



The Connotative Meaning of Emotional Words in Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*

ID No. 288

(PP 326 - 332)

<https://doi.org/10.21271/zjhs.26.4.21>

Hezha Hamid Mustafa

Department of Individual Games, College of Physical Education & Sport Sciences, Salahaddin University-Erbil
hezha.mustafa@su.edu.krd

Received: 29/04/2022

Accepted: 16/06/2022

Published: 05/09/2022

Abstract

As connotative meaning is the associative meaning of words and it depends on personal usage and perception, it requires analysis and research in different areas such as literary, journal, cultural contexts. In this paper, the researcher chooses a context from a literary work that is a novel written by Cate Chopin which is entitled "The Awakening". She selects the emotional words used in the text. Then, the connotative meaning of the selected emotional words are detected and classified according to their types in an organized table. Stating the positive, negative, and the neutral type. Later, the findings will announce the usage sequence (the most usage to the fewest usage) of the emotional words' connotative meaning types. First, the positive connotative meanings are mostly used. Secondly, the negative connotative meanings and lastly the neutral connotative meanings are used.

Key words: Connotative meaning, emotional words, positive connotation, negative connotation, natural connotation.

1. Introduction

As linguistics concerns with the scientific study of language, it consists of several levels. Each level analyzes language according to its basic criteria. The levels are *phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics*. While, in this paper the level of semantics which dealt with, studies the link between linguistic forms and entities. Moreover, it mainly argues the meaning of linguistic expressions. For example, the meaning of words, phrases, grammatical forms, sentences (Yule, 1996, Lobner, 2002). So, what is meaning? And what are the different types of it?

The word meaning can carry a lot of explanations. For instance, a sentence like "The door is right behind you!" may have different meanings according to two basic levels which are *linguistic meaning* and *speaker meaning*. When the speaker is uttering this sentence, he/she may mean that you should leave this room. Whereas, the linguistic meaning of it does not mean so rather it simply declares the location of the door. Now, taking into account these variations, meaning in its nature can have multiple levels (types) (Akmajian, et.al, 2012).

Scholars like Leech, 1985, Palmer, 1997, Lobner, 2013, Al-Sulaimaan, 2010, Geeraerts, 2010, in agreement with (Akmajian, et.al) state that there are different types of meaning such as utterance, structural, social, grammatical, phonetic, phonological, textual, denotative, connotative, descriptive, explicit, situational, literal, non-literal meaning, etc. Nevertheless, in this paper only one type of meaning is discussed which is the connotative meaning of words. Additionally, the researcher specifies the type of the words to only emotional ones which are used in the chosen novel *The Awakening*.

1.1. Connotative meaning.

The word connotation has come from the Medieval Latin word *connotatio* which means "in addition". Connotative meaning is the secondary meaning of a word which depends on the



cultural context and personal associations. Accordingly, connotative meaning can have different meaning forms such as (associative meaning, attitudinal meaning, affective meaning, allusive meaning, reflected meaning, etc.) (Dickins, 2019).

On the other hand, Leech argues that “Connotative meaning is the communicative value an expression has by virtue of what it *refers* to, over and above its purely conceptual content.” (1981). According to Leech’s definition, connotative is the associative meanings of a word beside its literal meaning. Additionally, a word can convey perceptions or feelings which differ from its actual meaning. Since connotative meaning depends on the emotions and feeling that a word can have next to its literal meaning, it can be positive, negative or neutral connotation. For instance, in a sentence like “He’s such a dog” the connotative meaning of the word “dog” is shamelessness or ugliness. Here the type of the connotation is negative for the word “dog” because it conveys a negative sense (feeling). Oppositely, one can find a positive connotation in this sentence “That woman is a dove at heart.”, since the word dove connotes peace or gentility (LiteraryDevices Editors, 2013). While, in the sentence “People with no fixed address” which describes the “homeless people” has a neutral connotation. Hence, connotative meaning can be derived from the speaker’s or writer’s emotional feelings when he/she uses a particular word. Namely, “*The baby sleeps in peace.*”, here the word *peace* means *quietly* and *no sound* or *movement* which describes the baby’s way of sleeping and combines the writer’s feelings with the words’ meanings (Larasatika, 2017). For that reason, it can be stated that connotative meaning is closely connected with emotional words.

1.2. Emotional Words.

The words which convey certain type of feelings as a result of a personal reaction toward a person, a situation or a thing can be defined as **emotional words**. For example, the word “anger” illustrates a specific type of feeling that’s related to one’s bad mood (strong feeling of annoyance). As it is stated by (Oatley, and Johnson-laird, 1987 cited in Ortony, and Clore, 2008) that there are five fundamental modes namely (anger, happiness, sadness, fear, and disgust). Furthermore, they mention that these basic emotions are the intrinsic of all the other emotional experience types since they can be experienced unconsciously. On the other hand, emotional words can be defined as those words which have emotional connotation such as (lonely, poverty, bless, reward, elegant, neglect, etc.) (Abbassi et al., 2015).

Wherefore, in this paper the researcher attempts to find out the emotional words used in *The Awakening* which are related to these basic emotional modes mentioned above. Furthermore, she works to demonstrate the advantageous of connotative meaning used for the words beside their denotative meaning (literal meaning).

2. Literature Review

As it is obvious that the concept of word’s meaning analysis is a complicated issue. Hence, numbers of researches have been conducted about types and methods of meaning examination. In this part, the researcher is going to demonstrate particularly the studies which are allied to connotative meaning explorations.

Connotative meaning is an important aspect in writing literary texts. Since, authors of literary texts use descriptive language to demonstrate feelings, emotions, experiences, etc., rather than conveying information where denotative meaning is used. As a result, translators of literary texts should be very careful and aware of the usage and analysis of connotative meaning. As in (Ilyas,2013)’s research it is stated that “When connotation is in focus, and it is not possible to find a connotative equivalent in the TL, translators can resort to exegetic translation, or use an explanatory footnote to draw the attention of readers to the connotative differences between the SL and the TL, and highlight the relevant S.L. cultural implications.”.

Connotative meaning of emotional words is the associative meaning of them. It can be derived from the writer’s emotional background. As it is stated in a research entitle



“connotative and denotative meaning of emotion words in twenty one pilots’ blurryface album” by (Larasatika,2017) that “The connotative and denotative meaning of the emotion words consisting in the lyrics imply that the songwriter has insecurity of some things which he represented by a character he created, Blurryface...”. So, it can be mentioned that the emotional word’s connotative meaning is a reflection of the writer’s inner side and feelings.

On the other hand, Connotative meaning can be used to affect (stimulate) someone’s feelings in different directions such as positively or negatively. While, it is illustrated in (Jayanti, Asridayani, and Afrilesa, 2019)’s paper that the use of connotative meaning in journal contexts can lead the reader to a positive or negative thinking (feeling). Since the authors have reached to a conclusion that (11) words with negative connotation and (7) words with positive connotation among (18) words in the journal’s context have been used.

Accordingly, the concept of meaning types demands research and analyzing. More specifically, the connotative meaning is in need to be studied in different contexts and cultures. Thus, the researcher tries to examine the connotative meaning in a different context namely (*The Awakening*) novel. In addition, only emotional words (phrases) have been chosen for the analysis purpose.

3. Methods

The researcher has provided an explanation about meaning in general and then semantic meaning of words in particular. Next, elaborating on the concept of connotative meaning and emotional words each separately. This study is meant to be qualitative one because it attempts to describe the data in a detailed manner rather than measuring it systematically. The researcher has collected the data of this paper from the original book of *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin. After reading the novel fully, she has selected the emotional words. Then, she examined the emotional words’ connotative meaning in terms of distinguishing their specific types such as; positive connotation, negative connotation, and neutral connotation. Finally, analyzing the usage of each type (i.e. connotative meaning types) regarding the purpose of the author for specific emotional word selection in the novel’s context.

4. Findings

The data of this paper are listed in the table below by indicating the positivity, negativity, and neutrality of the selected emotional words which are used in the awakening novel.

Table1: Emotional words and their connotation types (positive, negative, and neutral).

| Word Number | Emotional words | Positive Connotation | Negative Connotation | Neutral Connotation |
|-------------|------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. | suffered | | √ | |
| 2. | discouraging | | √ | |
| 3. | anguish | | √ | |
| 4. | eager | √ | | |
| 5. | unamiable | | √ | |
| 6. | uninterested | | √ | |
| 7. | amicable | √ | | |
| 8. | impressed | √ | | |
| 9. | astonishment | √ | | |
| 10. | moved | √ | | |
| 11. | sympathy | √ | | |
| 12. | adored | √ | | |
| 13. | feared | | √ | |
| 14. | jealous | | √ | |
| 15. | Hopeless passion | | √ | |



| | | | | |
|-----|----------------------|---|---|---|
| 16. | love | √ | | |
| 17. | annoying | | √ | |
| 18. | Vain hope | | √ | |
| 19. | disappointed | | √ | |
| 20. | pleased | √ | | |
| 21. | disturbing | | √ | |
| 22. | solitude | √ | | |
| 23. | confidences | √ | | |
| 24. | amused | √ | | |
| 25. | longing | √ | | |
| 26. | Greedy admiration | | √ | |
| 27. | Nervous apprehension | | √ | |
| 28. | joy | √ | | |
| 29. | exultation | √ | | |
| 30. | irritably | | √ | |
| 31. | Bad humor | | √ | |
| 32. | oppression | | √ | |
| 33. | drowsiness | | | √ |
| 34. | embarrassed | | √ | |
| 35. | excited | √ | | |
| 36. | uncomfortable | | √ | |
| 37. | depressed | | √ | |
| 38. | intimacy | √ | | |
| 39. | cheerfulness | √ | | |
| 40. | bother | | √ | |
| 41. | bewildered | | √ | |
| 42. | unhappy | | √ | |
| 43. | glad | √ | | |
| 44. | disapproving | | √ | |
| 45. | energetic | √ | | |
| 46. | curious | | | √ |
| 47. | taste | √ | | |
| 48. | relief | √ | | |
| 49. | pretty | √ | | |
| 50. | melancholy | | √ | |
| 51. | unaffected | | | √ |
| 52. | secure | √ | | |
| 53. | delicate | | √ | |
| 54. | Lacked sincerity | | √ | |
| 55. | apology | √ | | |
| 56. | miserable | | √ | |
| 57. | like | √ | | |
| 58. | entertaining | √ | | |
| 59. | sensitively | √ | | |
| 60. | disagreeable | | √ | |
| 61. | unpleasant | | √ | |
| 62. | shame | | √ | |
| 63. | courage | √ | | |
| 64. | torture | | √ | |



| | | | | |
|-----|---------------------|---|---|---|
| 65. | warm | √ | | |
| 66. | insulting | | √ | |
| 67. | amused | √ | | |
| 68. | disheartened | | √ | |
| 69. | neglected | | | √ |
| 70. | gentle | √ | | |
| 71. | delicious | √ | | |
| 72. | Hungry eyes | √ | | |
| 73. | dreadful | | √ | |
| 74. | agitation | | √ | |
| 75. | surprised | | | √ |
| 76. | fear | | √ | |
| 77. | sorry | √ | | |
| 78. | Amuse | √ | | |
| 79. | dissipation | √ | | |
| 80. | Despondent mood | | √ | |
| 81. | cruel | | √ | |
| 82. | Love and tenderness | √ | | |
| 83. | foolish | | √ | |
| 84. | agony | | √ | |
| 85. | stunned | | | √ |
| 86. | dazed | | | √ |
| 87. | Tearing emotion | | √ | |
| 88. | Incomparable charms | √ | | |
| 89. | threatening | | √ | |
| 90. | Disturbing notion | | √ | |
| 91. | despondency | | √ | |
| 92. | mercy | √ | | |
| 93. | Courageous soul | √ | | |

The emotional words which are used in the novel have mostly negative connotation. As (45) emotional words have negative connotation among (93) emotional words. For instance, words like (agitation, suffered, disheartened, dreadful, insulting, melancholy, discouraging, lacked sincerity, torture, etc.) have negative connotation. While, (41) emotional words among them have positive connotation such as (eager, amicable, astonishment, courageous soul, incomparable love, dissipation, amuse, hungry eyes, etc.). Whereas, (7) of them have neutral connotation as (stunned, surprised, dazed, neglected, unaffected, drowsiness, curious).

Conclusion

The types of connotative meaning which are positive, negative, and neutral were used in *The Awakening's* context. Each type has its own impact on the novel's context accordingly. For instance, words with positive connotations were used to describe positive situations (emotions) effectively. While, words with negative connotations were used to convey negative emotions. And the neutral connotations were used to describe neutral emotions. Concluding the points, it can be revealed that emotional words with negative connotations were mostly used. Chopin's usage of negative connotation more than positive ones refers to the theme of the novel and the messages that she wants to convey. Since, Chopin has defended women's right and presented the way the authority especially men look at them. So, she described women's feelings, experiences, difficulties in the society by using emotional words with negative connotations. Secondly, positive connotations were used in a smaller



amount than the negative ones. She has used emotional words with positive connotations to show the strength, persistency to self-ownership and freedom of women in that time. finally, the neutral connotations were used the fewest to illustrate normal situations happened in the novel.

References

- Adrian Akmajian, R. A. D. A. K. F. e., 2010. Linguistics. An introduction to language an communication. sixth ed. London: The MIT Press.
- Al-Sulaimaan, m., 2010. Semantics and Pragmatics. Mosul: University of Mosul.
- Clore, A. O. & G. L., 2008. Emotions, moods, and consciousness; comment on johnson-laird and oatley's "the language of emotions: An analysis of asemantic field". Taylor&Francis online, pp. 125-137.
- Dickins, J., 2019. Types of Connotative Meaning , and their Significance for Translation. In: Routledge: Routledge in Discourse in Translation.
- Duwi Jayanti, A. R. A., 2019. A Connotative Meaning Analysis of Journalistic Language on Tribunnews online.com(Political Issues. Krinok Jarnal, 4(1).
- Editors, L. D., 2015. Connotation Definition, online: literarydevices.net .
- Ensie Abbassi, I. B. A. I. A. H. G. a. Y. J., 2015. Emotional words can be embodied or disembodied: the role of superficial vs. deep types of processing. Front. Psychol., Volume 6, p. 975.
- Geeraerts, D., 2010. Theories of Lexical Semantics. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ilyas, A. I., 2013. The Importance of Connotation in Literary Translation. Arab World English Journal, Volume 1, pp. 248-263.
- Larasatika, R., 2017. Connotative and Denotative Meaning of Emotion words in Twenty One Pilots' Blurryface Album, Jakarta: Connotative and Denotative Meaning of Emotion words in Twenty One Pilots' Blurryface Album.
- Leech, G., 1981. Semantics. The Study of Meaning. second ed. New York: Penguin Books.
- Leech, G., 1985. Semantics. The Stuy of Meaning. second ed. New York: Penguin Books.
- Lobner, S., 2002. Understaning Semantics. Great Britain: Arnold, a member of the Hoder Headline Group.
- Palmer, F. R., 1997. Semantics. second ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Yule, G., 1996. The study of language. fourth edition ed. New york: Cambridge University Press.



ماناي واتاي ووشه سۆزداريه كان له رۆمانى (به ناگاها تته ووه) ي كهيت شوپان

هتزا حامد مصطفى

به شى ياره تاكه كان -كۆليژى پوره رده ي جهسته ي و زانسته وهرزشييه كان/زانكۆي سه لآحه ددين -هه ولير

hezha.mustafa@su.edu.krd

پوخته

ههروهك واتاي به لگه ي برتبه له واتاي لاهه كى (واتا په يوه نديداره كان) كه به نده له سه ره به كاره تنيان كه سه كان و چۆنيه تى تيگه يشتيان بۆي، بۆيه پتويستى به شيكرده وه و ليكۆلينه وه هه يه له بواري جياجيدا وه كو، بواري ئه ده بي، رۆژنامه وانى، ده قى كلتورى. به شيويه يه كى تايهت، توپزه ده قيك له كارىكى ئه ده بي هه لده بۆيرت كه برتبه له رۆمانيك نووسراوه له لايه ن كهيت شوپان به ناو نيشانى (به ناگاها تته وه). ههروه ها، ووشه سۆزداريه كانى ناو رۆمانه كه هه لبۆيردراون. پاشان، واتاي به لگه ي ووشه سۆزداريه هه لبۆيردراوه كان شيد ه كرته وه و پۆلين ده كرين به پتي جۆره كانيان له خشته يه كى ريكراودا. جۆرى ئه رتي، نه رتي، و سروشتى ده خرينه پوو. دواتر، دۆزينه وه كان ريزبه ندى به كاره تنيان جۆره كانى واتاي به لگه ي ووشه سۆزداريه كان ده خاته روو (له زۆرترين به كاره تنيان بۆ كه مترین به كاره تنيان). يه كه م، واتاي به لگه ي ئه رتي زۆرترين جار به كاره تته وه. دووه م، واتاي به لگه ي نه رتي به شيويه يه كى كه متر به كاره تته وه. له كۆتاييشدا، واتاي به لگه ي سروشتى كه مترین جار به كاره تته وه.

ووشه سه ره كيه كان: ماناي واتاي، ووشه ي سۆزداريه كان، واتاي ئه رتي، واتاي نه رتي، واتاي ئاساي.

المعنى الدلالي للكلمات العاطفية في رواية الصحوة لکيت شوبان

هتزا حامد مصطفى

قسم الالعاب الفردية-كلية التربية البدنية وعلوم الرياضة/جامعة صلاح الدين-أربيل

hezha.mustafa@su.edu.krd

ملخص

نظراً لأن المعنى الضمني الترابطي للكلمات ويعتمد على الاستخدام والادراك الشخصي، فإنه يتطلب التحليل والبحث في مجالات مختلفة مثل السياقات الأدبية والمجالات الثقافية. وخصوصاً في هذه البحث، يختار الباحث سياقاً من العمل الأدبي الذي هو رواية كتبها كيت شوبان بعنوان "الصحوة". وأيضاً، تختار الكلمات العاطفية المستخدمة داخل الرواية. بعد ذلك، يتم تحليل المعنى الضمني للكلمات العاطفية المختارة وتصنيفها وفقاً لأنواعها في جدول منظم. بيان النوع ايجابي والسلبى والمحايدة. لاحقاً، ستعلن النتائج عن تسلسل الاستخدام (الأكثر استخداماً لأقل استخداماً) لأنواع المعنى الضمني للكلمات العاطفية. أولاً، تم استخدام المعاني الضمنية الإيجابية في الغالب. ثانياً، تم استخدام المعاني الضمنية السلبية وأخيراً المعاني الضمنية المحايدة.

الكلمات الدالة: المعنى دلالي، الكلمات عاطفية، دلالات الإيجابية، دلالات السلبية، دلالات المحايدة.