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# Polysemy: Theoretical and Computational Approaches Yael Ravin and Claudia Leacock (editors) (IBM T. J. Watson Research Center and Educational Testing Services) New York: Oxford University Press, 2000, xi+227 pp; hardbound, ISBN

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## Polysemy: Theoretical and Computational Approache

**Yael Ravin and Claudia Leacock (editors)**  
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*Reviewed by*  
**Jean Véronis**  
*Université de Provence, Aix-en-Provence*

As the editors of this volume remind us, polysemy has been a v  
understanding of language since antiquity.<sup>1</sup> For half a century, i  
bottleneck for natural language processing. It contributed to the  
chine translation research (remember Bar-Hillel's famous *pen* and  
still plaguing most natural language processing and information re  
A recent issue of this journal described the state of the art in auto

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biguation (Ide and Véronis 1998), and Senseval system competition immense difficulty of the task (<http://www.sle.sharp.co.uk/sense>) significant progress can be made on the computational aspects of serious advances in theoretical issues. At the same time, theoretic tered by computational results and problems, and language-proc can provide a unique test bed for theories. It was therefore an exce both theoretical and applied contributions in the same book.

Yael Ravin and Claudia Leacock are well-known names to those theoretical and computational aspects of word meaning. In this together a collection of essays from leading researchers in the field. these essays are not reprints or expanded versions of conference the case for edited works; instead, they seem to have been specially the purposes of this book, which makes it even more exciting to e

The book is composed of 11 chapters. It is not formally divi chapters dealing more specifically with the computational aspec grouped together at the end (and constitute about one-third of the

Chapter 1 is an overview written by the volume editors. Ya dia Leacock survey the main theories of meaning and their treat These include the classical Aristotelian approach revived by Katz Rosch's (1977) prototypical approach, which has its roots in Wittg *cal Investigations* (1953); and the relational approach recently exem (Fellbaum 1998), which (although the authors do not mention it) to Peirce's (1931–1958) and Selz's (1913, 1922) graphs and which with Quillian's (1968) semantic networks. In the course of this o Leacock put the individual chapters into perspective by relating t theories.


<sup>1</sup> The editors, citing Robins (1967), attribute the first observations of the “complete meanings and words” to the Stoics, but reflection on polysemy can be traced b


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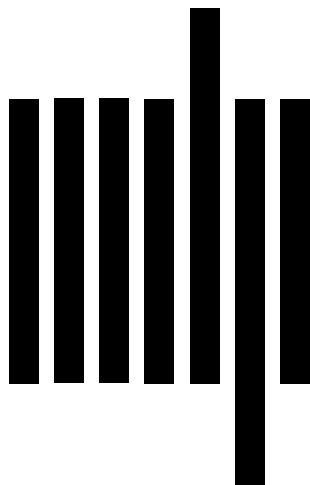
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