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Preface

The workshop on homonymy, polysemy and etymology in Indo-European languages, held at the Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg on July 11–12, 2023, was organised at the initiative of Éric Dieu (Toulouse) who was a Humboldt fellow at the chair of Comparative Philology from October 2021 till August 2023.

The aim of the workshop was to discuss a topic which so far has mainly been treated in isolated papers (for example, without seeking to be exhaustive: Lamberterie 1992 and 2012; Skoda 1993; García Ramón 1999; Kümmel 2000; Nikolaev 2018; etc.), except for two little, yet fine volumes of collected papers (only some of which are oriented towards historical linguistics): one edited by Alain Blanc and Alain Christol (2007), with seven papers on homonymy in Greek and Latin, and one coordinated by Julie Sorba and Sylvain Brocquet (2014), with ten papers on polysemy in some languages and literatures of Ancient India (Vedic, Sanskrit, Prakrits, and, in addition to Indo-Aryan languages, Classical Tamil). Within the Indo-European language family, and from a perspective of historical linguistics, one of the aims of the workshop was to examine forms which are likely to be analysed either as pure homonyms or as polysemous terms, with, if necessary, possible divergences of interpretation depending on whether the facts are considered in synchrony or in diachrony, such as the case of forms which, while clearly being homonyms in synchrony, result from a phenomenon of polysemy in diachrony. An example that has already been studied several times is Greek ἀλέη (Ionic) ‘avoiding, escape; protection, shelter’ and ἀλέη, Attic ἀλέᾱ ‘warmth, heat (of the sun, fire, etc.)’ – should these terms be understood as independent both in synchrony and in diachrony, with two distinct etymologies (a position taken e.g. by Nikolaev in 2021), or should we admit, with Jouanna (1982), a historical polysemy, with a semantic evolution from ‘protection, shelter’ to ‘warmth, heat’ from a contextual meaning?

Some of the papers collected in this volume discuss theoretical perspectives and others present case studies of individual lexemes, semantic groups and word classes. Some deal with both homonymy and polysemy, others focus mainly on either the notion of homonymy or that of polysemy; and questions of etymology are addressed quite broadly in the different papers, without necessarily being essential to all of them. Apart from a certain bias for Greek, this volume also covers Latin and Romance languages, Germanic languages, Vedic, Armenian, and Slavic languages.

We cordially thank the authors for their illuminating contributions. Our gratitude further extends to the Alexander von Humboldt-Foundation for its generous financial support to Éric Dieu, without which neither the organisation of the workshop nor the preparation of the present volume would have been possible. We are also grateful to the other editors of the *Münchener Studien zur Sprachwissenschaft, Beihefte*, Norbert Oettinger and Stefan Schaffner, for accepting the volume into the series, and the J. H. Röhl Verlag for their indispensable help during the preparation of the volume.

Toulouse/Würzburg, October 2024, Éric Dieu & Daniel Kölligan

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EVA BÜTHE-SCHEIDER

Spelling pronunciation als Quelle für Homonymie in der neuhochdeutschen Schriftsprache

Abstract: Der Beitrag diskutiert Spelling pronunciation als Quelle für Homonymie am Beispiel des nicht-lautgesetzlichen Zusammenfalls der Lautreihen mhd. *ei – öu – ou* und *î – û – û* im Neuhochdeutschen in zwei Perspektiven: ausgehend vom älteren Zustand im Mittelhochdeutschen sowie aus gegenwartssprachlicher Perspektive werden potenzielle Homonyme ermittelt und in historischer Sicht betrachtet. Dabei werden sowohl Reaktionen auf Homonymie (Homonymieflucht) sowie neue potenzielle Homonyme in der Gegenwartssprache beleuchtet. Unterschiedliche Kategorisierungen zu verschiedenen Zeiten werden diskutiert.

Keywords: Homonymie, Polysemie, Homonymieflucht, Homonymendifferenzierung, Schriftaussprache, Spelling pronunciation, Reihenzusammenfall mhd. *ei – öu – ou* mit *î – û – û* im Neuhochdeutschen

1 Problemstellung und Forschungsstand

1.1 Einleitung

Lautwandel kann zu Homonymie, also ausdrucksseitiger Gleichheit bei inhaltsseitiger Verschiedenheit von Wörtern oder Wortformen, führen. Die Voraussetzung ist, dass die vormalig ausdrucksseitig getrennten Wortformen oder Wörter nicht synonym waren. Das ist so weit unbestritten (vgl. Bloomfield 1933: 388). Der Beitrag untersucht, inwiefern auch Spelling pronunciation neben lautgesetzlichem Lautwandel, der für gewöhnlich als Hauptquelle gilt, zu Homonymie führt und somit zu den Quellen für Homonymie gezählt werden sollte. Als Gegenstand der Betrachtung dient dabei der Zusammenfall der Reihen mhd. *î – û – û* und *ei – öu – ou* im Neuhochdeutschen. Es ist bekannt, dass er „einige Homonyme zur Folge [hatte]: z. B. mhd. *wîde* (Baumart) und *weide* (Futtergrasfläche) [...] zu nhd. *Weide*“ (v. Polenz 2021: 172). Von ihnen

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- wiktionary-Liste = <https://de.wiktionary.org/wiki/Verzeichnis:Deutsch/Homonyme> (verfügbar am 30.7.2023).
- WNT = de Vries, Jan u.a., 1882–1998: *Woordenboek der Nederlandsche taal*. 40 Bde. 's-Gravenhage, Leiden; zitiert nach der online-Version des instituuts voor Nederlandse taal (Leiden): <https://gtb.ivdnt.org/search/?owner=wnt> (verfügbar am 15.8.2023).
- ZDL = *Zentrum für digitale Lexikographie der deutschen Sprache*. Artikel online bereitgestellt vom DWDS: <https://www.dwds.de/d/woerterbuecher> (verfügbar am 4.9.23).

Polysémie et étymologie : le cas du substantif grec ancien $\theta\alpha\iota\rho\acute{o}\varsigma$ (« pivot, axe [de porte] » ; « essieu [d'une voiture] »)

Abstract: The aim of this paper is to propose a new etymology for Ancient Greek $\theta\alpha\iota\rho\acute{o}\varsigma$ (“pivot [of a door or gate]”; “axle [of a chariot]”): this noun is likely to be related to the PIE root **d^her(h₂)*- “to hold, support, lean on, fasten”, from which are derived other Ancient Greek technical terms such as $\theta\rho\rho\acute{o}\nu\varsigma$ “seat, chair, throne”, $\theta\rho\tilde{\alpha}\nu\omicron\varsigma$ “wooden beam; bench, stepladder; close-stool” and Hom. $\theta\rho\tilde{\eta}\nu\upsilon\varsigma$ “footstool; (helmsman’s) bench”.

Keywords: Ancient Greek, polysemy, etymology, technical vocabulary

Le substantif grec $\theta\alpha\iota\rho\acute{o}\varsigma$ est un mot rare attesté depuis l’*Iliade*, en deux sens principaux¹ : celui, d’une part, de « pivot, axe (de porte) », représenté dans l’*Iliade* (M 459), et qui ne se retrouve guère, ensuite, qu’à partir d’une époque très tardive, qu’il s’agisse de poésie épique (Quintus de Smyrne, III, 27), d’autres types de textes tardifs (chez Agathias, Paul le Silencieux, etc.), ou encore de lexicographes anciens (Apoll. Soph., Poll., Eust., etc.) ; celui, d’autre part, d’« essieu » d’une voiture, sens documenté chez Sophocle (fr. 596 Radt), qui ne réapparaît plus tard que chez des lexicographes.

1 Liste des abréviations utilisées dans cet article : angl. = anglais ; att. = attique ; bibl. = bibliographie ; franç. = français ; gén. = génitif ; gr. = grec ; hitt. = hittite ; ion. = ionien ; isl. = islandais ; lit. = lituanien ; loc. = locatif ; myc. = mycénien ; néerl. = néerlandais ; nom. = nominatif ; norv. = norvégien ; pl. = pluriel ; sch. = scholie ; sg. = singulier ; tokh. = tokharien ; v. (devant un nom de langue abrégé) = vieux, vieil ; véd. = védique ; v.h.a. = vieux haut-allemand. Les abréviations des noms d’auteurs et d’œuvres grecs sont celles du LSJ. Une liste des abréviations bibliographiques se trouve en fin d’article.

When synchronic semantics and reconstruction (apparently) collide: Ved. *śāśadé* and Hom. κέκασται¹

Abstract: Ved. *śāśad-é* and Hom. κέκασ-ται (κεκαδ-μένον Pind.), both stative perfects with middle inflection, represent an exact formal correspondence which can be traced back to a common ancestor, namely IE **ke-k̑d-*): both are residually attested and stand isolated from any paradigm in Vedic and in Greek epics respectively, and share the same construction pattern and very close semantics. The supposed differences between *śāśad-é* ‘exults’ or ‘feels strong’, which is not always easy to detect in a number of Vedic passages, and Gk. κέκασ-ται ‘excels, is distinguished’ are by no means irreducible: they can be explained as different realisations of a same basic meaning, namely ‘to excel’ (originally ‘to be visible’), or as the reflex of semantic shifts, or as both at the same time. In no case can they invalidate an *aequabile* which is otherwise obvious in every respect.

Keywords: comparative reconstruction, morphosyntax, etymology, semantics

1 The current lemmata Ved. *śāśad-* (√ *śad*: 3sg. *śāśad-é*, ptc. *śāśad-āna-*) and Hom. κέκασμαι (3sg. κέκασ-ται, ptc. κεκαδ-μένος, κεκαδ-μένος Pind.) have currently been considered as a correspondence: both are perfect stems with middle inflection, isolated from any paradigm in the *corpora* where they occur, and share the same or very similar semantics,

1 This paper is based on the materials presented in lectures given at the Universities of Erlangen (1989), Wien and Salzburg (1990), Harvard (2000) and Paris-Sorbonne (2017). Translations rely on (or are taken from) Jamison & Brereton for R̥g-Veda (2014: J.-Br.), also from Witzel & Gotō (2007+: W.-Go.), and Humbach (1991: H.) and Kellens-Pirart (1988: K.-P.), also Gotō (Go.), Kümmel (Kü.), as well as Wolf (1910: W.) for the Avestan texts. Standard works and editions are quoted according to the current conventions (RV non indicated). The usual disclaimers apply.

Grey hair and waves: a story of Armenian *alík*'

Abstract: The root etymology of *alík* 'grey hair' and 'waves' has been established since the rise of the comparative grammar of Classical Armenian. However details of the morphological reconstruction and semantic changes resulting in the rise of the two homonymous lexemes out of the Proto-Indo-European color term 'grey' has never been thoroughly described. The present paper offers an overview of formal solutions and highlights the most probable scenarios of substantivization for each of the two meanings. Taking into account contrastive morphological and lexical features of *ali(k)* 'wave(s)' (count/mass noun) and *plurale tantum alík* 'grey hair' (mass noun) one may consider unmarked substantivization and a derived **h₂*-collective as two distinct sources of the two nouns, respectively. This scenario is discussed in the context of the relative chronology of secondary adjectival stems, based on PIE **pe/ol(h_x)-i-*, and related lexical changes.

Keywords: Classical Armenian, substantivization of adjectives, homonymy

1 Introduction

Classical Armenian *alík* (gen.pl. *aleac*) embodies a pair of homonymous nouns 'grey hair' and 'waves'. Both nouns go back to a widespread Proto-Indo-European root **pel(h_x)-* 'grey' (cf. Gk. *πολιός* 'grey', Skt. *palitá-* 'greyhaired', Lith. *pálšas* 'light grey', OCS *plavъ* 'white', Lat. *pullus* 'dark grey' etc.; see DELG² 892; EDG 1219).¹ The root etymology is clear, but a few details of the diachronic morphology and semantics require further comments.

1 Whether or not the root contained a laryngeal is a complicated issue related to the analysis of Lith. *paĩvas*, *pĩlkas* 'fallow', *pálšas* 'light grey', *pelenai* 'ashes' (EDBIL: 342f., 348f.), Lat. *pallidus* 'pale' and *pullus* 'dark grey' (Nussbaum 1997; Driessen 2005: 45f.; EDL: 440f., 497), CArm. *atawni* 'pigeon' (Batisti 2021, see also Kocharov 2018 on the vocalization of word-

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DANIEL KÖLLIGAN

Noisy crowds (and compact masses)

Abstract: The paper argues that the recurrent synchronic polysemy of words meaning ‘crowd’ and ‘noise, tumult, uproar’ or ‘compact mass’ may have existed in words for which only one of these meanings is attested. Colexification patterns may be instructive for diachronic research.

Keywords: colexification, polysemy, etymology, noise, crowd

1 One may observe among the sources for words meaning ‘crowd’ (a) words meaning ‘noise (made by a crowd), tumult, (noisy) uproar, agitation’ and (b) words based on a meaning ‘to push, beat, press’ which develop into ‘compact mass (of people)’ whence ‘mass of people’. Since such synchronic polysemies and diachronic semantic shifts are recurrent, it will be argued that this pattern of colexification and development may serve to derive words showing either of these meanings from etyma with the other meaning. After an overview of some representative examples in section 2 (ordered by languages), some etymological proposals based on these patterns will be discussed in section 3.¹

2.1 Vedic *krándas-* (n.) derives from the root *krand* ‘to shout, resound’, e.g., RV 3.26.3 *ásvo ná krándan* “like a neighing horse” which is attested only in Indoaryan, cf. LIV² 396 s.v. **k^(w)Rend-* and Turner (1962–

1 This does not exclude other developments, of course, e.g., there seems to be a recurrent development of words meaning ‘group of beings, esp. soldiers’ into ‘mess, disarray’ probably via ‘unordered group of beings’ (a distinction particularly relevant for the army, cf. Lat. *acies* ‘army in battle-array’, Gr. *στόλος* ‘army’ : *στέλλω* ‘arrange, equip’, etc.), cf. Dutch *rot* ‘wolf pack’ (Germ. *Rotte*) beside *reut* ‘mess’, *troep* ‘troop; mess’ (borrowed from Fr. *troupe*), *bende* ‘gang, band of soldiers; mess’ < OFr. *bande* ‘troop of soldiers’ (van Beek, p.c.).

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Disambiguating homonyms: assessing the weight of the different factors

Abstract: The paper aims at assessing the weight of the different factors in the disambiguation of homonyms, with a particular focus on the role of frequency compared to allomorphy and motivation.

Keywords: allomorphy, motivation, frequency, synonymy, disambiguation, chronology

0 Introduction

It is well known that homonymy is a problem in languages. Homonyms are found in all languages, and the latter rely on context in order to disambiguate, because in context most of the time there can be no hesitation for a native speaker. Sometimes, when the meanings of the two homonyms are not widely different, the merger may result in a unique polysemous word. A well-known case is that of the Latin combinations of **deh*₃- ‘to give’ and **d^heh*₁- ‘to place’ with preverbs, where it is not always possible to identify which root lies behind the *-dō* (*addō*, *ēdō*). However, all languages, in the course of their history, display a tendency to eliminate homonymous pairs and to keep only one word while the other one is replaced by a new form, either etymologically related or not.

This had already been noticed by Greek grammarians: for instance, Eustathius of Thessalonica (12th c. CE) says that a word ἄορ ‘wife’, was changed into ὄαρ by metathesis because it was homonymous with ἄορ ‘sword’ (*Comm. Il.*, vol. 2, p. 128: “from it is derived a deverbal noun ἄορ, the woman who is married and lives with her husband. But because of the confusion with ἄορ ‘sword’, ἄορ underwent a metathesis and became ὄαρ ‘wife’”).¹ The etymology is of course fantastic from a modern

1 Eustathius did not invent this explanation, which must come from an older source, now lost.

AUDREY MATHYS

Homonymy and syntactic contamination: Old Norse-Icelandic and Old Swedish *at*

Abstract: The paper studies the evolution of the uses of *at* in Old Norse-Icelandic and in Old Swedish. It provides a description of its different functions (preposition, adverb, infinitive particle, and conjunction) and discusses their origins as well as the consequences of this extreme polyfunctionality: contamination between uses in Icelandic, and phonetic differentiation and avoidance in Swedish.

Keywords: diachronic syntax, infinitive particle, conjunction, preposition, homonymy, polyfunctionality, contamination

1 Introduction¹

The preposition, particle and conjunction *at* is one of the most frequent words in the oldest stages of Medieval Scandinavian languages, be it in

1 Many thanks to Éric Dieu and Daniel Kölligan for their invitation and to the participants for their remarks. Abbreviations: texts : *ÄVgL* = *Äldre Västgotalagen*, *EK* = *Erikskrönikan*, *ES* = *Egils Saga*, *Gylf.* = *Gylfaginning*; linguistic abbreviations: A = accusative, ADV = adverb, ANAPH = anaphoric, ART = article, AUX = auxiliary, CONJ = conjunction, COORD = coordination, D = dative, DEF = definite, DEM = demonstrative, G = genitive, Goth. = Gothic, IND = indicative, INDEF = indefinite, INF = infinitive, INFL = inflected, Lat. = Latin, LOC = location, M = masculine, MED = mediopassive, MOV = movement, N = nominative, NEG = negation, NGerm = North Germanic, NT = neuter, OCS = Old Church Slavonic, OE = Old English, OHG = Old High German, Olc = Old Icelandic, OSax = Old Saxon, OSw = Old Swedish, PART = participle, PCLE = particle, PL = plural, PGerm = Proto-Germanic, POSS = possessive, PP = past participle, PREP = preposition, PRET = preterite, PST = present, REFL = reflexive, REL = relative, run. = runic, SG = singular, SUBJ = subjunctive, SUPERL = superlative, Ved. = Vedic. Old Norse-Icelandic spelling is generally normalised according to the conventions used in the editions indicated in the bibliography; Old Swedish examples are given without normalisation, as in the editions quoted in the bibliography. To save

Þórhallur Eyþórsson & Ingunn Hreinberg Indriðadóttir, 2018: “The prepositional absolute construction in Icelandic”. In: *Scandinavian Philology* 16, 3–18.

EDUARD MEUSEL

Hom(oi)onymie und Dichtersprache. Der Einfluss des indogermanischen Rituals auf die Hom(oi)onymie bei ved. *śrayⁱ*- und gr. *μελι^ο*

Abstract: Der vorliegende Beitrag geht der Möglichkeit einer Homonymie in zwei konkreten Einzelfällen nach: einmal bei der vedischen Verbalwurzel *śrayⁱ*-, das andere Mal beim griechischen Kompositions-vorderglied *μελι^ο*. Unter Heranziehung der Methoden der historisch-vergleichenden Sprachwissenschaft sowie einzelner Theorien aus der allgemeinen Linguistik kann hierbei für ved. *śrayⁱ*- eine Homonymie konstatiert werden, die aus einer Integration der Wurzel uridg. **kerh₂*- ‚mischen‘ in das Verbalparadigma zur Wurzel uridg. **krejH-* ‚vortrefflich sein/machen‘ im Vedischen herrührt. Für gr. *μελι^ο* kann auf Grundlage zahlreicher Belege aus der Dichtung ebenfalls ein Changieren zwischen der Bedeutung ‚Honig‘ (< uridg. **melit-*) und ‚Lied‘ festgestellt werden, welches allerdings nicht den regelmäßigen Charakter einer Homonymie einnimmt, immerhin aber den einer Art ‚Homoionymie‘. Als maßgeblich erweist sich in beiden Fällen das urindogermanische oder graeco-arische Ritual, speziell das Trankopfer, das den Rahmen bildet, um die für eine lexikalische Verbindung notwendige konzeptuelle Nähe und Verwandtschaft zwischen den Hom(oi)onymen zu erklären.

Keywords: homonymy, sound change, to mix, to excel, honey, song, libation

An Hand zweier Einzelfalluntersuchungen – der vedischen Verbalwurzel *śrayⁱ*- und dem griechischen Kompositions-vorderglied *μελι^ο* – widmet sich der folgende Beitrag dem Thema der Homonymie. Es wird einerseits danach gefragt werden, inwiefern es sich in beiden Fällen überhaupt um Homonymie handelt; andererseits wird aber auch der Blick darauf gerichtet, wie eine mögliche Homonymie in beiden Fällen zu Stande kommen konnte und welchen Einfluss dabei der indogermanische Ritualkontext bzw. die sogenannte ‚indogermanische Dichtersprache‘ spielte.

THERESA ROTH

Aufbau und Status von Polysemie im Grammatikalisierungsprozess der gotischen Modalverben¹

Abstract: Der vorliegende Beitrag evaluiert den Status derjenigen gotischen Präteritopräsentien, denen in Grammatiken und Handbüchern modale Bedeutung(saspekte) und z.T. sogar ein Status als Modalverb zuerkannt werden. Die Frage, welche Bedingungen für eine Beurteilung als vollausgebildetes Modalverb nötig und welche Stufen des Grammatikalisierungsprozesses vom lexikalischen Verb zum modalen Hilfsverb vorausgesetzt werden müssen, wird mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der modalen Polysemie, d.h. der Ausprägung von deontischer / dynamischer *und* epistemischer Bedeutung diskutiert.

Keywords: Modalität, Modalverben, Polysemie, Grammatikalisierung, epistemisch, deontisch, Gotisch

1 Polysemie im Kontext von Modalität

Ihrer Diskussion der Bedeutung(en) von engl. *may* legen Viebahn & Vetter folgende Definition verschiedener semantischer Phänomene zugrunde, die sich alle auf die Beziehung zweier oder mehrerer Bedeutungen eines einzigen sprachlichen Ausdrucks beziehen, nämlich Ambiguität, Polysemie und Homonymie:

„Ambiguity, homonymy and polysemy are usually characterised as follows: An expression is ambiguous if it has multiple meanings. **An expression is polysemous if it is ambiguous and its meanings are related to each other**, and it is homonymous if it is ambiguous but its meanings are unrelated.“ (Viebahn & Vetter 2016: 3; Hervorhebungen TR)

1 Dieser Aufsatz basiert auf einem Vortrag beim Workshop „Homonymy, polysemy and etymology in Indo-European languages“ (Würzburg, 11.–12. Juli 2023). Ich danke den Organisatoren, Éric Dieu und Daniel Kölligan, für die Einladung und den Teilnehmenden für hilfreiche Anmerkungen und Fragen.

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The metaphorical meanings of Greek *πυκνός*, *πυκινός* ‘close-fit, tight’ and their diachronic origins

Abstract: The paper argues that *πυκνός* / *πυκινός* represents a conflation of two etymologically different lexemes: (1) *πυκνός* ‘close-fit, tight’ reflecting **pḡkʷ-nó-* (with a hitherto unidentified PIE root **penkʷ-* ‘close’ also underlying words for ‘fist’) and (2) *πυκινός* ‘acute, sharp’ (of the mind) from PIE **puḱ(i)nó-* (root **peuḱ-* as in Lat. *pungō* ‘to prick’). It is also argued that Latin *pugna* ‘fight, battle’ contains the same root as *πυκινός* ‘sharp’ and is not directly related to *pugnus* ‘fist’.

Keywords: polysemy, homonymy, etymology, conceptual metaphor

Ancient Greek *πυκνός* and its epic variant *πυκινός* are synonymous; the basic meaning of both words is ‘close-fitting, tight, dense’. The words are problematic in several respects. First, we seem to be dealing, synchronically in epic Greek, with doublet forms of the same lexeme (*πυκνός* / *πυκινός*),¹ but it is not quite clear how this variation should be explained historically. Second, it remains to be seen how the polysemy in this lexeme, with various metaphorical uses, is best described. Which metaphors are involved, and can all distinct meanings be accounted for as extensions of ‘close-fitting’? Third, *πυκνός* has no clear etymology: a relation to words like *πυκάλιμος*, *πυκεδανός*, *ἐχεπευκής* within Homeric Greek is not evident, as the meanings of those words seem derived from ‘sharp’, which is conceptually far removed from ‘close, tight’.

1 By means of the slash in *πυκνός* / *πυκινός*, I indicate henceforth that we are dealing with one lexeme with two variant forms in Homer.

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The dynamics of polysemy and homonymy: demotivation and ad hoc motivation from the perspective of cultural traditions and discourse traditions

Abstract: The paper aims to address the relationship between polysemy and homonymy by focusing on the inherent dynamics of the phenomena, which allows for diachronic transitions and synchronic variation of speaker judgments concerning the semantic relatedness of different meanings of lexical items. Emphasising the importance of historical contexts, the concepts of discourse traditions and cultural traditions will be introduced in order to identify four basic scenarios of demotivation. This systematisation will be complemented by analyses of ad hoc motivation in specific discourse traditions in ludic language. Together, the analyses show the potential of approaching the phenomena from the perspective of their usage in concrete historical settings.

Keywords: polysemy, homonymy, demotivation, ad hoc motivation, discourse traditions

1 Introduction

[...] “qui dit polysémie, dit motivation” (‘when you say polysemy, you say motivation’; Koch 2005a: 29, translation EWF). The broadly recognised importance of motivational aspects for analyses of polysemy will serve as a starting point to reflect on the relationship between polysemy and homonymy from a usage-based perspective. Focusing on how the two phenomena are realised in actual usage, the aim of this paper is to study their inherent dynamics, which can blur the distinction between the two concepts: on the one hand, we can observe diachronic developments from polysemy to homonymy, or vice versa, on the other hand, we find variable categorisations in synchrony, i.e., speakers may