

LING554: Seminar in Semantic Theory
Assignment #2 (Due Feb. 1, 2007)
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The fact that one should not overlook in the discussion of the difference between *shallow teacup/pool* and *shallow end/frying/water* is that both expressions evoke the concept of a ‘container’ and its ‘content’ but in a different way. In the former case, the head nouns by themselves are containers. The adjective *shallow* indicates that the depth of the container is less than the norm or expectation of the speaker. The content has few contributions to the meaning here. In the latter case, on the other hand, the head nouns designate the content of a container rather than the container by itself; *shallow breath* (→ lung), *shallow frying* (→ pan), for example. *Shallow breath* means that someone does not inhale as much air as he or she can do potentially or usually.

Thus, two distinct senses of *shallow* are due to different profiles relative to the identical base. Both *shallow teacup/pool* and *shallow end/frying/water* have a container and its content as the base. But the former expressions profile the entire container (Figure 1), while the latter profiles only the content (Figure 2). Accordingly the portion measured through mental scanning differs between them. What is relevant to *shallow* is the depth of a container in the former, but that of the content in the latter. In either case, *shallow* means that the profiled portion is less than the norm and/or expectation of the speaker.

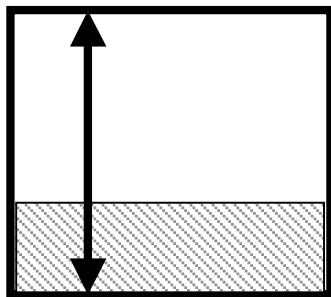


Figure 1

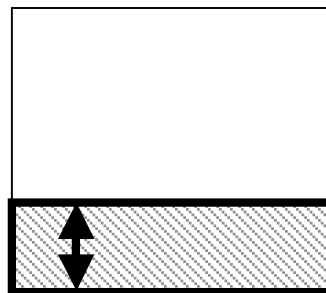


Figure 2

The expression *shallow missions* is an instance of metaphorical extension of the latter usage of *shallow*. The container corresponds to (areas inhabited by) people with whom missionaries can potentially share the gospel, and the content is equivalent to (areas inhabited by) people who have accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior because of them. Thus, *shallow missions* are those which are at the early stage and have not been so fruitful as they should be.