

THE SEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE CONNOTATIVE
LEXICAL UNITS EXPRESSING HUMAN PSYCHOLOGY

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This paper discusses how language reflects human psychology through the use of connotative words. Every word has not only a direct meaning but also an emotional shade that shows how people feel about something. The study focuses on the difference between positive and negative connotations and explains how such meanings help people express emotions, attitudes, and inner states.

Introduction

Language is more than a tool for sharing information. It reflects how people think and feel. When we speak, we don’t just name things, we also express our attitude toward them. For example, calling someone brave or stubborn describes not only their behavior but also how we feel about it.

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In this sense, every word carries both a denotative meaning and a connotative meaning. Understanding connotation helps us see how people express their emotions and thoughts through words.

This paper explores how positive and negative connotations appear in the language system and how emotional and expressive words reveal aspects of human psychology. The analysis is based on general semantic and psycholinguistic theories, supported by examples from everyday language use.

1. The Concept of Connotation and Its Role in Language

Connotation adds emotional color to language. While denotation shows what a word refers to, connotation reflects the feelings and evaluations that come with it. For instance, home and house refer to the same place, but home sounds warmer and more emotional.

According to Leech (1981), connotation is the communicative value a word has beyond its literal meaning. It shows how people perceive the world emotionally, not just logically. Connotation also helps distinguish between different styles of language - formal, informal, poetic, or everyday speech.

Moreover, connotation is closely tied to culture. Words that sound positive in one culture might have neutral or even negative meanings in another. This proves that connotation is not only a linguistic element but also a cultural and psychological one. It connects words to human emotions and values.

2. Positive and Negative Connotation in Language

Words with positive connotation create pleasant associations and express approval. Examples include honest, gentle, bright, generous, and hopeful. Such words make communication warm and emotionally supportive.

In contrast, negative connotation expresses disapproval, dislike, or unpleasant feelings. Words like selfish, cruel, lazy, or arrogant can hurt or criticize, showing rejection or disappointment.

Connotation often depends on context. For instance, the word clever may sound positive when describing a child, but slightly ironic when used for someone who manipulates others.

The emotional tone of words is also influenced by sound and form. Soft-sounding words (like melody, gentle, breeze) often feel positive, while harsh or abrupt ones (like crash, grim, scream) feel negative. This shows that the emotional effect of language comes from both meaning and sound.

3. Types of Emotional and Expressive Words

Different types of words carry emotional or expressive meaning. Linguists divide them into several groups:

1. Evaluative words - showing approval or disapproval (excellent, terrible, pleasant, awful).
2. Emotive words - directly expressing feelings (happy, angry, afraid, worried).
3. Intensifiers - making emotions stronger (very, terribly, deeply, absolutely).
4. Idiomatic and figurative expressions - using imagery to express feelings (heart of stone, over the moon, see red).
5. Slang and informal words - showing emotional attitude in everyday speech (cool, jerk, chill).

Each of these helps people express their emotions more vividly. For example, instead of saying I am sad, someone might say I feel blue, which sounds more natural and emotional.

Such words and expressions reveal the speaker's inner state and also their social or cultural background. The way a person uses emotionally colored words can show their level of sensitivity, emotional balance, or even mood.

4. Connotation as a Reflection of Human Psychology

The connection between language and psychology is very close. People's emotions influence the words they choose, and words, in turn, affect how people feel. Using positive words can improve one's mood, while negative language may increase irritation or sadness.

Psychologists note that frequent use of negative expressions can lead to a pessimistic way of thinking, whereas positive speech helps to create a more optimistic outlook. For this reason, connotative meaning is not just about language, it also influences emotional well-being.

In literature and media, connotation plays a powerful psychological role. Advertisers choose words like pure, fresh, bright, new to create pleasant emotions, while political language sometimes uses negative connotations such as crisis, danger, corruption to create fear or urgency. These examples show that connotation can shape not only personal emotions but also public opinion.

Conclusion

Connotation is a vital part of language that connects meaning with emotion. It allows people to express feelings, evaluations, and attitudes in a subtle yet powerful way. Through positive and negative connotations, language becomes a mirror of human psychology.

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The study of connotative meaning helps us understand how words influence thought, mood, and communication. It shows that language is not just logical but deeply emotional and human. Every word we choose carries a small part of our inner world, turning speech into a reflection of the soul.

