Polysemy Examples

CS216: Computation Semantics and Generative Lexicon Theory

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Choose 2 of the following 5 examples of polysemy. For each example, discuss what is going on that makes the example polysemous. Find other lexemes (words) that behave the same way and give examples of the different meanings. Finally, if you are not a native speaker of English, find examples of this polysemy in your native language.

(1) a. John slept through the exam.

   b. Mary printed 30 copies of the exam.

(2) a. The lunch with her boss took longer than she expected.

   b. She packed her lunch in her purse.

(3) a. The classification of the genetic data took two years.

   b. The journal Science published the classification this month.

(4) a. the scratch in the cup

   b. the coffee in the cup

   c. the porcelain in the cup

   d. the painting on the wall

   e. the run on the floor

(5) a. Mary treated John for his injuries.

   b. John treated Mary to a nice dinner.

   c. They treated each other with respect.