concept and emotion and brings together the different forms of the same word.

<div align="right">(Truong, 1993:53)</div>

When we hear or see the word *house* for example, our concept is realized and the picture or image of the house occurs to our mind. Therefore, this realization is called lexical meaning. On the other hand, the work *doctor*, it refers to person why works in hospital in order to treat patients. Lexical meaning is dived into two types. They are direct meaning and indirect meaning.

2.1.1. Direct meaning

Direct meaning is the meaning that directly denotes something without comparing it or associating with other things, i.e. we do not need a context. Direct meaning is also called literal meaning.

<div align="right">(Truong, 1993:57)</div>

E.g. 1: where is the key for turning off the radiator?

<div align="right">(No, 1993:1113)</div>

The word key here is a small instrument using to open or close the door, or to start or stop the engine of a vehicle.

E.g. 2: He fell and hit his head.

Or   The ball hit her on the head.

<div align="right">(No, 1993: 935)</div>

The word head is the part of the body containing the eyes, nose, mouth and brain. Etc. We need not the comparison or association with other things to

<div align="center">14</div>

understand it. Therefore, head in this sentence is direct meaning. It differs from indirect meaning which is discussed in the following.

2.1.2. Indirect meaning

Indirect meaning is the meaning that indirectly denotes something. To understand it we have to compare it or associate with other things, i.e. we need contexts. Indirect meaning is also called "figurative/transferred meaning".

(Truong, 1993:57)

On hearing the word 'key' for example, we are most likely to think of a small metal instrument using to open or lock the door.

This is the direct meaning of 'key'. On the other hand, if we come across the sentence. "He said that always listening to other ideas is the key to success", we will think of the meaning of 'the way to gain the success in life', which is an indirect meaning.

It happens the same with the word head in the sentence 'He is the head of the class'. We will think of meaning of leader. We can see that head with direct meaning is a part of the body, it can control people's behaviors and actions, but head with indirect meaning of leader is the person who controls activities of a class to help it develops. Besides, there are many other direct meanings of head such as person in the sentence: 'I count 29 heads at the party' and beginning in the sentence: 'The head step planned'.

Therefore, we can infer that to understand direct meaning, we need not the comparison but to understand indirect meaning, we need the comparison with direct meaning.

2.2. Grammatical meaning

Grammatical meaning can be defined as an expression in speech of relation between words based on the contrastive features of arrangement in which they occur. This meaning is abstract and generalized. (Truong, 1993:53)

Every language has a grammatical system and different language has some-what different grammatical systems. We can explain what grammatical meanings are by showing how the sentence 'some students are listening to music' differs from other sentences that have the same or a similar, referring expression and the same predicate. The grammatical system of English makes possible the expression of meanings like these:

Statement vs. Question:

Some students are listening to music   Are some students listening to music

Affirmative vs. negative:

Some students are listening to music   Some students are not listening to music

Present continuous vs. past

Some students are listening to music   Some students listened to music

Plural vs. singular

Some students are listening to music   A student is listening to music

Indefinite vs. definite

Some students are listening to music   The students are listening to music

From the above comparison, we can conclude that grammatical meanings are expressed in various ways: the arrangement of words (referring to expression before the predicate, for instance), by grammatical affixes like the –s attached to the noun "student" and the –ed attached to the verb "listen", and by grammatical words or functional words, like the ones illustrated in those sentences: be (in the form are), not, some, the. These words do not automatically suggest any identifiable meaning. They are elements like preposition, articles, and conjunctions, forms indicating number or tense, and so on.

Let's consider the forms:

a) Eat, eating, ate, eaten

b) Put up with, kick the budget, dog in the manger

c) Listen, speak, read, write

How many words are there in the group a)? Four or one? There are four forms and the four forms have different meaning, but they have a shared meaning, which is lexical and other meaning of a grammatical nature added to the lexical meaning. Then we say that different forms of the word will share the same lexical meaning but different grammatical meanings.

Group b) presents a different sort of problem. The expression "put up with" combines the forms of "put", "up", and "with", but its meaning is not the combination of their separate meaning. Therefore, "put up with", in the sense of "endure", "tolerate" is a single word. The same in the cases of "kick the budget" which means "die" and dog in the manger when it refers to a person who will not let others share what he has, even though he does not use it himself. Here we find that some lexical words and functional words are put together to form a new meaning word.

In group c), all of those words are verbs but each word denotes a different action. Therefore, different words may share the same grammatical meaning but different lexical meanings.

Besides, full word forms, which are forms of the major part of speech, such as nouns, verbs and adjectives have both lexical and grammatical meaning. For example, child and children, being forms of the same lexeme "child" have the same lexical meaning. When the lexemes have certain semantic relevant grammatical properties (it is a noun of particular kind), the two word-forms also share some parts of categorical meaning. Difference between singular and plural (in those languages in which it is grammaticalised) is another part of the categorical component of grammatical meaning. For example, the word "father", it has lexical meaning (male, parent) and also grammatical meaning (singular, count noun, it can play the function of subject, object, complement)

All in all, lexical and grammatical meanings do not exist separately but always go together to make up the meaning of the word

CHAPTER II: HOMONYMS IN ENGLISH

Language processing considerations have often been used to explain aspects of language structure and evolution. According to Bates and MacWhinney, this view "is a kind of linguistic Darwinism, an argument that languages look the way they do for functional or adaptive reasons". However, as in adaptationist accounts of biological structures and evolution, this approach can lead to the creation of "just so" stories. In order to avoid these problems, case-by-case analyses must be replaced by statistical investigations of linguistic corpora. In addition, independent evidence for the relative "adaptiveness" of certain linguistic structures must be obtained. We will use this approach to study a linguistic phenomenon - homonymy. That seems to be maladaptive both intuitively and empirically and has been frequently subjected to informal adaptationist arguments. A statistical analysis of English homonyms then uncovered a reliable bias against the usage of homonyms from the same grammatical class. A subsequent experiment provided independent evidence that such homonyms are in fact more confusing than those from different grammatical classes.

In a simple code each sign has only one meaning, and each meaning is associated with only one sign. This one-to-one relationship is not realized in natural languages. When several related meanings are associated with the same group of sounds within one part of speech, the word is called polysemantic, when two or more unrelated meanings are associated with the same form - the words are homonyms.

The intense development of homonymy in the English language is obviously due not to one single factor but to several interrelated causes, such as the monosyllabic character of English and its analytic structure.

The abundance of homonyms is also closely connected with such a characteristic feature of the English language as the phonetic identity of word and stem or, in other words, the predominance of free forms among the most

frequent roots. It is quite obvious that if the frequency of words stands in some inverse relationship to their length, the monosyllabic words will be the most frequent. Moreover, as the most frequent words are also highly polysemantic, it is only natural that they develop meanings, which in the course of time may deviate very far from the central one.

In general, homonymy is intentionally sought to provoke positive, negative or awkward connotations. Concerning the selection of initials, homonymy with shortened words serves the purpose of manipulation. The demotivated process of a shortened word hereby leads to re-motivation. The form is homonymously identical with an already lexicalized linguistic unit, which makes it easier to pronounce or recall, thus standing out from the majority of acronyms. This homonymous unit has a secondary semantic relation to the linguistic unit.

Homonymy of names functions as personified metaphor with the result that the homonymous name leads to abstraction. The resultant new word coincides in its phonological realization with an existing word in English. However, there is no logical connection between the meaning of the acronym and the meaning of the already existing word, which explains a great part of the humor it produces.

In the course of time the number of homonyms on the whole increases, although occasionally the conflict of homonyms ends in word loss.

I. DEFINITIONS OF HOMONYMS

There are many definitions of homonyms in English as the following:

In linguistics, a homonym is one of a group of words that share the same spelling and the same pronunciation but have different meanings, usually as a result of the two words having different origins. The state of being a homonym is called homonymy.

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homonym)

One of two or more words that have the same sound and often the same spelling but differ in meaning. Definition of Dictionary.com

E.g. *bank*: embankment

   Bank: place where money is kept

Cambridge Dictionary of American English defines homonym as "a word that is spelled the same as another word but that does not have the same meaning" and adds "A homonyms is also a homophone".

E.g. "Close" as a verb and "close" as an adjective are homonyms.

Chambers 21st Century Dictionary defines a homonyms as "a word with the same sound and spelling as another, but with a different meaning".

E.g. *kind:* helpful

   Kind: sort

Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English also defines a homonym as "a word that is spelt the same and sounds the same as another, but is different in meaning or origin."

E.g. The noun 'bear' and the verb 'bear' are homonyms

Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary also says that a homonym is "one of two or more words spelled and pronounced alike but different in meaning", but appears to also give homonym as a synonym for either homophone or homograph.

E.g. The noun *quail* and the verb *quail*

Random House Unabridged Dictionary explains in greatest detail that homonym is the technically correct for words that are simultaneously homographs and homophones but that it is used in the sense of only homographs and

homophones but that it is used in the sense of only homograph or only homophone in non-technical contexts.

Truong (1993:69) also defines that homonyms are words identical in pronunciation and/ or spelling but different in meaning.

It is significant that many scholars have attempted to define homonyms as a linguistic phenomenon. But the definition which can be considered totally satisfactory is explained by Hung (2006:62) "Homonyms are words which identical in sound and spelling, or, at least, in one of these aspects, but different in their meaning".

The term is derived from Greek "homonyms" (homos- "the same" and onoma - "name") and thus expresses very well the sameness of name combined with the difference in meaning.

Examples of homonyms are *stalk* (which as a noun can mean part of a plant, and, as a verb, to follow/harass a person), *bear* (animal) and *bear* (carry), *left* (opposite of right) and *left* (past tense of leave). Some sources also consider the following trio of words to be homonyms, but others designate them as "only" homophones: *to*, *too* and *two* (actually, *to*, *to*, *too*, *too* and *two*, being "for the purpose of" as in "to make it easier", the opposite of "from", *also*, *excessively*, and "2", respectively

Further examples:

Fluke can mean: A fish, and a flatworm.

The end parts of an anchor.

The fins on a whale's tail.

A stroke of luck.

To - two - too   *been - bean - bin*   *right - rite - write -wright*

English vocabulary is rich in such pairs and even groups of words.

Their identical forms are mostly accidental: the majority of homonyms coincided due to phonetic changes which they suffered during their development.

If synonyms and antonyms can be regarded as the treasury of the language's expressive resources, homonyms are of no interest in this respect, and one can not expect them to be of particular value for communication.

In the process of communication, they are more of an encumbrance, leading sometimes to confusion and misunderstanding. Yet, it is characteristics which makes them one of the most important sources of popular humor. Therefore, to understand the meaning of words which are homonyms, we need specific contexts.

II. CLASSIFICATION OF HOMONYMS

1. The main ways of classification

1.1 Given by I.V. Arnold

The most widely accepted classification is that recognizing homonyms proper, homophones and homographs.

	PRONUNCIATION	PRONUNCIATION
SPELLING	SAME	DIFFERENT
SAME	A. Homonym proper	C. Homograph (or heteronym)
DIFFERENT	B. Homophone (or heteronym)	D. Allonym

Most words differ from each other in both spelling and pronunciation - therefore they belong to the sell D in this table - It shall be called *allonyms*. Not so many

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linguists distinguish this category. But it must be admitted that Keith C. Ivey, in his discussion of homonyms, recognizes this fact and writes:

These familiar with combinatorics may have noticed that there is a fourth possible category based on spelling and pronunciation: words that differ in spelling and pronunciation as well as meaning and origin (alligator/true). These pairs are technically known as different words.

1.1.1 Homonyms proper

Homonyms proper are words identical in both pronunciation and spelling.

There is an obvious difference between the meanings of the symbol *fast* in such combinations as *run fast* 'quickly' and *stand fast* 'firmly'. The difference is even more pronounced if we observe cases where *fast* is a noun or a verb as in the following proverbs:

"A clean fast is better than a dirty breakfast;

Who feasts till he is sick, must fast till he is well."

<div style="text-align:center">(http://revolution.allbest.ru/languages/00000517_0.html)</div>

Fast as an isolated word, therefore, may be regarded as a variable that can assume several different values depending on the conditions of usage, or, in other words distribution. All the possible values of each linguistic sign are listed in the dictionaries. It is the duty of lexicographers to define the boundaries of each word, i.e. to differentiate homonyms and to unite variants deciding in each case whether the different meanings belong to the same polysemantic word or whether there are grounds to treat them as two or more separate words identical in form. In speech, however, as a rule only one of all the possible values is determined by the context, so that no ambiguity may normally arise. There is no danger, for instance, that the listener would wish to substitute the meaning `quick' into the sentence: *It is absurd to have hard and fast rules about anything[2]*, or think that *fast rules* here are `rules of diet'. Combinations when two or more meanings are possible are either deliberate puns, or result from

carelessness. Both meanings of *liver*, i.e. 'a living person' and `the organ that secretes bile' are, for instance, intentionally present in the following play upon words:

"Is life worth living?" "It depends upon the liver."

<div align="center">(http://revolution.allbest/ru/languages/00000517_0.html)</div>

*Other examples are:

- Bear (animal) and bear (carry)

- Porter (a weak beer) and porter (a man who carries luggage)

- Lean (thin) and lean (rest against)

- Lap (to drinkwith tongue) and lap (a circuit)

- Plane (a tool) and plane (a tree)

- Plain (ordinary looking) and plain (flat country)

- Skip (to jump) and skip (to miss out)

- Miss (unmarried woman) and miss (to overlook)

- Pluck (to remove feathers) and pluck (bravery)

- Type (to write via keyboard) and type (a sort)

- Train (a loco and trucks) and train (to teach)

The important point is that homonyms are distinct words: not different meanings within one word.

1.1.2 Homophones

Homophones are words of the same sound but of different spelling and meaning

In the sentence:

The play-wright on my right thinks it right that some conventional rite should symbolize the right of every man to write as he pleases.

<div align="center">(http://revolution.allbest.ru/languages/00000517_0.html)</div>

The sound complex [rait] is a noun, an adjective, an adverb and a verb, has four different spellings and six different meanings.

The difference may be confined to the use of a capital letter as in bill and Bill, in the following example:

"How much is my milk bill?"

"Excuse me, Madam, but my name is John."

On the other hand, whole sentences may be homophonic:

"The sons raise meat"

"The sun's rays meet".

To understand these one needs a wider context. If you hear the second in the course of a lecture in optics, you will understand it without thinking of the possibility of the first.

Homophones are often used to create *puns* and to deceive the reader (as in *crossword puzzles*) or to suggest multiple meanings. The last usage is common in *poetry* and creative *literature*. An example of this is seen in Dylan Thomas's radio play Under Milk Wood: "The shops in mourning" where mourning can be heard as mourning or morning. Another vivid example is Thomas Hood's use of 'birth' & 'berth' and "told" & 'toll'd' (tolled) in his poem "Faithless Sally Brown": His death, which happen'd in his berth.

At forty-odd befell:

They went and told the sexton, and

The sexton toll'd the bell.

In some accents, various sounds have *merged* in that they are no longer distinctive, and thus words that differ only by those sounds in an accent that maintains the distinction (a *minimal pair)* are homophonous in the accent with the merger. Some examples from English are:

Pin and *pen* in many southern American accents.

Merry, *marry*, and *Mary* in many western American accents.

The pairs *do*, *due* and *forward*, *foreword* is homophonous in most American accents but not in most British accents.

*Some pairs of homophones:

ate, eight	eye, I	bare, bear
bean, been	complement, compliment	caught,court
dear, deer	dew, due	fair, fare
flour, flower	genes, jeans	hear, here
in, inn	it's, its	key, quay
knows, nose	lead, led	lean, lien
mail, male	meat, meet	meat, meet
principal, principle	read, red	road, rode
sale, sail	sea, see	there, their
tide, tied	war, wore	waist, waste

(http://www.bifroest.demon.co.uk/misc/homophones-list.html)

1.1.3. Homographs

Homographs are words different in sound and in meaning but accidentally identical in spelling.

(http://revolution.allbest.ru/languages/00000517_0.html)

Homographs are words which are spelt the same as each other but which have a different pronunciation and meaning.

(http://www.firstschoolyears.com/literacy/word/other/homonyms.htm)

Homograph: One of two or more words spelled alike but different in origin, meaning, and sometimes pronunciation.

Examples: bow of a ship, a bow and arrow, and a bow (deference/manners).

A homograph (from the Greek: *homós*, "same" and *gráphō*, "write") is one of a group of words that share the same spelling but have different meanings. When spoken, the meanings may be distinguished by different pronunciations (in which case the words are also heteronyms) or they may not (in which case the words are also both homophones and homonyms

Examples:

(1) shift *n*. (a change)

  shift *n*. (a period at work)

  shift *v*. (to move quickly)

In (1) all three words are identical in spelling and pronunciation (i.e. they are also homophones), but differ in meaning and function. These are commonly described as different senses of the same word, but if a word is regarded as a unique idea separate from its orthography and pronunciation then they are two different words.

(2) Read /ri:d/ (present v)

  Read /red/ (past v)

(2) is an example of two words spelt identically but pronounced differently. Here confusion is not possible in spoken language.

More examples

Word	Example of first meaning	Example of second meaning
Dove	The *dove* cooed at the passers-by.	Patricia *dove* into the pool with barely a splash.
Close	"Will you please *close* that door!"	The tiger was now so *close* that I could smell it...

Wind	Frank's arthritic fingers could not *wind* up the clock again.	The *wind* howled through the woodlands.

lead :   /led/ (n) Water travelled through ancient Rome through *lead* pipes.

       /lid/ (v) The mother duck can *lead* her ducklings around.

live :   /liv/ (v) I don't need you to determine whether I *live* or die.

       /laiv/ (a) I went to see Alanis Morissette *live* in concert.

present : /ˈprezənt/ (a) All need to be *present* for a unanimous vote.

       /ˈprezənt/ (n) I need to buy my sister a *present* for her birthday.

       /priˈzent/ (v) He will *present* his ideas to the Board of Directors tomorrow.

record :   /ˈrekɔ:d/ (n) She played a vinyl *record* on her old turntable.

       /riˈkɔ:d/ (v) Did he *record* the concert with his camcorder?

wind :   /waind/ (v) How did we *wind* up in Kansas?

       /wind/ (n) The *wind* blew from the northeast.

1.2. Classification given by A.I. Smirnitsky

The classification, which have been mentioned above, is certainly not precise enough and does not reflect certain important features of these words, and, most important of all, their status as parts of speech.

The given examples show that those homonyms may belong to both to the same and to different categories of parts of speech. Obviously, the classification of homonyms should reflect this distinctive feather. Also, the paradigm of each word should be considered, because it has been observed that the paradigms of some homonyms coincide completely, and of others only partially.

Accordingly, Professor A.I. Smirnitsky classifieds homonyms into two large classes:

a) full homonyms

b) partial homonyms

1.2.1. Full homonyms/absolute homonyms

Full lexical homonyms are words, which represent the same category of parts of speech and have the same paradigm.

Match, n - a game, a contest

Match, n - a short piece of wood used for producing fire

Wren, n - a member of the Women's Royal Naval Service

Wren, n - a bird

Bark, n – outer covering of the tree

Bark, n – noise made by a dog

Seal, n – a sea animal

Seal, n – a design printed on paper by means of a stamp

1.2.2. Partial homonyms

Partial homonyms are subdivided into three subgroups:

A. Simple lexico-grammatical partial homonyms are words, which belong to the same category of parts of speech. Their paradigms have only one identical form, but it is never the same form, as will be soon from the examples:

(to) found, v: to establish

Found, v (past indef., past part. of *to find*)

(to) lay v: to put

lay v (past indef. of *to lie*)

(to) bound v: to make frontier/ border

bound v (past indef., past part. of *to bind*)

B. Complex lexico-grammatical partial homonyms are words of different categories of parts of speech, which have identical form in their paradigms.

Rose, n: one kind of flower

Rose, v: (past indef. of *to rise*)

Maid, n: a girl

Made, v (past indef., past part. of *to make*)

Left, adj: opposite to right

Left, v: (past indef., past part. of *to leave*)

Bean, n: one kind of vegetable

Been v (past part. of *to be*)

One, n: number

Won v (past indef., past part. of *to win*)

C. Partial lexical homonyms are words of the same category of parts of speech which are identical only in their corresponding forms.

to lie (lay, lain) v: to rest

to lie (lied, lied) v: tell lie

to can (canned, canned): to make fish, meat…can

(I) can (could): modal verb

2. Other ways of classification

2.1. Lexical homonyms

Lexical homonyms are words of the same part of speech but of different meanings and there is no semantic relation between them.

For example:

Match: football match, the boss of matches

Board: a notice board, on board a ship, board of director.

Spring: metal spring, the spring of 2000, hot spring.

Three examples of homonyms above are noun and they belong o the same part of speech. However, their meaning are total different.

2.2.Grammatical homonyms

Grammatical homonyms are words of different parts of speech.

For example: *light* (n) - *light* (adj)

                           watch (n) - *watch* (v)

III. SOURCES OF HOMONYMS

1. Phonetic changes

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

For instance, *night* and *knight* 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: O.E. *kniht* (confer. O.E. *niht*). A more complicated change of form brought together another pair of homonyms: *to knead* (O.E. *cneadan*) and *to need* (O.E. *neodian*).

In Old English the verb *to write* had the form *writan*, and the adjective *right* had the forms *reht, riht*. The noun *sea* descends from the Old English form *sae*, and the verb *to see* - from O.E. *seon*. The noun *work* and the verb *to work* also had different forms in Old English: *wyrkean* and *weork* respectively.

2. Borrowings

Borrowing is another source of homonyms. A borrowed word may, in the final stage of its phonetic adaptation, duplicate in form either a native word or another borrowing.

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2.1. Latin borrowing

In the group of homonyms *rite*, n - *to write*, v - *right*, adj the second and the third words are of native origin whereas *rite* is a Latin borrowing (< Lat. *ritus*).

2.2. Old French borrowing

In the pair *piece*, n - *peace*, n, the first originates from Old French *pais*, and the second from O.F. (< Gaulish) *pettia*.

Fair, adj (as in *a fair deal, it's not fair*) is native, and *fair*, n 'a gathering of buyers and sellers' is a French borrowing. *Match*, n 'a game; a contest of skill, strength' is native, and *match*, n 'a slender short piece of wood used for producing fire' is a French borrowing.

2.3. Italian borrowing

Bank, n 'a shore' is a native word, and *bank*, n 'a financial institution' is an Italian borrowing.

3. Word building

3.1. Conversion

Word building also contributes significantly to the growth of homonymy, and the most important type in this respect is undoubtedly conversion.

Such pairs of words as *comb*, n - *to comb*, v; *pale*, adj - *to pale*, v; *to make*, v - *make*, n are numerous in the vocabulary.

Homonyms of this type, which are the same in sound and spelling but refer to different categories of parts of speech, are called lexico-grammatical homonyms.

3.2. Shortening

Shortening is a further type of word building, which increases the number of homonyms.

E.g. *Fan*, n in the sense of `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. The noun *rep*, n denoting a kind of fabric (cf. with the Rus. *penc*) has three homonyms made by shortening*: rep*, n (< *repertory*), *rep*, n (< *representative*), *rep*, n (< *reputation*); all the three are informal words.

During World War II girls serving in the Women's Royal Naval Service (an auxiliary of the British Royal Navy) were jokingly nicknamed *Wrens* (informal). This neologistic formation made by shortening has the homonym *wren*, n 'a small bird with dark brown plumage barred with black' (Rus. крапивник).

3.3. Sound-imitation

Words made by *sound-imitation* can also form pairs of homonyms with other words:

E.g:

> - *bang*, n "a loud, sudden, explosive noise".

> - *bang*, n "a fringle of hair combed over the forehead".

Also:

> - *mew*, n "the sound the cat makes".

> - *mew*, n "a sea gull".

> - *mew*, n "a pen in which poultry is fattened"

> - *mews*, "small terraced houses in Central London"

The above-described sources of homonyms have one important feature common. In all the mentioned cases the homonyms developed from two or more different words, and their similarity is purely accidental. (In this respect, conversion certainly present an exception for in pairs of homonyms formed by conversion own word of the pair is produced from the other: *a find < to find*.)

4. Disintegration or split of polysemy

Now we come to a further source of homonyms, which differs essentially from all the above cases. Two or more homonyms can originate from different

meanings of the same word when, for some reason, the semantic structure of the word breaks into several parts. This type of formation of homonyms is called disintegration or split of polysemy. (Hung, 2006:66).

In most cases, the function of arrangement and the unity if determined by one of the meanings.

Fire, n:

II. Flame

III. An instance of destructive burning: a forest fire

IV. Burning material in a stove, fireplace: There is a fire in the next room. A camp fire.

V. The shooting of guns: to open (cease) fire.

VI. Strong feeling, passion, and enthusiasm: a speech lacking fire.

If this meaning happens to disappear from word's semantic structure, associations between the rest of the meanings may be severed, the semantic structure loses its unity and fails into two or more parts which then become accepted as independent lexical units.

Considering the history of three homonyms:

Board, n - a long and thin piece of timber

　　　E.g: He made a cage for his puppy only by four boards.

(No, 1993:219)

Board, n - daily meals, esp. as provided for pay.

　　　E.g: He pays 40 dollars a week for board and lodging.

(No, 1993:219)

Board, n - an official group of persons who direct or supervise some activity,

　　　E.g: she is on the board of directors of a large company,

(No, 1993:219)

It is clear that the meanings of these three words are in no way associated with one another. Yet, most larger dictionaries still enter a meaning of *board* that once held together all these other meanings "*a tables*". It developed from the meaning "*a piece of timber*" by transference based on contiguity (association of an object and the material from which it is made).

The meanings "*meals*" and "*an official group of persons*" developed from the meaning "*table*", also by transference based on contiguity: meals are easily associated with a table on which they are served; an official group of people in authority are also likely to discuss their business round a table.

Nowadays, however, the item of the furniture, on which meals are served and round which boards of directors meet, is no longer denoted by word *board* but by the French Norman borrowing *table*. *Board* in this meaning, though still registered by some dictionaries, can very well be marked as archaic as it is no longer used in common speech. That is why, with the intrusion of the borrowed *table*, the word *board* actually lost its corresponding meaning.

But it was just that meaning which served as a link to hold together the rest of the constituent parts of the word's semantic structure. With its diminished role as an element of communication, its role in the semantic structure was also weakened.

The speakers almost forgot that *board* had ever been associated with any item of furniture, nor could they associate the notions of meals or of a responsible committee with a long thin piece of timber (which is the oldest meaning of *board*). Consequently, the semantic structure of board was split into three units.

The following scheme illustrates the process:

Board, n (development of meanings)

```
          ┌─────────────────────────────┐
          │  A long, thin piece of timber │
          └──────────────┬──────────────┘
                         │
                         ▼
          ┌─────────────────────────────┐
          │     A piece of furniture     │
          └──────────────┬──────────────┘
                ╱                  ╲
               ▼                    ▼
┌─────────────────────┐   ┌─────────────────────────┐
│ Meals provided for pay │   │ An official group of persons │
└─────────────────────┘   └─────────────────────────┘
```
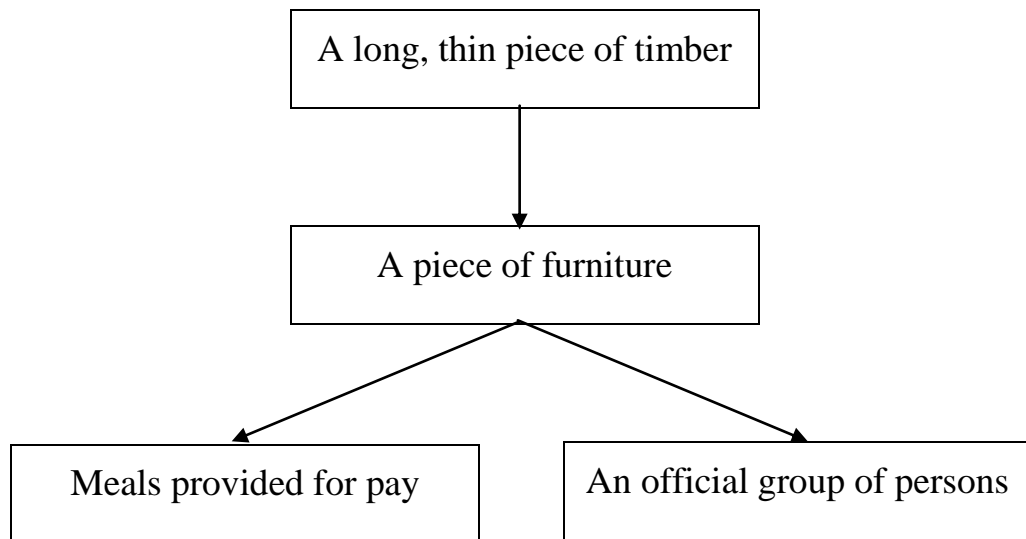
Board I, II, III, n (split of the polysemy)

I.	A long, thin piece of timber	A piece of furniture	II.	Meals provided for pay
		Seldom used: ousted by III. French borrowing *table*		An official group of persons
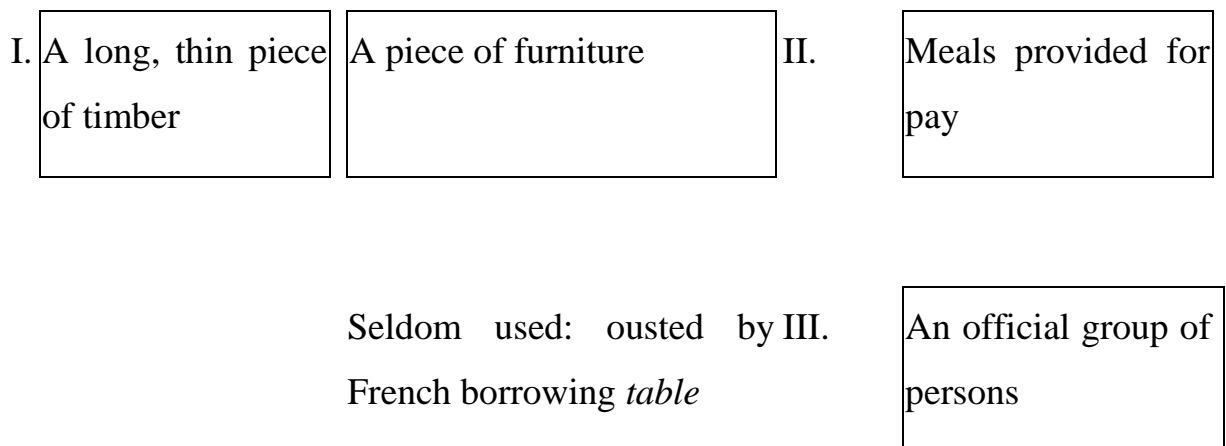
A case of split polysemy may be illustrated by the three following homonyms:

Spring, n. - the act of spring, a leap.

   E.g: With an easy *spring* that cat reached the branch.

<div align="right">(No, 1003:2011)</div>

Spring, n. - a place where a stream of water comes up out of the earth.

   E.g: My family often goes to hot *spring* in holiday every year.

<div align="right">(No, 1003:2011)</div>

Spring, n. - a season of the year.

> E.g: In *spring* leaves begin to grow the tree*.*

Historically all three nouns originate from the same verb with the meaning of *"to jump, to leap"* (O.E. *springan*), so that the meaning of the first homonym is the oldest. The meanings of the second and third homonyms were originally based on metaphor. At the head of a stream the water sometimes leaps up out of the earth, so that metaphorically such a place could well be described as a leap.

On the other hand, the season of the year following winter could be poetically defined as *a leap* from the darkness and cold into sunlight and life.

Such metaphors are typical enough of Old English and Middle English semantic transferences but not so characteristic of modern mental and linguistic processes.

The poetic associations that lay in the basis of the semantic shifts described above have long since been forgotten, and an attempt to re-establish the lost links may well seem far-fetched.

It is just the near-impossibility of establishing such links that seems to support the claim for homonymy and not for polysemy with these three words.

It should be stressed, however, that split of the polysemy as a source of homonyms is not accepted by all scholars.

It is really difficult sometimes to decide whether a certain word has or has not been subject to the split of the semantic structure and whether we are dealing with different meanings of the same word or with homonyms, for the criteria are subjective and imprecise.

The imprecision is recorded in the data of different dictionaries, which often contradict each other on this very issue, so that board is represented as two homonyms in Professor V.K. Muller's dictionary, as three homonyms in Professor V.D. Arakin's and as one and the same word in Hornby's dictionary.

IV. PROBLEMS OF HOMONYMS

There are three main problems in homonyms: The criteria distinguishing homonymy from polysemy, the formulation of rules for recognizing different meanings of the same homonym in terms of distribution, and the description of difference between patterned and non-patterned homonymy. It is necessary to emphasize that all these problems are connected with difficulties created by homonymy in understanding the message by the reader or listener, not with formulating one's thoughts; they exist for the speaker though in so far as he must construct his speech in a way that would prevent all possible misunderstanding.

Firstly, the truth is that there exists no universal criterion for distinction between polysemy and homonymy. For example, it is easy enough to see that *match*, as in *safety matches*, is a separate word from the verb *match* 'to suit'. But Lexicographer must know whether one is justified in taking into one entry *match*, as in *football match*, and *match* in *meet one's match* 'one's equal'. It is a wildly spread practice in English lexicography to combine in one entry words of identical phonetic form showing similarity of lexical meaning, in other words, revealing a lexical invariant, or even if they belong to different parts of speech.

Polysemy characterizes words that have more than one meaning - any dictionary search will reveal that most words are polysemes. This means that the word is used in texts scanned by lexicographers to represent twelve different concepts and make a clear distinction between different words by writing separate entries for each of them, whether or not they are spelled the same way. For example: In the dictionary of Fred W. Riggs which has five entries for the form of " *bow*" :

- bow (v): [baʊ] To bend forward at the waist in respect (e.g. "bow down")

- bow (n): [bəʊ] the front of the ship (e.g. "bow and stern")

- bow (n): [bəʊ] the weapon which shoots arrows (e.g. "bow and arrow")

- bow (n): [bəʊ] a kind of tied ribbon (e.g. bow on a present, a bowtie)

- bow (v): [baʊ] to bend outward at the sides (e.g. a "bow-legged" cowboy)

However, the form *bow* is polysemic and can represent more than twenty concepts that readers who might think that a word is a homonym because it has several meanings but having one word represent more than one concept is normal such as not only being able to refer to the designator of a concept but the duration of something. To make their definitions precise, lexicographers need criteria to distinguish different words from each other even though they are spelled the same way.

Secondly, the patterned homonymy is the invariant lexical meaning present in homonyms that have developed from one common source and belongs to various parts of speech but some English lexicographers think it is quite possible for homonyms and the same word to function as different parts of speech. Such pairs like *act* n - *act* v; *back* n - *back* v; *drive* n - *drive* v …

Therefore, one should regard as separate words all cases when words are countable nouns in one meaning and uncountable in another, when verbs can be used transitively and intransitively and have an efficiency in lexicographic work. Besides, one should concern with teaching of English as a foreign language books which are also keenly interested in patterned homonymy and has a correct understanding of this peculiarity of contemporary English from the very beginning about homonyms in other parts of speech like the following classified list of homonyms:

Above, prp, adv, a; *act*, n, v; *after*, prp, adv, cj; *age*, n, v; *back*, n, adv, v; *ball*, n, v; *bank*, n, v; *before*, prp, adv, cj; *besides*, prp, adv; *bill*, n, v; *bloom*, n, v; *box*, n, v…

Thirdly, the distribution of a lexico-semantic variant of a word may be represented as a list of structural patterns and the data on its combining power. Some of the most typical structural patterns for a verb are: N + V + N; N + V + Prp + N; N + V + A; N + V + adv; N + V + to + V and some others.

In the following extract from "A Taste of Honey" by Shelagh Delaney the morpheme *laugh* occurs three times:

I can't stand people who laugh at other people.

They'd get a bigger laugh, if they laughed at themselves.

We recognize *laugh* used first and last here as a verb, because the formula is N + *laugh* + prp + N and so the pattern is in both cases N + V + prp + N. In the beginning of the second sentence *laugh* is a noun and the pattern is article + A + N.

In short, the distinction between polysemy homonymy is relevant and important for lexicography and for the practice of either human or machine translation. Particularly, the identification of meaning, the distribution and the distinction between patterned and non-patterned homonyms are much concerned.

CHAPTER III: IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

In this chapter, the author will give some pairs of homonyms which English learners often make mistakes when they use them. In addition, some exercises are also supplied to help learners distinguish subdivisions of homonyms.

I. COMMONLY MISUED PAIRS OF HOMONYMS

The transition spoken to written language can often be a bumpy one because the way we talk tends to be a lot less formal than the way we write. Then trying to translate spoken ideas into writing, it is often hard to remember correct grammar. Also, we hear incorrect grammar used so often that correct grammar might sound odd even wrong to us.

Homonyms can present an especially difficult problem because they sound alike, but the different spellings mean different things. Changing one letter in a word could alter the whole meaning of a sentence.

Knowing which word to use correctly can make a big difference in our writing. It is easier to take a piece of writing more seriously when the grammar is correct. Below is a list of commonly confused homonyms, as well as a few hints to help learners remember the grammar rules.

- *Accept, Except:*

Accept is a verb meaning to receive. *Except* is usually a preposition meaning excluding. *Except* is also a verb meaning to exclude.

E.g.   I will accept all the packages except that one.

Please except that item from the list.

(http://wsuonline.weber.edu/wrh/words/htm)

- *Affect, Effect:*

Affect is usually a verb meaning to influence. *Effect* is usually a noun meaning result. *Effect* can also be a verb meaning to bring about

E.g.

The drug did not affect the disease, and it had several adverse side effects.

Only the president can effect such a dramatic change.

(http://wsuonline.weber.edu/wrh/words/htm)

- **All right, Alright:**

All right: all right means okay, satisfactory, agreeable, safe, good, well.

Alright: While alright is used often in fictional dialogue, and is still preferred by some writers of journalistic and business publications, we'll merely say that it is outdated for daily use.

(http://www.webgrammar.com/article-vorfeld-homonyms.html)

- **Allusion, Illusion:**

An *Allusion* is an indirect reference. An *illusion* is a misconception or false impression.

E.g.

Did you catch my allusion to Shakespeare?

Mirrors give the room an illusion of depth.

(http://wsuonline.weber.edu/wrh/words/htm)

- **Capital, Capitol***:*

Capital refers to a city, *capitol* to a building where lawmakers meet. Capital also refers to wealth or resources.

E.g:

The capitol has undergone extensive renovations.

The residents of the state capital protested the development plans

(http://wsuonline.weber.edu/wrh/words/htm)

- **Climactic, Climatic:**

Climactic is derived from climax, the point of greatest intensity in a series or progression of events. *Climatic* is derived from climate; it refers to meteorological conditions.

E.g: The climactic period in the dinosaurs' reign was reach just before servere climatic conditions brought on the ice age.

<div align="right">(http://wsuonline.weber.edu/wrh/words.htm)</div>

• *Complement, Compliment*:

Complement is a noun meaning something added for ornamentation or an accessory. *Compliment* is a noun meaning an expression by admiration.

E.g:

    The Government allows to import some kinds of car complement.

    All women are happy when they are given compliment.

<div align="right">(Ba, 2007:452)</div>

• *Elicit, Illicit*:

Elicit is a verb meaning to bring out to evoke. *Illicit* is an adjective meaning unlawful.

E.g: The reporter was unable to elicit information from the police about illicit drug traffic.

<div align="right">(http://wsuonline.weber.edu/wrh/words.htm)</div>

• *Its, It's*

Its: The possessive form of the pronoun it, never written with an apostrophe. Since most possessives have apostrophes, this confuses many people.

It's: contraction of it is and it has.

E.g.: It's time to go pinic

    It's a well-designed site.

<div align="right">(http://www.webgrammar.com/article-vorfeld-homonyms.html)</div>

- *Past, Passed*

Past is a noun meaning a former tim neither present nor future. *Passed* is past tense of the verb meaning to move.

E.g:

　　She passed the market but forgot to buy some vegetables.

　　It was past midnoon when she arrived.

<div align="right">(Ba, 2007:451)</div>

- *Principle, Principal*:

Principal is a noun meaning the head of a school or an organization or a sum of money. *Principle* is a noun meaning a basic truth or law.

E.g: The principal taught us many important life principles.

<div align="right">(http://wsuonline.weber.edu/wrh/words.htm)</div>

Hint: to recognize the spelling of Principal first think of yourself as a greedy opportunist. You definitely would want to be a pal of anyone who is in a position of power or anything to do with money. This principal has pal in it.

- *There, Their, They're:*

There is an adverb specifying place; it is also an expletive. Adverb: *Sylvia is lying there unconscious*. Expletive: *There are two plums left*. *Their* is a possessive pronoun. *They're* is a contraction of *they are*: *Fred and Jane finally washed their car. They're later than usual today*.

<div align="right">(http://wsuonline.weber.edu/wrh/words.htm)</div>

Hints: If using *there* to tell the reader where, both words have h-e-r-e. *Here* is also a place.

If using *their* as a possessive pronoun, it is telling the reader what they own.

There is a contraction of they are. Sound out they are in the sentence and see if it works. If it does not, it must be one of the previous versions.

- *To, Too, Two*:

To is a preposition; *too* is an adverb; *two* is a number.

E.g: *Too* many of your shots slice *to* the left, but the last *two* were right on the mark.

(http://wsuonline.weber.edu/wrh/words.htm)

Hints: If someone is trying to spell out the number, it is always t-w-o. *Two* has a *w* which is the first letter in word. The opposite of word is number.

Too is usually used as also when adding or including some additional information. Whenever reader wants to include something else, think of it as adding, therefore also needing to add an extra *o*.

- *Your, You're*:

Your is a possessive pronoun; *you're* is a contraction of *you are*.

E.g: *You're* going to catch a cold if you don't wear *your* coat.

(http://wsuonline.weber.edu/wrh/words.htm)

Hints: Sound out you are in the sentence. If it works in the sentence it can be written as *you're*. If it sounds awkward, it is probably supposed to If it sounds awkward, it is probably supposed to be *your*.

E.g: *You're* shoes are muddy. "You are shoes are muddly" does not work, so it should be written as: *Your* shoes are muddy.

(http://wsuonline.weber.edu/wrh/words.htm)

- *Weather, Whether*:

Weather is a noun meaning the state of the air or atmosphere with respect to heat or cold, wetness or dryness, calm or storm, clearness or cloudiness, or any other meteorological phenomena; meteorological condition of the atmosphere. *Whether* is a conjunction used in indirect sentence?

E.g:

The bad weather prevented us from traveling by plane.

I wondered whether she came.

<div align="right">(Ba, 2007:455)</div>

II. EXERCISES

Exercise 1: Click the answer button to see the correct answer.

1. My mother went to the bank to get a ___.

    a. loan

    b. lone

2. Don't ___ that car.

    a. steel

    b. steal

3. My math teacher never takes the ___.

    a. role

    b. roll

4. I went ___ hunting in October.

    a. dear

    b. deer

5. Vegetarians don't eat ___.

    a. meat

    b. meet

6. In an ___ from now, I will meet you.

    a. hour

    b. our

7. Did you ___ the report yet?

    a. write

    b. right

8. Is your house ___ far from here?

    a. vary

    b. very

9. The store is having a ___ this Friday.

    a. sail

    b. Sale

10. I hope that someday there will be world ___.

    a. piece

    b. Peace

Exercise 2: Read each sentence and fill in the blank with the correct word.

1. I will not be able to _____ the new job. (accept, except)

2. Please try not to _____ your new sunglasses. (lose, loose)

3. _____ going to the races this evening. (Their, They're)

4. How does candy _____ your blood sugar? (affect, effect)

5. We had _____ much snow last winter. (to, too, two)

6. She _____ the capitals of every state. (new, knew)

7. _____ car is parked in the driveway? (Who's, Whose)

8. April is the _____ month. (forth, fourth)

9. The _____ ingredients of bread are flour, water, and yeast. (principal, principle)

10. I would _____ all parents to have a dog. (advice, advise)

Exercise 3: There are two or more homonyms in each sentence. Read the sentences carefully and then underline the homonyms.

1. The wind blew my blue shirt into the pool.
2. Cheryl rode along as we rowed the boat from the island to the lakeside road.
3. I've never seen such a beautiful scene.
4. We want a site for our home that will be out of sight.
5. The seam in the tent doesn't seem to hold back the rain.

6. Due to the dry weather, we do not see any dew on the grass.

7. I knew they had a new gnu at the zoo.

8. Some people know that you add to find the sum.

9. They're hanging their coats over there.

10. I ate the eight cakes that were on my plate.

Exercises 4: Find words with the same pronunciation.

E.g: | eə |: air, heir

1. | ə'laud | 6. | si:z |

2. | beə | 7. | weiv |

3. | piə | 8. | vein |

4. | nouz | 9. | tu: |

5. | 'medl | 10. | kɔ |

Exercises 5: Each following sentence has a mistake by using homonyms. Findout and correct it.

a. Indonesia was formed by hundreds of aisles.

b. In the war, people had to hide in sellers to avoid bombs.

c. After a week of resting, her health seamed to be better.

d. The male cause of the accident was that the taxi driver had been drunk.

e. He made her paned by saying good bye to her love.

f. The content of the film was so meaningful that I was moved to tares.

Exercises 6: Comment on the types of homonyms

1. wait - weight   10. head (n) - head (v)

2. sole - soul

3. present (adj) - present (v)

4. firm (v) - firm (n)

5. thought (n) - thought (past tense form)

6. bear (n) - bear (v) - bear (adj)

7. bow (n) - bow (v)

8. blue - blew

9. steel - steal

11. match (n) - match (v)

12. sweet (adj) - sweet (v)

13. waste - waist

14. record (n) - record (v)

15. won - one

16. sail - sale

17. can (n) - can (v)

18. wear - where

Exercise 7: Find the homonyms in the following extracts. Classify them into homonyms proper, homographs and homophones.

1.   a) "Mine is a long and a sad tale" said the Mouse, turning to Alice, and sighing.

      b) "It is a long tail, certainly" said Alice, looking down with wonder at the Mouse's tail, "but why do you call it sad?"

2.   a) My seat was in the middle of a row.

      b) "I say, you haven't had a row with Corky, have you?"

3.   a) Our Institute team got a challenge to a match from the University team and we accepted it.

      b) Somebody struck a match so that we could see each other.

4.   a) It was nearly December but the California sun made a summer morning of the season.

      b) On the way home Crane no longer drove like a nervous old maid.

5.   a) She loved to dance and had every right to expect the boy she was seeing almost every night in the week to take her dancing at least once on the weekend.

b) "That's right" she said.

6.   a) Do you always forger to wind up your watch?

b) Crane had an old Ford without a top and it rattled so much and the wind made so much noise.

7.   a) In Brittany there was once a knight called Eliduc.

b) She looked up through the window at the night.

8.   a) He had a funny round face.

b) __ How does your house face?

__ It faces the South.

9.   a) So he didn't shake his hand because he didn't shake cowards' hands, see, and somebody else was elected captain.

b) Mel's plane had been shot down into the sea.

10.   a) He was a lean, wiry Yankee who know which side his experimental bread was buttered on.

b) He had a wife of excellent and influential family, as finely bred as she was faithful to him.

Exercise 8: Circle the word that matches the picture.

1. flour, flower

2. horse, hoarse

3. ring, wring

7. knows, nose

8. aunt, ant

9. meat, meet
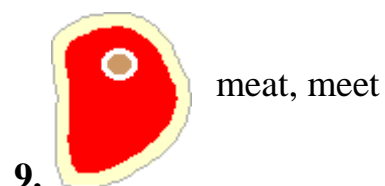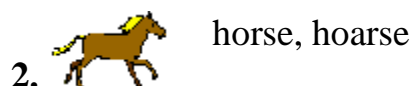
4. pale, pail

5. plane, plain

6. I, eye

10. hair, hare

11. sent, cent

12. bawl, ball

PART III: CONCLUSION

After a long time of working with the help of supervisor, teachers and friends, my graduation paper has been completed. Firstly, this study has given out the rationale, aim, method, scope as well as design of the study. Secondly, some notions have been given in the theoretical background as an introduction to the study relating to homonyms. Thirdly, the main matter of the study - English homonyms. They are definitions, sources and classification of homonyms in English. Moreover, some misused pairs of homonyms are also mentioned. In addition, the author of this graduation paper supply some exercises with the hope that learners will understand more throughout practicing exercises. Finally, homonyms list is also added to help learners refer.

Hopefully the study will be of some help to those who care about English vocabulary in general and homonyms in particular.

However, because of my limited knowledge and ability, mistakes and short-coming are unavoidable. Therefore, the writer greatly do hope to receive any remarks, criticisms and suggestions from teachers and friends to make it better.

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APPENDIX:

I. KEYS FOR EXERCISES

Exercise 1:

1. a   6. a

2. b   7. a

3. b   8. b

4. b   9. b

5. a   10. b

Exercise 2:

1. accept   6. knew

2. lose   7. whose

3. They're   8. fourth

4. affect   9. principal

5. too   10. advise

Exercise 3:

1. blew and blue   6. due and dew

2. rowed and road   7. knew and new

3. seen and scene   8. some and sum

4. site and sight   9. they're and their

5. seam and seem   10. ate and eight

Exercises 4:

1. Aloud, allowed   6. sees, seas, seize

2. bear, bare

3. peer, pier

4. knows, nose

5. medal, meddble

7. wave, waive

8. vain, vein, vane

9. to, two, too

10. core, corps

Excercise 5:

a. aisles = isles

b. sellers - cellars

c. seamed - seemed

d. male - main

e. paned - pained

f. tares - tear

Exercise 6:

1. homophones

2. homophones

3. homographs

4. homonym proper

5. homonym proper

6. homophones

7. homographs

8. homophones

9. homophones

10. homographs

11. homonym proper

12. homonym proper

13. homonym proper

14. homophones

15. homographs

16. homophones

17. homophones

18. homonym proper

Exercise 7:

1. taile - tale: homophones

2. row - row: homonym proper

3. match -match: homonym proper

4. made - maid: homophones

5. right - right: homonym proper

6. wind - wind: homonym proper

7. knight - night: homophones

8. face - face: homonym proper

9. see - sea: homophones

10. bread - bred: homophones

Exercise 8:

1. flower

2. horse

3. ring

4. pail

5. plane

6. eye

7. nose

8. ant

9. meat

10. hare

11. cent

12. ball

II. HOMONYMS LIST

The list of homonyms cannot mention sufficiently, here are some common homonyms that are used much in English. Hoping that this homonyms list can help learners understand them more easily.

A

■	ad	short for advertisement
	add	short for addition
■	aid	to assist
	aide	an assistant
■	affect	to change
	effect	result
■	ail	sick
	ale	beer
■	air	stuff we breathe
	err	to make a mistake
	heir	one who will inherit
■	aisle	walkway
	isle	island
■	allowed	permitted
	aloud	spoken
■	altar	raised center of worship
	alter	to change
■	ant	insect
	aunt	parent's sister
■	ate	past tense of eat

	eight	the number base of octal
■	aught	anything
	ought	should

B

■	bare	naked
	bear	wild ursine
■	be	to exist
	bee	pollinating buzzer
■	beach	where i want to be
	beech	a type of tree
■	bean	a legume
	been	past tense of be
■	been	past tense of be
	bin	a box or container
■	bight	middle of a rope
	bite	a mouthful
	byte	eight bits
■	blew	past tense of blow
	blue	color of California sky
■	boarder	lodger who gets meals, too
	border	perimeter
■	born	brought into life
	borne	past participle of bear
■	bread	a loaf
	bred	past tense of breed

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■	buy	to purchase
	by	near
	bye	farewell

C

■	capital	most important
	capitol	center of government
■	key	opens locks
	quay	a wharf
■	cent	one hundredth of a dollar
	scent	an aroma
	sent	dispatched
■	cereal	grains
	serial	numbers in sequence
■	choral	by a chorus
	coral	marine polyp skeleton
■	cite	to refer to
	sight	vision
	site	a location
■	close	to shut
	clothes	garments
■	coal	black mineral
	cole	plants in the crucifer family
■	coarse	rough
	course	path of travel

■	complement	allotment
	compliment	encomium
■	council	group of leaders
	counsel	advisor

D

■	days	more than one day
	daze	to bewilder
■	dear	beloved
	deer	Bambi
■	dew	morning condensation
	do	to perform
	due	payable
■	die	to become dead
	dye	coloring agent
■	dine	to eat
	dyne	unit of energy
■	disc	a phonograph record
	disk	a round, plate-shaped object
■	discreet	confidential
	discrete	individual
■	do	first note of diatonic scale
	doe	a female deer
	dough	uncooked bread
■	does	several female deer
	doze	to nap

■	done	completed
	dun	demand money
■	draft	a preliminary written version
	draught	a gust of wind; depth of water needed to float a ship

E

■	effect	result
	affect	to change
■	eight	the number base of octal
	ate	past tense of eat
■	elicit	to draw out
	illicit	unlawful
■	e'er,	see: air
	earl	British nobleman
	URL	Internet address
■	earn	to come to deserve
	urn	a jar
■	elude	to escape from
	illude	to deceive
■	epic	a narrative poem or story
	epoch	a noteworthy period in history
■	ewes	more than one female sheep
	use	to apply
	yews	more than one yew tree
■	eyelet	small hole for laces
	islet	small island

■	eye	ocular organ
	I	oneself

F

■	facts	objective things
	fax	obsolete, but widespread, image transmission technology
■	fair	even-handed
	fare	payment
■	fairy	imaginary magic person
	ferry	river-crossing boat
■	faux	fake
	foe	enemy
■	feat	an accomplishment
	feet	look down
■	flew	past tense of fly
	flu	short for influenza
■	flour	powdered grain
	flower	a bloom
■	for	in place of
	four	number after three
■	foreword	introduction to a book
	forward	the facing direction
■	forth	a direction
	fourth	following the third
■	frees	releasing
	freeze	very cold

■	friar	a monk
	fryer	small chicken

G

■	gays	a frisky gathering
	gaze	a languid look
■	gait	a manner of walking or running
	gate	fence door
■	galley	ship's kitchen
	gally	to frighten or terrify
■	gene	a chromosome
	jean	cotton twill
■	gin	alcoholic beverage
	jinn	plural of jinni, a Muslim spirit or demon
■	gorilla	large ape
	guerrilla	irregular soldier
■	grate	a lattice
	great	extremely good
■	grill	to sear cook
	grille	an iron gate or door
■	guessed	past tense of guess
	guest	a visitor
■	guise	appearance
	guys	Garrison Keillor's obsession
■	gym	sports room

Jim	nickname for James

H

	hail	frozen rain
	hale	robust health
■	hair	grows from your head
	hare	rabbit
■	hall	a large room
	haul	to carry
■	halve	break in two
	have	to hold in possession
■	hay	grass
	hey	a shout
■	he'll	contraction of "he will"
	heal	to make well
■	heal	to cure of disease
	heel	hind part of foot
■	hear	to listen
	here	at this location
■	heigh	an exclamation
	hi	a greeting
■	heroin	narcotic
	heroine	female hero
■	hole	round opening
	whole	entirety
■	hour	sixty minutes

	our	possessed by us

I

■	I	oneself
	eye	ocular organ
■	illicit	unlawful
	elicit	to draw out
■	illude	to deceive
	elude	to escape from
■	in	expressing inclusion
	inn	hotel
■	isle	island
	aisle	walkway
■	incite	to provoke
	insight	understanding
■	innocence	a state without guilt
	innocents	more than one innocent
■	it's	contraction of "it is"
	its	possessive pronoun
■	islet	small island
	eyelet	Small hole
■	I'll	see: aisle
	idle	not working
■	inc	short for incorporated
	ink	writing fluid

J

- jam — to smash together

  jamb — side post of a doorway

- jean — cotton twill

  gene — a chromosome

- jewel — precious stone

  joule — unit of energy measure

- jinn — plural of jinni, a Muslim spirit or demon

  gin — alcoholic beverage

- juggler — one who juggles

  jugular — artery to head

- Jim — nickname for James

  gym — sports room

K

- knap — crest of a hill; break with a hammer

  nap — a short sleep

- knead — working bread dough

  need — must have

- knickers — woman's underwear

  nickers — those who nick

- knight — chivalrous man

  night — darkness

- knit — interlocking loops of yarn

	nit	louse egg
🟥	knits	verb form of knit
	nits	louse eggs
🟥	knob	handle
	nob	rich person
🟥	knock	to rap
	nock	a notch in an arrow
🟦	knot	fastening in cord
	naught	nothing
	not	negation
🟥	know	to possess knowledge
	no	negation
🟦	knows	"Only the shadow knows..."
	noes	"The noes have it..."
	nose	"Plain as the nose on your face..."

L

🟥	lain	past tense of lay
	lane	narrow road
🟦	lays	to recline
	laze	to recline with extreme prejudice
🟥	lead	heavy metal
	led	guided
🟥	leased	rented
	least	the minimum

■	lessen	to reduce
	lesson	a segment of learning
■	lie	an untruth
	lye	a caustic
■	lightening	removing weight or darkness
	lightning	static electricity from the sky
■	loan	allow to borrow
	lone	by itself
■	loch	a lake
	lock	a security device

M

■	made	accomplished
	maid	young woman
■	mail	postal delivery
	male	masculine person
■	main	primary
	mane	back hair
■	manner	method
	manor	lord's house
■	marry	to join in matrimony
	merry	happy
■	meat	animal flesh
	meet	to connect
■	medal	an award
	meddle	to interfere

■	men's	owned by males
	mends	to repair
■	mince	chop finely
	mints	aromatic candies
■	miner	one who digs
	minor	small
■	misses	young ladies
	Mrs.	married lady
■	moral	a social imperative
	morel	a mushroom

N

■	nap	a short sleep
	knap	crest of a hill; break with a hammer
■	need	must have
	knead	working bread dough
■	nob	rich person
	knob	handle
■	nock	a notch in an arrow
	knock	to rap
■	naught	nothing
	not	negation
	knot	fastening in cord
■	no	negation
	know	to possess knowledge

■	night	darkness
	knight	chivalrous man
■	noes	"The noes have it..."
	nose	"Plain as the nose on your face..."
	knows	"Only the shadow knows..."
■	nickers	those who nick
	knickers	woman's underwear
■	neap	the lowest tide
	neep	a turnip

O

■	one	singularity
	won	victorious
■	our	possessed by us
	hour	sixty minutes
■	ours	belonging to us
	hours	time measurement
■	ought	should
	aught	anything
■	oral	of the mouth
	aural	of hearing
■	odd	not usual
	awed	in a state of wonder
■	offal	butchered entrails
	aweful	filled with awe
	awful	really bad

P

■	pail	bucket
	pale	light colored
■	pain	it hurts
	pane	a single panel of glass
■	pair	a set of two
	pare	cutting down
	pear	bottom-heavy fruit
■	patience	being willing to wait
	patients	being willing to wait
■	peace	what hippies want
	piece	what hippies want
■	plain	not fancy
	plane	a surface
■	poor	no money
	pore	careful study; microscopic hole
	pour	to flow freely
■	praise	to commend
	prays	worships God
■	presence	the state of being present
	presents	what Santa brings
■	prince	son of the King
	prints	impressions
■	principal	head of school
	principle	causative force

71

Q

■	quarts	several fourths-of-gallons
	quartz	crystalline rock
■	quay	a wharf
	cay	a low island
	key	opens locks
■	quire	the twentieth part of a ream of paper
	choir	church singers
■	quoin	corner stone
	coin	money
■	queue	a waiting line (another famous English-ism)
	cue	a signal
■	quince	small, round fruit
	quints	multiple quintuplets

R

■	rabbet	a groove cut in a board
	rabbit	small mammal
■	rain	precipitation
	reign	sovereign rule
	rein	horse's steering wheel
■	read	having knowledge from reading
	red	a primary color
■	read	to get the meaning by looking
	rede	advice

	reed	tall, thin water plant
■	rest	stop working
	wrest	take away
■	right	correct
	rite	ritual
	wright	a maker
	write	to inscribe
■	ring	circle around your finger
	wring	twisting
■	road	a broad trail
	rode	past tense of ride
	rowed	to propel a boat by oars
■	role	part to play
	roll	rotate
■	root	subterranean part of a plant
	route	path of travel
■	rose	pretty flower
	rows	linear arrangement
■	rote	by memory
	wrote	has written
■	rude	impolite
	rued	regretted

S

■	sail	wind powered water travel

73

	sale	the act of selling
■	scene	visual location
	seen	past tense of saw
■	sea	ocean
	see	to look
■	seam	row of stitches
	seem	appears
■	sew	needle and thread
	so	in the manner shown
	sow	broadcasting seeds
■	shall	is allowed
	shell	aquatic exoskeleton
■	sole	only
	soul	immortal part of a person
■	some	a few
	sum	result of addition
■	son	male child
	sun	star
■	stair	a step
	stare	look intently
■	stake	wooden pole
	steak	slice of meat
■	stationary	not moving
	stationery	writing paper
■	steal	take unlawfully
	steel	iron alloy

■	storey	the horizontal divisions of a building
	story	a narrative tale
■	suite	ensemble
	sweet	sugary
■	summary	precis
	summery	like summer
■	sundae	ice cream with syrup on it
	Sunday	first day of the week

T

■	tailer	one who hauls in on a ship's line
	tailor	one who makes clothes
■	tare	allowance for the weight of packing materials
	tear	to rip
■	tea	herbal infusion
	tee	golfball prop
■	tenner	English slang for a ten pound note
	tenor	tendency
■	tense	nervous
	tents	more than one temporary shelter
■	their	belonging to them
	there	a place
	they're	contraction of "they are"
■	threw	to propel by hand
	through	from end to end
■	throne	the royal seat

	thrown	was hurled
■	tide	periodic ebb and flow of oceans
	tied	passed tense of tie
■	tighten	to make tighter
	titan	a giant
■	to	toward
	too	also
	two	a couple

U

■	URL	Internet address
	e'er,	see: air
	earl	British nobleman
■	urn	a jar
	earn	to come to deserve
■	Unix	operating system unable to serve all of humanity
	eunuchs	men unable to serve all of humanity
■	use	to apply
	ewes	more than one female sheep

V

■	vain	worthless
	vane	flat piece moving with the air
	vein	blood vessel
■	vale	valley

	veil	gauzy fabric
■	vary	to change
	very	extremely
■	verses	paragraphs
	versus	against
■	vial	narrow glass container
	vile	despicable
	viol	stringed instrument
■	vice	bad habit
	vise	bench-mounted clamp

W

The "W" section is specially dedicated to Lem Bingley.

■	waist	between ribs and hips
	waste	make ill use of
■	wait	remain in readiness
	weight	an amount of heaviness
■	waive	give up rights
	wave	undulating motion
■	Wales	Western division of UK
	wales	corduroy ridges
	whales	a pod of ocean mammals
■	war	large scale armed conflict
	wore	past tense of wear
■	ware	merchandise
	wear	attire

77

	where	a place
■	warn	to advise of a hazard
	worn	displaying evidence of use
■	warrantee	one who is protected by a guarantee
	warranty	a guarantee
■	warship	naval implement of destruction
	worship	revere in a religious manner
■	we	us
	wee	very small
■	we're	contraction of "we are"
	were	past tense plural of "to be"
■	weak	not strong
	week	seven days
■	weather	meteorological conditions
	wether	a castrated ram
	whether	if it be the case
■	who's	contraction of "who is"
	whose	belonging to whom
■	wood	what trees are made of
	would	will do

Y

■	y'all	Southern contraction of "you all"
	yawl	two-masted sailboat with mizzenmast abaft the tiller
■	yack	informal talk
	yak	long-haired Tibetan ox

■	yoke	oxen harness
	yolk	yellow egg center
■	yokes	more than one harness
	yolks	an omelet
■	yore	the past
	you're	contraction of "you are"
	your	belonging to you
■	you'll	contraction of "you will"
	yule	Christmas

(http://www.coper.com/alan/homonyms_list.html)