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Kateřina Bílková

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CONFUSING WORD PAIRS

Kateřina Bílková

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Cruse, A. (2006). A Glossary of Semantics and Pragmatics. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press

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ABSTRACT

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This undergraduate thesis is concerned with the topic of confusing word pairs which is relevant not only for learners of English language but also for native speakers. It consists of two main parts, theoretical and practical one.

The theoretical background provides the reader cohesive information concerning lexical meaning and paradigmatic relations with a special focus on homonymy. Four main groups of homonyms are selected and further elaborated, specifically grammatical homonyms, homophones, paronyms and interlingual homonyms, also called false friends. However, terms such as absolute homonymy, partial homonymy, proper homonymy, oronymy and homography are included as well because of their close relation to the subject matter.

In the practical part of the thesis, concrete examples of commonly confused word pairs are presented. The analysis is based on the explanation of the lexical meaning of each expression and on finding particular features within the selected group of homonyms. This part also contains pedagogical implications where exercises with correct answers connected to the topic of this paper are suggested.

Key words: lexical meaning, paradigmatic relations, confusing word pairs, homonymy, grammatical homonymy, homophony, paronymy, interlingual homonymy, false friends

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1   INTRODUCTION

Language is a principal tool for communication and interaction with other people in our everyday life. Not only it conveys information, feelings and attitudes but it also shapes our cultural identity and consequently forms the way we perceive the world. Language represents the basic skill and its correct use is a mark of education. Nowadays, a great emphasis is placed on the knowledge of foreign languages and the more languages a person knows, the more opportunities a person has. However, it is undeniable, that in today's world of globalization, English is considered to be an international language, almost necessary for everyone to know. So that English learners use the language correctly, it is important not to disregard various challenging aspects in order to avoid possible mistakes, misunderstandings, confusion or even embarrassment.

This undergraduate thesis deals with the topic of confusing word pairs which is the theme that every English learner surely encounters, at least unknowingly. This is also the reason why I chose this topic. It happened to me many times at grammar school that I was not able to recognize the difference between the words such as *economic* and *economical* or I incorrectly translated the word *gymnázium* as *gymnasium*. At that time, I did not know anything about confusing expressions, nobody explained us that there are many word pairs one should be aware of. I encountered this subject matter at university and it intrigued me.

The thesis contains the chapter Theoretical Background which serves as base for the topic examined. This chapter brings a brief overview of the lexical meaning, paradigmatic relations and focuses mainly on paradigmatic relationships of identity between lexical items, specifically on homonymy. Grammatical homonyms, homophones, paronyms and the linguistic phenomenon of false friends were chosen as the main subject matter and their detailed description is included in this chapter as well. The practical part begins with the chapter Methods and it explains how the topic of the thesis will be further elaborated. The main aim of this work is to collect the most frequently confused word pairs, focus on their lexical meaning and analyse their common or distinctive features, which can be found in the chapter Analysis. The fifth chapter Pedagogical Implications presents suggestions for exercises which could be used in the teaching practice in order to raise the awareness of easily confused expressions. The last chapter Conclusion summarizes the whole thesis and outlines the possibilities for further research.

2   THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1   LEXICAL MEANING

Word is a primary unit of the language and creates a basis for lexicology, a fundamental discipline in the whole linguistic system. Jackson and Amvela (2007) define lexicology as "a study of lexis, understood as the stock of words in a given language, i.e. its vocabulary or lexicon (from Greek *lexis*, 'word', *lexikos*, 'of/for words')" (p. 2). Subjects of the study are simple words, complex words, compound words and bigger structures containing meaning. Finding generalizations and relations between the already mentioned units are thus linguistic fields included in lexicology as well (Lipka, 2002). Consequently, it is crucial for lexicological studies to rely on other linguistic disciplines, specifically morphology, semantics and etymology (Jackson & Amvela, 2007).

In order to study the most significant role of a word, which is to carry a meaning, and consequently to comprehend semantic relationships between lexical units it is important to introduce some of the fundamental definitions of a word first. Peprník (2006) defines a word as "a combination of sounds (rarely a single sound), or its representation in writing, that symbolizes and communicates a meaning" (p. 8). In other words, a word can be described as a lexical unit which has a particular form, carries a meaning and can be further divided into individual morphemes. More general definition was also introduced by Filipec and Čermák (1985), they define a word as "a basic, central language unit in terms of both vocabulary and grammar" (p. 31).

Beside the above mentioned general definitions, a word can be also defined from different points of view as it interferes with all linguistic areas. Murphy (2010) therefore states four basic ways to define a word, namely orthographic, semantic, phonological and grammatical. The orthographic definition describes a word as a particular segment of language which has a space on both sides which can be consequently observed only in written form. The semantic definition states that a word is an isolated language unit which gathers a meaning and forms a single concept. An individual unit of language which is determined by phonological features, especially pronunciation, is a description of a word from the phonological point of view. The grammatical definition characterizes a word according to its position in bigger units – phrases.

The main task for word as a linguistic sign is to convey the meaning. Lexicology distinguishes two types of meaning, lexical that connects words with human associations and grammatical that reflects grammatical categories of the given word (Kreidler, 1998). Lexical meaning as a subject of the study of lexical semantics is the one further to be examined.

According to Peprník (2006), lexical meaning is a reflection of the extralinguistic reality, also known as concept. This signifies that the human mind is able to create a concept for everything captured in reality, therefore meaning can be simply described as a reference to reality. The extralinguistic reality applies both to physically existing objects (e.g. *a house, a dog*) and abstract entities (e.g. *love, childhood*). Moreover, the extralinguistic reality contains non-existent, imaginary objects as well (e.g. *a werewolf, a centaur*) (Peprník, 2006).

In modern linguistics, there are two fundamental models of the linguistic sign which describe the relations between a word and its lexical meaning. The first one is a bilateral or binary model of the sign created by the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure. In his psychological approach he distinguishes two parts of the sign, a phonic image (*signifiant*, a signifier) and the concept (*signifié*, the signified). There is no logical connection to be found between the phonic image and the concept, therefore the relationship is completely arbitrary, the exception may be for example onomatopoeic words (Lipka, 1992).
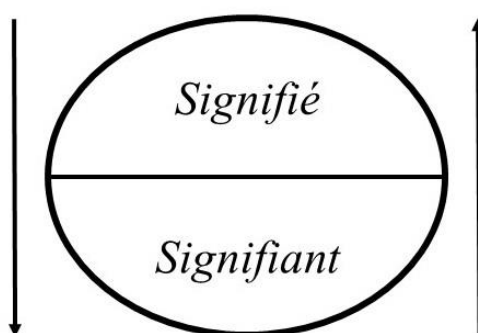

Figure 1: Bilateral Model (created by the author)

The second model of the linguistic sign is a three-part model created by British linguists Charles Kay Ogden and Ivor Armstrong Richards, also called Ogden/Richards's semiotic triangle, triangle of signification or the referential triangle. In this scheme, it can be observed that the relationship between the word (symbol) and the object from the extralinguistic reality (referent) is represented by a dashed line which means that the relationship is fully

arbitrary. Since the connection between the symbol and the referent can be realized only with the help of human consciousness, there is also a third part of the model, a relational concept. This concept represents an abstract image of particular object from the extralinguistic reality produced by a human mind (Lipka, 1992).
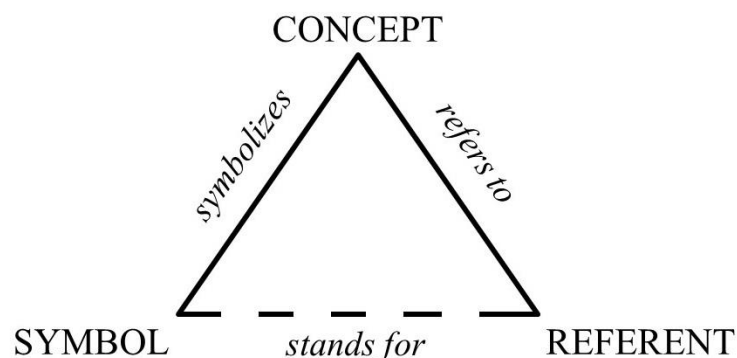

Figure 2: Semiotic Triangle (created by the author)

Lexicology states two approaches to analyse the lexical meaning, an onomasiological and a semasiological one. The onomasiological approach studies the name-giving, it starts from the concept and ends with the symbol, the name. The semasiological approach, on the other hand, proceeds in the opposite direction, specifically from a symbol to a concept. A synonymous term for semasiology is semantics (Lipka, 2002).

For the exact identification of the meaning of the word, it is necessary to know the context in which the particular word was used since the word is not usually treated as an isolated unit. Also, there are two components of the meaning which provide a detailed description of the word in the given context, denotation and connotation. The former is, according to Jackson and Amvela (2007), defined as "the relationship between a linguistic sign and its denotatum or referent" (p. 57) and the latter "constitutes additional properties of lexemes, e.g. poetic, slang, baby language, biblical, casual, colloquial, formal, humorous, legal, literary, rhetorical" (p. 57). To clarify the distinction between denotation and connotation it is essential to state that every word has the denotative, conceptual meaning which is an obligatory component of the word, however, the connotative, implied meaning adds the stylistic value, expressivity or associations to the semantic nucleus (Peprník, 2006). Synonyms may serve as a suitable example of words with the same denotative but different connotative meaning (Jackson & Amvela, 2007).

2.2   LEXICAL RELATIONS

As mentioned earlier, the lexicon consists of lexical units which have a certain form and convey a meaning. It can be observed that between these forms and lexical meanings there are specific relational aspects to be found. Filipec and Čermák (1985), Kreidler (1998), Lipka (1992), Lyons (1968) and Murphy (2010) distinguish two fundamental types of relations in accordance with the type of dimension in which they may occur. The relations on the vertical axis are referred to as paradigmatic and on the horizontal axis as syntagmatic. In addition, Cruse (2000) states one more type of relations, namely derivational, that deals with meaning relationships between items from one word family (e.g. *cook* and *cooker*).
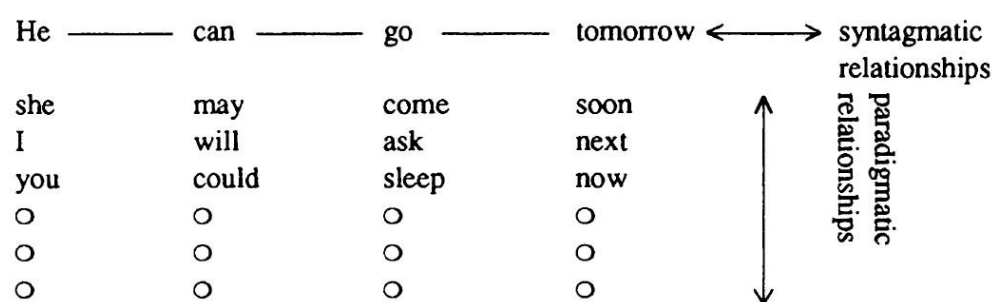

Figure 3: Paradigmatic and Syntagmatic Relations (Lipka, 1992)

The syntagmatic relations, also called combinatorial, are relationships occurring between units that can stand next to each other, that can combine. It is important to realize that the ability of forming combinations is observable not only between words but also within one word (morphemes) and between larger cohesive linguistic units (clauses, sentences) (Lipka, 1992). Syntagmatic relations occur typically between collocations, set expressions and phrasal verbs.

The paradigmatic relations, also called oppositional, exist between intersubstitutable lexical units. Because of the fact that these units can be substituted for each other, the relationship is marked as contrast or opposition (Lipka, 1992). To make the substitution feasible, it is important that words are from the same part of speech. The set of words as a result of particular substitution is therefore called a paradigm (Murphy, 2010). The categorization of the paradigmatic relations slightly differs author by author, however, most of them concur with the one introduced by Lyons (1968). He distinguishes three basic types of paradigmatic relations, synonymy, hyponymy and oppositeness (antonymy). Beside

these, Cruse (2000) and Murphy (2010) differentiate also meronymy as one of the fundamental relationships. Although paradigmatic relations are mostly associated with the meaning or sense relationship, Lipka (1992) declares that they can be also based on the substitution of form. In his classification, created according to the binary model of the sign introduced by Saussure, there are, therefore, homonymy and polysemy included as well. He explains that although there is no meaning or semantic relation between contents (*signifiés*), the graphemic forms (*signifiants*) yet create a paradigm.

2.3 HOMONYMY

This thesis focuses mainly on meaning variations, specifically on groups of easily exchangeable word pairs which have the same or similar form but distinctive meaning; grammatical homonyms, homophones, paronyms and false friends. According to the explanation of paradigmatic relations based on the word form in the previous subchapter, all four groups can be included in the superordinate complex called homonymy.

The term homonymy was derived from Greek words *homos* (similar) and *onoma* (name). Murphy (2010) defines homonymy as "a relation between different lexemes that are coincidentally similar in form" (p. 90). In other words, homonymy appears between words whose spoken or written form has two or more unrelated meanings. Homonyms are therefore defined as words "identical in sound but different in meaning" (Peprník, 2006, p. 33). Thanks to the ambiguity, homonymous words can make the communication sometimes difficult, especially for non-native speakers. For the correct understanding, it is important to know the exact context in which the homonymous word was used.

Homonyms, however, are not the only ambiguous words. Another paradigmatic relationship based on form of the word is polysemy, which is with homonymy often confused. Peprník (2006) defines polysemy as "having two or more meanings, i.e. referring to two or more items of extralinguistic reality, but at the same time sharing at least one element of meaning" (p. 26). Jackson and Amvela (2007), on the contrary, define polysemy as "the situation where the same word has two or more different meanings" (p.58). However, simpler definitions, such as the one introduced by Jackson and Amvela (2007), could be considered as inaccurate because of the fact that it could apply both to polysemy and homonymy. Therefore, the difference between these two relations could be sometimes unclear. The most important distinctive feature between these two relations is etymology.

Words, which are considered to be polysemous are etymologically identical, they share the same origin. All the meanings of one word are related to the primary meaning (Lipka, 1992). Murphy (2010) also states that homonymy is a relationship concerning two or more different lexemes whereas polysemy concerns only a single lexeme. The distinction between homonymous and polysemous expressions can be also observed in lexicography. In diachronic dictionaries, a polysemous lexeme is explained in just one entry while homonymous lexemes have each one separate entry. Lexicographers are sometimes exposed to a problematic task and that is to decide whether words are homonymous or polysemous. There is no definite borderline between polysemy and homonymy and the etymological connection can be due to time irrelevant (Kreidler, 1998).

Homonyms can be categorized according to their grammatical, phonological and orthographical similarities. Lyons (1995) distinguishes two basic types of homonymy, absolute homonymy and partial homonymy. So that lexemes could be absolute homonyms, they must meet particular conditions: "they will be unrelated in meaning; all their forms will be identical; the identical forms will be grammatically equivalent" (p. 55). In other words, the inflectional paradigms of absolute homonyms are identical; e.g. $bank_1$ – a financial institution, $bank_2$ – a sloping side of a river; $match_1$ – a wooden stick for lighting a fire, $match_2$ – a competition in sport; $seal_1$ – a marine mammal; $seal_2$ – an official mark on a document; $sole_1$ – a bottom of foot or shoe, $sole_2$ – a kind of fish. The second group, partial homonyms are words, whose at least one form is identical and only one or two conditions for absolute homonymy are fulfilled. As an example of partial homonymy, Lyons (1995) discusses especially the problematic of grammatical homonymy.

Peprník (2006) introduced a classification of homonyms from the phonological and orthographic point of view. He divides them into three subcategories: real homonyms, homophones and homographs. Words from the first category are both phonologically and orthographically identical. Real homonyms resemble absolute homonyms from the Lyons's (1995) classification, however, Peprník (2006) does not mention the necessity of sameness in the whole paradigm of the homonymous word pair. This type of homonyms is also commonly referred to as proper homonyms. Homophones, as the name suggests, are pairs of homonymous words, whose pronunciation is the same but their spelling is different. Homographs, on the contrary, differ in pronunciation but their written form is the same. Moreover, Peprník (2006) mentions a special group of homonyms which is a linguistic phenomenon called false friends (*faux amis*). He describes this phenomenon as an

interlanguage homophony; two words are from different language, look very similar but have distinctive meaning.

2.3.1 GRAMMATICAL HOMONYMS

This group of homonyms is not very well known and in lexicology insufficiently elaborated.

Grammatical homonymy is a special type of homonymy where two homonymous words coincidentally have identical phonic form, identical pronunciation and, on top of that, belong to the paradigm of one lexeme. This case of grammatical homonymy can be found with all regular verbs, where the form of past simple and participle is identical, e.g. *ask – asked – asked*. The ambiguity of the two partially homonymous lexemes depends on their grammatical non-equivalence and the identity of the lexical meaning.

Lyons (1995) considers grammatical homonymy as a subtype of partial homonymy because grammatical homonymy contravenes the two conditions defining absolute homonyms, namely the identity of all forms and the grammatical equivalency of the identical forms.

However, grammatical homonymy can be also observed between two lexical units belonging to different paradigms. Lyons (1995) describes this type of grammatical homonymy on exemplary word pair: *found$_1$ – found$_2$*. The first one is a form of past simple and participle of a verb *find* (discover) and the second is form of present simple of a verb *found* (establish). These grammatical homonyms create a restricted group because their occurrence is limited only to a certain number of irregular verbs, which always create one of the expressions in the homonymous pair.

2.3.2 HOMOPHONES

Homophony as a subtype of partial homonymy expresses the relationship between two lexical units which are pronounced identically but have different spelling.

Homophones, as easily confused or mistyped words, can cause troubles not only to learners of a foreign language but also to native speakers. Usually children are the main producers of such errors, so there are many exercise books which help to eliminate unintentional mistakes.

However, homophones are not only a result of misuse, they can be also used intentionally for a particular purpose, especially humorous. The most frequent source, where homophones together with homographs can be found is paronomasia, commonly abbreviated to pun, which is according to Bussmann (1998) "A play on words through the coupling of words that sound similar but which are very different semantically and etymologically" (p. 968). Puns based on homophony are for example: *a bicycle cannot stand on its own because it is two-tired* (too tired)*; with her marriage she got a new name and a dress* (address)*; those who jump off a Paris bridge are in Seine* (insane)*, once you've seen one shopping centre you've seen a mall* ('em all)*.

Homophony includes not only relationship between individual words, but also between bigger lexical units. This homophonic subtype concerning phrases which are pronounced the same but have different spelling is called oronymy, e.g. *I scream – ice cream, that's tough – that stuff, four candles – fork handles*.

2.3.3   PARONYMS

Filipec and Čermák (1985) define paronyms as "words, which have similar form but their meaning is completely different" (p. 142). Misapplication of paronymous words in the communication may lead to incomprehension of the context and is a result of unfamiliarity with foreign words.

Because of the fact that the definition of paronyms is more or less identical to definition of homonyms, paronymy is often considered to be a subcategory of homonymy. The difference between homonymy and paronymy is that paronyms arise as a result of derivational process. Cruse (1986), therefore, states a more precise definition:

> The relationship between one word and another belonging to a different syntactic category and produced from the first by some process of derivation will be called paronymy; the derivationally primitive item will be called the base, and the derived form, the paronym. (Cruse, 1986, p. 130)

The above mentioned derivational process is always realized by means of affixation. Prefixes and suffixes are attached to the primary lexical unit, the so called base and they are the source of change of meaning.

According to the way of formation of paronyms, they could be divided into two subgroups, specifically prefixed paronyms and suffixed paronyms. The former would be for

example word pairs such as *dissatisfied – unsatisfied, disuse – misuse, disability – inability*. Examples for the latter would be: *continuous - continual, economic – economical, imaginary – imaginative.*

Cruse (1986) introduced a classification in which he divided paronyms into three classes:

1. Paronyms
2. False paronyms
3. Zero-derived paronyms

The first group contains paronymous word pairs which are formed semantically regularly, according to analogy. False paronyms are, on the other hand, expressions which are semantically idiosyncratic and from the morphological point of view irregular, e.g. *beauty – beautiful*. The last group represents paronymous words which do not follow the derivation. In other words, these expressions have the same form but belong to different part of speech; they do not undergo the affixation, therefore, these zero-derived paronyms are typical results of conversion.

2.3.4   FALSE FRIENDS

The linguistic term false friends or false cognates describes confusing word pairs occurring in two or more different languages, which have the same or very similar form but different meaning. These words developed mostly from classical languages that means that all of them have the same origin but their semantic meaning rapidly changed over the years, so they are no longer considered to be polysemous. The difference between these word pairs can be observed not only in the semantic meaning but also in spelling, pronunciation or grammatical category (Hladký, 1990).

False friends can cause many difficulties to a language user when learning a foreign language, they can provide linguistic traps in which a non-native speaker can unknowingly fall. Wrong use of a false friend can result in mistakes in translations, misunderstandings, confusion or even embarrassment and hilarious situations. It is undeniable that these words can be erroneously expressed by non-native speakers, as well native speakers because of the fact that they can occur in various dialects of the same language (Chamizo Domínguez, 2008). This phenomenon of false friends existing in one language is called intralingual false friends. British English and American English could be used as an example. A word *biscuit* represents in British English sweet and dry flat cake whereas in American English it

represents small airy roll, not necessarily sweet. Other words representing something else in both British and American English are *pants, suspenders, fag/faggot, buns, pissed, jelly, vest, football, pavement, bill, chips* (Roca-Varela, 2011). On the other hand, false friends are not always considered to be linguistic obstacles which can cause non-native speakers unpleasant issues. For some authors, false friends represent original opportunities, they use them in order to make their texts more interesting, they allow them to make for example puns, as well as homophones (Chamizo-Domínguez & Nerlich, 2002).

As for the classification of false friends, there is no single division on which all of the linguists would agree. False friends can be therefore classified in accordance with various aspects, for example morphological, graphical, phonetic, etymological or syntactical. This is where authors differ the most. However, the shared meaning and the semantic form between given two words always have a significant role to play in distributing false friends.

Chamizo-Domínguez (2008) divides false friends from a semantic and synchronic point of view into two basic groups:

1. Chance false friends
2. Semantic false friends

Chance false friends do not share any semantic or etymological aspect, it means that they do not have the same origin and their mutual relation is just random. However, they are similar from the graphical and/or phonetic point of view. A prototypical example is Spanish word *misa* which means a holy mass and Slovakian word *misa* which means a bowl. Hence chance false friends in two or more languages are equivalent to homonyms in one language. For example the Czech word *kolej* means either a rail or a student accommodation. These two words do not possess any etymological relation, however, from the graphical and phonetic point of view are exactly the same, as well as chance false friends. Semantic false friends, on the other hand, share the common origin, have also similar graphical and/or phonetic aspects but the meaning changed over the years. Typical example where this group of false friends can occur are European languages which developed particularly from Greek and Latin. To study semantic false friends in more detail, Chamizo-Domínguez and Nerlich (2002) divide them further into two subgroups:

a) Full false friends
b) Partial false friends

The meaning of full false friends in two different languages changed rapidly and two given words do not share any semantic relation, whereas partial false friends are words which can bear more than one meaning and one of them is common for both of them.

Chacón-Beltrán (2006) introduced a classification of false friends also with connection to cognate words. This classification is called CCVF (*Clasificación de Cognados Verdaderos y Falsos*) and divides cognates into six groups depending on their phonetic or/and graphic structure and whether they are true cognates or false cognates:

1. True Cognates: Phonetic
2. True Cognates: Graphic
3. Partial False Friends: Phonetic
4. Total False Friends: Phonetic
5. Partial False Friends: Graphic
6. Total False Friends: Graphic

The first group represents words which have similar phonetic aspect and share also the same meaning, for example the English word *laboratory* and the Spanish word *laboratorio.* The second group of words is similar to the first one but the main difference is in pronunciation which can be for non-native speakers misleading, for example the English *horizon* /həˈraɪzən/ and Spanish *horizonte* /oɾiˈθon̪te/. Partial false friends in the third and the fifth group refer to words which in one language have only one meaning while in the other language the given word have more than one meaning. Conversely, total false friends possess only a lack of semantic relation in both given languages. As for the phonetic and graphic point of view, the same principle as with the first and the second group is applied.

Another classification was introduced by Veisbergs (1996). He distinguishes three main groups of false friends:

1. False friends proper
2. Occasional or accidental false friends
3. Pseudo false friends

The first group is further divided into three subgroups:

a) Complete (absolute) false friends
b) Partial false friends
c) Nuance differentiated word pairs

Complete (absolute) and partial false friends share the same features as total and partial false friends in Chacón-Beltrán's (2006) classification. The difference connected to connotative

meaning occurs with nuance differentiated word pairs, slight distinction between two given word can be caused by the frequency of use, semantic features, stylistic differences, diachronic diversion and colloquialism. Occasional or accidental false friends share, on the contrary, the same properties as chance false friends from the Chamizo-Domínguez's (2008) classification. It means that the connection between two given words is just coincidental as they do not have any etymological coherence. Pseudo false friends are basically non-existing expressions built by non-native speakers who assume that one word in their mother tongue has a corresponding counterpart in the other language. This situation happens usually with international words. Although pseudo friends are not ordinarily mentioned in dictionaries, their usage by learners of foreign language is quite frequent. For example the Czech word *narkoman* does not have the English counterpart *narcoman*, the correct translation is *drug addict*.

Stevens (2009) also organized confusing word pairs into several groups according to their shared meaning. However, in his book he mainly focuses on practical exercises which should improve learners' knowledge about German-English confusing word pairs rather than on explaining the principles. Nevertheless, he divides these words into four categories:

1. True friends
2. False friends
3. Lots of friends
4. Confusing friends

True friends represent a group of English-German word pairs which have similar form as well as meaning, for example *bringen – bring, kommen – come, Karte – card, Salat – salad*, etc. Considering what has been mentioned above, these words could be also labelled as true cognates. True friends can be also easily found in Czech with respect to English, for example *adaptovat – adapt, alarmovat – alarm, dekorace – decoration.* The next group, false friends, contains English-German word pairs which have similar form but different meaning. These are just common false friends regardless of their shared scope of meaning, etymology, graphic or phonetic features. Lots of friends are, simply said, polysemous words which means that one word contains more than one meaning, for example a German verb *fahren* which can mean in English *go, drive, ride, travel, run* or *take* or German noun *Reise* can mean in English *trip, drive, journey, travel* or *tour*. These lots of friends can be compared to Chacón-Beltrán's partial false friend. The last group, confusing friends, comprises English word pairs which are almost identical in their form but different in meaning. For example

economic (relating to economy) and *economical* (efficient). According to previous definitions, confusing friends are considered by other English linguists to be paronyms.

This theoretical part provided information about lexical meaning and paradigmatic relations with the main focus on homonymy. Four groups of homonyms were elaborated, specifically grammatical homonyms, homophones, paronyms and interlingual homonyms, so-called false friends. The collected theoretical material should provide the reader a cohesive base for the following practical chapter in which specific confusing word pairs will be compiled, analysed and further processed.

3   METHODS

This short chapter describes the method of the analysis presented in the following chapter and the method of creating exercises concerning easily confused word pairs, which can be found in the fifth chapter Pedagogical Implications, is included as well.

For the analysis there is a set of 114 word pairs collected mainly from websites that serve as an auxiliary sources for learners of the English language and were marked as commonly confused or deceiving. Such pairs of words were consequently divided into four groups, regarding homonymous relationships between lexical units described in the previous chapter, namely grammatical homonyms, homophones, paronyms and false friends. As for the grammatical homonymy, all examples concerning irregular verbs are mentioned because this group is quite small and explicitly restricted. Expressions in the group of false friends were searched with respect to Czech.

The analysis is based on the explanation of the lexical meaning of each word as well as the determination of particular part of speech, which is stated by means of abbreviations listed at the end of this thesis. Verbs are also provided with the type of verb tense, where necessary. At the end of each subchapter, there are common as well as distinctive features of the collected word pairs belonging to the same group described.

The second half of the practical part contains pedagogical implications related to the topic of confusing word pairs. For each of the four groups there are two exercises created by the author with two levels of difficulty. The first exercise is always created for learners of English language on the intermediate level of knowledge. The second exercise contains more complex expressions and is intended for English learners on the upper-intermediate level of knowledge. All the easily confused word pairs used when creating exercises were selected from the collection presented in the analysis.

4   ANALYSIS

This chapter contains collected material, specifically 114 examples of confusing word pairs. Each word will be provided with the part of speech and lexical definition. Where needed, the verb tenses will be included as well. Author's observations will be stated at the end of each subchapter.

4.1   GRAMMATICAL HOMONYMS

1   *bore₁ – bore₂*

- v., past simple of the verb *bear*; to carry
- v., present simple; to talk or act in a way that makes someone lose interest

2   *bound₁ – bound₂*

- v., past simple and participle of the verb *bind*; to tie or fasten tightly together
- v., present simple; to move quickly with large jumping movements

3   *cost₁ – cost₂*

- v., present simple, past simple and participle; to require the payment
- v., present simple; to calculate the future cost of something

4   *drove₁ – drove₂*

- v., past simple of the verb *drive*; to move or travel on land in a motor vehicle
- v., present simple; to move farm animals on foot from one place to another

5   *fell₁ – fell₂*

- v., past simple of the verb *fall*; to suddenly go down onto the ground
- v., present simple; to cut down

6   *felt₁ – felt₂*

- v., past simple and participle of the verb *feel*; to be aware of
- v., present simple; to make into felt or press together

7   *found₁ – found₂*

- v., past simple and participle of the verb *find*; to discover
- v., present simple; to establish

8 ground₁ – ground₂

- v., past simple and participle of the verb *grind*; to make something into small pieces
- v., present simple; to keep on land

9 lay₁ – lay₂

- v., past simple of the verb *lie*; to be in or move into a horizontal position
- v., present simple; to put down

10 rode₁ – rode₂

- v., past simple of the verb *ride*; to sit on and control the movement of something
- v., present simple; to perform a display flight at dusk during the breeding season of the male woodcock

11 saw₁ – saw₂

- v., past simple of the verb *see*; to use eyes
- v., present simple; to cut wood or other hard material using a saw

12 smelt₁ – smelt₂

- v., past simple and participle of the verb *smell*; to perceive or detect the odour or scent of something
- v., present simple; to extract a metal from its ore

13 spat₁ – spat₂

- v., past simple and participle of the verb *spit*; to force out the contents of the mouth
- v., present simple; to quarrel pettily, briefly or to strike with a sound like that of rain falling in large drops

14 wound₁ – wound₂

- v., past simple and participle of the verb *wind*; to turn or cause something to turn
- v., present simple; to injure by cutting or breaking the skin

This group of grammatical homonyms contains pairs of words which have the same spelling and whose lexical meaning differs, i.e. each word belongs to different paradigm.

However, it is obvious that the lexical meaning in examples *3, 4, 5* and *9* is closely related, unlike other pairs.

Grammatical homonyms concerning irregular verbs create quite a small, restricted group of homonyms. In most cases the second word from the pair is a regular verb. An exception are pairs number *9* and *11* where both verbs are irregular.

In examples *2, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13, 14,* it can be observed that the identity of form occurs not only between the two paradigms, but also within the paradigm of one lexeme. As with all regular verbs, past simple and past participle of one verb have the same spelling as well as pronunciation. Moreover, in pair number *3* identity of form can be found in all three tenses of the first word and in present simple of the second. Examples *1, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11* share the formal identity in just one form from each lexeme. It cannot be therefore said that this type of homonymy predominate in particular type of irregular verbs.

From the phonological point of view, examples *1 – 13* have the same pronunciation, therefore they can be referred to as grammatical homophones. The only exception is the pair number *14* in which the pronunciation differs; *wound$_1$* - /waʊnd/, *wound$_2$* - /wuːnd/. For that reason, words from this particular pair are not homophones but homographs. Moreover, because of the fact that all words, except for that one pair (*14*), have the same written and spoken form, they could be considered as proper homonyms as well.

4.2 HOMOPHONES

15 air – heir

- n., the mixture of gases that surrounds the earth and that we breathe
- n., a person who will legally receive money, property, or a title from another person

16 allowed – aloud

- v., past simple and participle of the verb *allow*; to give permission for someone to do something, or to prevent something from happening
- adv., in a voice loud enough to be heard

17 ate – eight

- v., past simple of the verb *eat*; to take into the mouth and swallow for nourishment
- num., the number 8

18 bare – bear

- adj., without any clothes or not covered by anything
- n., a large, strong wild mammal with a thick fur coat that lives especially in colder parts of Europe, Asia, and North America

19 be – bee

- v., to exist or live
- n., a flying insect that has a yellow and black body and is able to sting

20 bite – byte

- v., to cut, wound, or tear with the teeth
- n., a unit of computer information, consisting of a group (usually eight) bits

21 blew – blue

- v., past simple of the verb *blow*; to move and make currents of air, or to be moved or make something move on a current of air
- n., the pure colour of a clear sky

22 buy – by – bye

- v., to get something by paying money for it
- prep., is used to show the person or thing that does something
- int., a short form of goodbye

23 capital – capitol

- n., a city that is the centre of government of a country
- n., the building in which the US Congress meets

24 cell – sell

- n., a small room with not much furniture, especially in a prison or a monastery or convent
- v., to give something to someone else in return for money

25 cent – scent

- n., a unit of money worth 0.01 of a dollar, or a coin with this value

- n., a distinctive odour, especially when agreeable

26 dear – deer

- adj., loved or liked very much

- n., any of several ruminants of the family Cervidae, most of the males of which have solid, deciduous antlers

27 draft – draught

- n., a piece of text, a formal suggestion, or a drawing in its original state

- n., a current of unpleasantly cold air blowing through a room

28 eye – I

- n., an organ of sight

- pron., refers to the person speaking or writing

29 fair – fare

- adj., treating someone in a way that is right or reasonable

- n., the money paid for a journey in a vehicle such as a bus or train

30 flour – flower

- n., powder made from grain

- n., the blossom of a plant

31 hear – here

- v., to receive or become conscious of a sound using ears

- adv., in, at, or to this place

32 hour – our

- n., a period of time equivalent to 60 minutes

- pron., the form of the possessive case of the pronoun we

33 knew – new

- v., past simple of the verb *know*, to have information in mind

- adj., recently created or having started to exist recently

34 knight – night

- n., a man given a rank of honour by a British king or queen, or was a man of high social position trained to fight as a soldier on a horse
- n., a period of darkness between sunset and sunrise

35 mail – male

- n., letters, packages, etc., that are sent or delivered by means of the postal system
- n., a person bearing an X and Y chromosome pair in the cell nuclei

36 main – mane

- adj., larger, more important, or having more influence than others of the same type
- n., the long, thick hair that grows along the top of a horse's neck or around the face and neck of a lion

37 meat – meet

- n., the flesh of an animal when it is used for food
- v., to see and talk to someone for the first time or to come together with someone intentionally

38 miner – minor

- n., a person who works in a mine
- adj., having little importance, influence, or effect, especially when compared with other things of the same type

39 one – won

- num., the number 1
- v., past simple and participle of the verb *win;* to achieve first position

40 pair – pear

- n., two things of the same appearance and size that are intended to be used together
- n., a sweet fruit, usually with green skin and a lot of juice that has a round base and is slightly pointed towards the stem

41 peace – piece

- n., a freedom from war and violence
- n., a part of something

42 principal – principle

- n., the person in charge of a school
- n., a basic idea or rule that explains or controls how something happens or works

43 right – write

- adj., correct
- v., to make marks that represents letters, words, or numbers on a surface

44 sail – sale

- v., to move along or travel over water
- n., the act of selling

45 sea – see

- n., a large area of salty water
- v., to be conscious of what is around by using eyes

46 sight – site

- n., the ability to see
- n., the area or exact plot of ground on which anything is, has been, or is to be located

47 son – sun

- n., a male child or person in relation to his parents
- n., the star that is the central body of the solar system

48 steal – steel

- v., to take something without permission or right, especially secretly or by force
- n., a strong metal that is a mixture of iron and carbon

49 too – two

- adv., also or more
- num., the number 2

50 waist – waste

- n., the part of the body between the ribs and the hips, usually the narrowest part of the torso
- v., to consume, spend, or employ uselessly or without adequate return

51 wait – weight

- v., to stay in place in expectation of something
- n., the amount that something or someone weighs

52 wear – where

- v., to have clothing, jewellery, etc. on the body
- adv., to, at, or in what place

53 weather – whether

- n., the state of the atmosphere at a particular time over particular area
- conj., if, or not

This group of homophones contains 38 pairs and 1 trio of examples. All of them were retrieved from websites which consider these expressions as most commonly confused. Although in this analysis only 39 cases of homophones are presented, there are more than 500 to be found.

All pairs have the same pronunciation but their lexical meanings and phonic forms differ. From the collected material it is obvious that homophony appears mostly in monosyllabic words, only examples *16, 38* and *53* are disyllabic and examples *23* and *42* are trisyllabic.

What is also observable is that 27 pairs out of 39 involve words from different part of speech. Only 12 examples have identical part of speech and all of them are nouns.

4.3 PARONYMS

54 amoral – immoral

- adj., something without moral principles, being neither moral nor immoral
- adj., something morally wrong, or outside society's standards of acceptable, honest, and moral behaviour

55 classic – classical

- adj., having a high quality or standard against which other things are judged
- adj., relating either to the ancient Greek and Roman world or to music of the late 18th and early 19th centuries

56 comic – comical

- adj., relating to, or characterized by comedy
- adj., amusing, funny

57 continual – continuous

- adj., happening repeatedly, usually in an annoying or not convenient way
- adj., without a pause or interruption

58 dialectal – dialectical

- adj., corresponding to the noun dialect which is a regional variety of language
- adj., corresponding to the philosophical term dialectic which is a way of discovering what is true by considering opposite theories

59 disable – unable

- v., to make something ineffective or inoperative
- adj., to be not able

60 disarmed – unarmed

- v., past tense of the verb disarm; to take weapons away from someone, or to give up weapons or armies
- adj., without weapons or armour

61 disbelief – unbelief

- n., the inability or refusal to believe or to accept something as true
- n., the state or quality of not believing, especially in matters of doctrine or religious faith

62 disconnect – misconnect

- v., to severe or interrupt the connection
- v., to connect something in a wrong or improper way

63 disgraceful – ungraceful

- adj., something bringing or deserving shame
- adj., something lacking charm or elegance

64 disinterested – uninterested

- adj., having no personal involvement or receiving no personal advantage, and therefore free to act fairly
- adj., to be not interested

65 disqualified – unqualified

- adj., to be stopped from being in a competition because of violation of the rules
- adj., lacking the skills and experience needed for a particular job

66 disuse – misuse

- v., to discontinue the use or practice of something
- v., to use something in an unsuitable way

67 economic – economical

- adj., relating to economy, i.e. based on the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services
- adj., marked by careful, efficient, and prudent use of resources

68 electric – electrical

- adj., pertaining to, derived from, produced by, or involving electricity; powered by electricity
- adj., relating to electricity

69 emigration – immigration

- n., a departure from a place of abode, natural home, or country for life or residence elsewhere
- n., a travel into a country for the purpose of permanent residence there

70 historic – historical

- adj., famous or important in history
- adj., something relating to, or having the character of history

71 imaginary – imaginative

- adj., existing only in imagination
- adj., new, original, and clever

72 magic – magical

- adj., happening in an unusual or unexpected way, or easily or quickly
- adj., produced by or using magic

73 periodic – periodical

- adj., occurring or recurring at regular intervals
- adj., published at regularly recurring intervals

74 politic – political

- adj., wise and showing the ability to make right decisions
- adj., relating to politics

75 prescribe – proscribe

- v., to lay down a rule
- v., to denounce or condemn something as dangerous or harmful

This section comprises 22 examples of paronyms, i.e. pairs of words derived from the same root which have very similar form but differ in meaning. The distinction of lexical meaning between two expressions is caused by the already mentioned derivation. In this collection, there are 11 examples of paronyms constructed by means of prefixation and 11 by means of suffixation.

Prefixated paronyms are examples number *54, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 69* and *75*. In these pairs, prefixes *a-* (not), *im-* (not or in), *dis-* (apart, away or utterly), *un-* (not), *mis-* (wrong), *e-* (out of), *pre-* (before), and *pro-* (indicate) occur. What makes the words easy to confuse is the fact, that within a pair, prefixes with very similar meaning occur, e.g. *a-* and *im-*, *dis-* and *un-*, *dis-* and *mis-*, *pre-* and *pro-*. Prefix *dis-* also occurs the most, predominantly with *un-*. The only pair where the prefix expresses the very opposite is example *69*, therefore the difference in meaning of these two words is quite clear. Another observation is that both words from each pair have the same part of speech, they are either nouns, verbs or adjectives. Examples *59* and *60* differ because the first word is an adjective and the second a verb.

On the contrary, suffixated paronyms are examples number *55, 56, 57, 58, 67, 68, 70, 71, 72, 73* and *74,* all expressions are from the same part of speech, i.e. adjectives. It was discovered that the most repetitive suffixes are *–ic* and *–ical.* In each pair there is always one adjective directly connected to the primary meaning of the noun superior to both expressions. However, it appears that there is no consistent pattern which would determine which suffix, *ic-* or *ical-,* does so. For instance, in example number *70*, *historic* is the marked form and *historical* is the unmarked form directly referring to the noun *history*. Conversely, in

example number *67*, the adjective *economic* is the unmarked form of the noun *economy* and *economical* the marked form having broader sense. For a correct use of such expressions, there is no other option than to learn them as individual units.

Although the majority of collected suffixated paronyms are those mentioned above, there are 2 examples with different suffixes, *-al*, *–ous, -ary* and *-ative*. Suffixes *–al* and *–ous* in example *57* have distinctive meaning, the former "of the kind" and the latter "full of", however, the lexical meaning of the two words is closely related. Last but not least, suffixes *–ary* and *–ative* in example *71* have identical meaning, *imaginary* is an unmarked form referring to imagination and *imaginative* is a marked adjective meaning new. All suffixated paronyms are from the same part of speech, i.e. adjectives.

4.4   FALSE FRIENDS

76 absolve – absolvovat

- v., to free someone from guilt, blame, or responsibility
- v., to graduate, pass

77 accord – akord

- n., (a formal) agreement
- n., a chord

78 actual – aktuální

- adj., existing in fact
- adj., topical, current

79 affect – afekt

- v., to have an influence on someone or something
- n., emotion, passion

80 angina – angína

- n., angina pectoris
- n., tonsillitis

81 apartment – apartmá

- n., a flat
- n., a suite

82 billion – bilión

- n., the number 1,000,000,000
- n., million millions

83 blanket – blanket

- n., a flat cover
- n., a sheet of paper

84 brigade – brigáda

- n., a large group of soldiers in an army
- n., a part-time job

85 chef – šéf

- n., a skilled and trained cook
- n., a boss

86 closet – klozet

- n., a cupboard or a small room with a door, used for storing things
- n., a toilet

87 collective – kolektiv

- adj., of or shared by every member of a group of people
- n., a group, a team

88 confection – konfekce

- n., a decorated cake or unusual sweet dish
- n., ready-to-wear clothing shop

89 creature – kreatura

- n., any large or small living thing that can move independently
- n., a monster

90 criminal – kriminál

- n., someone who commits a crime
- n., a jail

91 desk – deska

- n., a type of table that you can work at
- n., a board

92 dress – dres

- n., an outer garment for women and girls, consisting of bodice and skirt in one piece
- n., a tracksuit

93 eventual – eventuální

- adj., happening or existing at a later time or at the end
- adj., contingent, possible

94 front – fronta

- n., the part of a building, object, or person's body that faces forward or is most often seen or used
- n., a queue, a line

95 gum – guma

- n., either of the two areas of firm pink flesh inside the mouth that cover the bones into which the teeth are fixed
- n., a rubber

96 gymnasium – gymnázium

- n., a large room with equipment for exercising the body and increasing strength
- n., grammar school

97 hymn – hymna

- n., a song of praise that Christians sing to God
- n., a national anthem

98 local - lokál

- adj., from, existing in, serving, or responsible for a small area, especially of a country
- n., a pub, a bar

99 maturity – maturita

- n., the quality of behaving mentally and emotionally like an adult
- n., a school-leaving examination

100 novel – novela

- n., a long printed story about imaginary characters and events
- n., a short novel, novella

101 parcel – parcela

- n., an object or collection of objects wrapped in paper, especially so that it can be sent by post
- n., a plot

102 pasta – pasta

- n., a food made from flour, water, and sometimes egg, that is cooked and usually served with a sauce, made in various shapes that have different names
- n., paste, cream

103 preservative – prezervativ

- n., a chemical used to stop food from decaying
- n., a condom

104 promotion – promoce

- n., activities to advertise something or the act of raising someone to a higher or more important position or rank
- n., a graduation

105 prospect – prospekt

- n., the possibility that something good might happen in the future
- n., a brochure

106 protection – protekce

- n., the act of protecting or state of being protected
- n., a favouritism

107 receipt – recept

- n., a piece of paper that proves that money, goods, or information have been received
- n., a prescription, a recipe

108 smoking – smoking

- n., the action of smoking a cigarette, pipe, etc.
- n., a dinner jacket

109 stop – stopovat

- n., the act of stopping an activity or journey, or a period of time when you stop
- v., to hitchhike

110 sympathetic – sympatický

- adj., used to describe someone who shows, especially by what they say, that they understand and care about someone else's suffering
- adj., pleasant, nice

111 table – tabule

- n., a flat surface, usually supported by four legs, used for putting things on
- n., a blackboard

112 traffic – trafika

- n., the number of vehicles moving along roads, or the amount of aircraft, trains, or ships moving along a route
- n., a tobacconist's

113 transparent – transparent

- adj., see-through
- n., a banner

114 wagon – vagón

- n., a vehicle with four wheels, usually pulled by horses or oxen, used for transporting heavy goods, especially in the past
- n., a carriage

In this subchapter, there are 39 examples of false friends collected. Each pair consists of an English and a Czech word. These expressions appearing in two various languages have very close formal relation and bear similar or deceptive meaning which is caused by their diverse development from one single language.

The first observation is that in 34 examples the part of speech of both expressions is identical, specifically there are 30 pairs of nouns, 3 pairs of adjectives and 1 pair of verbs. Examples *79, 87, 98, 109, 113* are combinations of either a noun and a verb or a noun and an adjective.

From the formal point of view, false friends are very similar in form, as in the case of homophony and paronymy. Even in cases number *83, 102, 108* and *113* the form of both words is completely identical, we could consider such pairs as interlingual homonyms

proper. In many other pairs, there is only a slight difference, often one vowel or consonant changes.

From the phonological point of view, examples *77, 82, 83, 85, 86, 87, 90, 92, 102, 103, 105* and *113* share almost identical pronunciation and that could be the major reason why these words are being translated incorrectly. Again, this could be considered as a kind of interlingual homophony.

5 PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

In this chapter, there are exemplary exercises regarding the subject matter of this undergraduate thesis suggested. The importance of easily confused word pairs in learning English language should not be disregarded, therefore there are eight exercises in total presented in order to emphasize the relevance of homonymy. For each category of homonyms, there are two exercises constructed, each suitable for different level of knowledge, as explained in the chapter Methods.

<u>GRAMMATICAL HOMONYMS</u>

Exercise 1: Complete the table.

Czech word	English translation (present simple)	Past simple	Past participle
najít			
založit			
spadnout			
kácet			
ležet			
položit			

Answer key:

Czech word	English translation (present simple)	Past simple	Past participle
najít	<u>find</u>	<u>found</u>	<u>found</u>
založit	<u>found</u>	<u>founded</u>	<u>founded</u>
spadnout	<u>fall</u>	<u>fell</u>	<u>fallen</u>
kácet	<u>fell</u>	<u>felled</u>	<u>felled</u>
ležet	<u>lie</u>	<u>lay</u>	<u>lain</u>
položit	<u>lay</u>	<u>laid</u>	<u>laid</u>

Exercise 2: Circle the correct past form of the verb.

1. My hands were *bound/bounded* together.
2. She *wound/wounded* herself with a sharp knife.
3. I bought a bag of whole bean coffee and *ground/grounded* it myself.
4. They *spat/spatted* over her ridiculously expensive handbag she bought earlier.
5. The lumberman *saw/sawed* the trunk in half.
6. The expert *cost/costed* the goods inaccurately.

Answer key:

1. My hands were <u>bound</u> together.
2. She <u>wounded</u> herself with a sharp knife.
3. I bought a bag of whole bean coffee and <u>ground</u> it myself.
4. They <u>spatted</u> over her ridiculously expensive handbag she bought earlier.
5. The lumberman <u>sawed</u> the trunk in half.
6. The expert <u>costed</u> the goods inaccurately.

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

Exercise 3: Choose the correct word from the brackets to complete the sentence.

1. John doesn't eat _____, he's a vegetarian. (*meet, meat*)
2. Can you _____ the monkey? (*see, sea*)
3. My mum bought a _____ pair of shoes yesterday. (*knew, new*)
4. I really want to _____ that black dress tonight. (*wear, where*)
5. Are you going to the cinema on Friday _____? (*two, too*)
6. Maggie wants to _____ a new handbag. (*buy, bye, by*)

Answer key:

1. John doesn't like <u>meat</u>, he's a vegetarian.
2. Can you <u>see</u> the monkey?
3. My mum bought a <u>new</u> pair of shoes yesterday.
4. I really want to <u>wear</u> that black dress tonight.
5. Are you going to the cinema on Friday <u>too</u>?
6. Maggie wants to <u>buy</u> a new handbag.

Exercise 4: Fill the gaps with suitable expressions from the list below.

1. Her father served as an assistant _____ at the Oxford High School for ten years.
2. A central feature of democracy is to have free and _____ elections.
3. In 1985 an unexpected explosion at the Bersham Colliery killed one _____.
4. The _____ charged by Uber drivers is noticeably lower in comparison with ordinary taxi service.
5. His undergraduate thesis is based particularly on the _____ of relativity.
6. Three people sustained _____ injuries in a car accident on the Brooklyn Bridge.

fair	*fare*	*miner*	*minor*	*principal*	*principle*

Answer key:

1. Her father served as an assistant <u>principal</u> at the Oxford High School for ten years.
2. A central feature of democracy is to have free and <u>fair</u> elections.
3. In 1985 an unexpected explosion at the Bersham Colliery killed one <u>miner</u>.
4. The <u>fare</u> charged by Uber drivers is noticeably lower in comparison with ordinary taxi service.
5. His undergraduate thesis is based particularly on the <u>principle</u> of relativity.
6. Three people sustained <u>minor</u> injuries in a car accident on the Brooklyn Bridge.

<u>PARONYMS</u>

Exercise 5: Match the words with correct explanations.

1.	disconnect	a)	without a pause
2.	misconnect	b)	lacking the skills
3.	disqualified	c)	to interrupt the connection
4.	unqualified	d)	happening repeatedly
5.	continual	e)	to connect something in a wrong way
6.	continuous	f)	to be stopped from being in a competition

Answer key:

1. c)
2. e)
3. f)
4. b)
5. d)
6. a)

Exercise 6: Explain the difference between the words.

1. amoral – immoral
2. disable – unable
3. disuse – misuse
4. historic – historical
5. prescribe – proscribe
6. economic - economical

Answer key:

1. without moral principles – morally wrong
2. to make something ineffective – to be not able
3. to discontinue the use – to use something in an unsuitable way
4. famous in history – relating to history
5. to lay down a rule – to denounce something as dangerous
6. relating to economy – efficient

<u>FALSE FRIENDS</u>

Exercise 7: Complete the table.

Czech word	English translation	False friend	Czech translation
lokál	*pub, bar*	local	*místní*
šéf		chef	
kriminál		criminal	
deska		desk	
gymnázium		gymnasium	
smoking		smoking	
tabule		table	

Answer key:

Czech word	English translation	False friend	Czech translation
lokál	*pub, bar*	local	*místní*
šéf	boss	chef	šéfkuchař
kriminál	jail	criminal	zločinec
deska	board	desk	lavice
gymnázium	grammar school	gymnasium	tělocvična
smoking	dinner jacket	smoking	kouření
tabule	blackboard	table	stůl

Exercise 8: Fill the gaps with suitable expressions.

1. Jeho syn je sympatický mladý muž.

    His son is a _____ young man.

2. Její promoce se bude se bude konat v červnu.

    Her _____ will take place in June.

3. Tento prospekt jsme dostali v obchodě.

    We were given this _____ in the shop.

4. Eventuální chyby budou opraveny.

    _____ mistakes will be corrected.

5. Ve frontě jsme stáli přibližně hodinu.

    We were waiting in a _____ for about an hour.

6. Českou národní hymnu složil František Škroup.

    The Czech national _____ was composed by František Škroup.

Answer key:

1. His son is a kind young man.

2. Her graduation will take place in June.

3. We were given this brochure in the shop.

4. Possible mistakes will be corrected.

5. We were waiting in a queue for about an hour.

6. The Czech national anthem was composed by František Škroup.

6 CONCLUSION

This work deals with confusing word pairs, a topical subject for each English learner. All students studying English should be familiar with such theme in order to avoid common mistakes in both written and spoken language. Working with similar expressions should be included in teaching all language levels.

The primary aim of this undergraduate thesis was to collect most frequently confused pairs of words in order to determine their common features and to find out why are they so tricky. Because of the fact that these words have similar spoken or/and written form but differ in meaning, a description of lexical meaning, paradigmatic relationships and especially homonymy were provided the reader in the theoretical chapter of this work. The main focus was given on grammatical homonymy, homophony, paronymy and linguistic phenomenon of false friends.

The analysis brings following results. Grammatical homonyms created a group with the smallest number of examples. The reason is that only irregular verbs with their regular counterparts were studied. It was discovered that expressions from each pair have identical spelling, therefore they could be referred to as homonyms proper. Moreover, almost every pair, except for one case, was identical from the phonological point of view, so the majority of grammatical homonyms could be also considered as homophones.

The next analysed group were homophones. During the study, it was found out that this particular type of partial homonymy contains the biggest number of pairs, trios and even quaternions; approximately 500 occurrences. However, only the most common ones were presented. The phonological conformity appears completely by accident. There was no regular pattern to be observed because more than a half of collected pairs had different part of speech.

According to the analysis, paronyms could be divided into two groups, prefixated and suffixated. The exact half of the collected pairs were expressions with prefixes and the other half with suffixes. Prefixated paronyms were words from different part of speech. The predominant prefix was *dis-*, especially with combination of prefix *un-*. Conversely, suffixated paronymous pairs were characterized by the uniformity of the part of speech, all words were adjectives. The most repetitive suffixes were *-ic* and *-ical.* Paronyms appear to

be the trickiest because the majority of affixes has very similar meaning and there is also no regular pattern which would indicate the markedness.

The last category comprised English-Czech false friends. This phenomenon appeared especially with nouns. The formal similarity was significant, there were even proper homonymy and near homophony found. Again, the total quantity of false friends is much bigger, however, there are only the most frequent examples presented.

In conclusion, homonymy as a source of meaning variations includes a wide range of confusing words. This thesis provided the reader theoretical information as well as particular examples and exercises concerning four categories of homonyms. However, there are other types of homonyms which were mentioned only marginally. In further research, there could be also absolute homonyms, proper homonyms and homographs elaborated as well in order to obtain a complete overview of homonymy. Additionally, I want to mention that studying this topic in detail was very enriching, especially in terms of learning or clarifying the vocabulary.

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LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

adj.	adjective
adv.	adverb
conj.	conjunction
int.	interjection
n.	noun
num.	numeral
prep.	preposition
pron.	pronoun
v.	verb

SUMMARY IN CZECH

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá tématem matoucích dvojic slov, které je podstatné jak pro studenty anglického jazyka, tak i pro rodilé mluvčí. Práce je rozdělena na dvě části, a to na teoretickou a praktickou.

Teoretická část poskytuje čtenáři fundované informace týkající se lexikálního významu slov a paradigmatických vztahů mezi jazykovými jednotkami, důraz je kladen zejména na problematiku homonymie. Jsou zde vybrány čtyři skupiny homonym, konkrétně gramatická homonyma, homofona, paronyma a mezijazyková homonyma též nazývána zrádnými slovy, které jsou dále samostatně rozpracovány. Vysvětleny jsou také termíny jako absolutní homonymie, částečná homonymie, oronymie a homografie, vzhledem k jejich blízké souvislosti s daným tématem.

V praktické části této práce jsou prezentovány konkrétní případy často zaměňovaných dvojic slov. Analýza je postavena na vysvětlení lexikálního významu jednotlivých pojmů a na nalezení společných znaků, kterými jsou vybrané skupiny homonym charakterizovány. Tato kapitola také obsahuje didaktizaci daného tématu. Jsou zde navržena cvičení, která by mohla sloužit jako výukový materiál.