_____

CONNOTATION: CLASSIFICATION OF CONNOTATIVE UNITS, THEIR TYPES, AND STAGES OF EVOLUTIONARY DEVELOPMENT

S.A. Kholmamatova

First-Year Doctoral Candidate (PhD)

Fergana State University

Abstract

This article analyzes the concept of connotation and its role in linguistics from both theoretical and practical perspectives. In addition to the lexical (denotative) meaning of a word, the supplementary meanings—connotative layers—are examined across emotional, evaluative, stylistic, symbolic, and cultural dimensions. The study undertakes a comparative analysis of the views of local and foreign scholars and illustrates various manifestations of connotation through literary examples from Uzbek literature. The findings demonstrate that connotation significantly expands the semantic potential of words and functions as an essential linguistic phenomenon that reveals the interrelation between language and culture. Furthermore, the article explores the interconnection and differences between connotative units and connotation, while also highlighting the evolutionary development and types of connotative units, supported by relevant examples.

Keywords: connotation, denotation, emotional connotation, expressive connotation, stylistic connotation, symbolic connotation, cultural connotation, linguopoetics.

Introduction

The meaning of the word is considered one of the most important and central issues in linguistic research. In addition to the lexical meaning, the supplementary meanings attached to a word—connotations—enrich speech usage and provide the text with additional expressiveness, emotionality, and stylistic coloring. In the

_____

20th century, scholars such as R. Jakobson, V. Gak, and S. Apresyan laid the foundations of the theory of connotation. Their views made it possible to regard connotation as a semantic layer of the word. In Uzbek linguistics as well, scholars such as Sh. Rahmatullayev, A. Madvaliev, S. Otamirzayeva, and N. Mahmudov analyzed connotative meaning and revealed its role in artistic discourse.

Research Methods and Methodology

In the analysis of the article, the following methods were employed: Historical-descriptive method – the origin and evolution of the term *connotation* were examined on the basis of relevant sources; Comparative-semantic method – definitions proposed by various scholars (Jakobson, Gak, Apresyan, Suntsova, and others) were compared; Linguopoetic analysis – connotative units were interpreted through examples drawn from the works of writers such as Abdulla Qodiriy, Cho'lpon, Hamid Olimjon, and Erkin Vohidov, with emphasis on their artistic and aesthetic functions; Cultural-linguistic approach – the layers of connotation connected with national values and traditions were identified.

Literature Review

R. Jakobson (1960) explained connotation as a semantic layer that exists beyond the primary meaning of the word, whereas V. Gak (1971) interpreted it as an evaluative and emotional additional meaning that emerges in the process of speech. S.I. Apresyan (1974) classified connotation into emotional, expressive, stylistic, symbolic, and cultural types, thereby creating a solid theoretical foundation. Later, M.V. Suntsova (2021) enriched Apresyan's theory from a practical perspective by examining the types of connotation in the Russian language on the basis of textual analysis.

In Uzbek linguistics, scholars such as Sh. Rahmatullayev (1982), A. Madvaliev (2010), S. Otamirzayeva (2005), and N. Mahmudov (2012) have carried out in-depth analyses of the linguopoetic aspects of connotation in artistic discourse. Collectively, these sources reveal the multifaceted nature of connotation in linguistic studies.

_____

Main Part

Over the years, the study of word meaning has been regarded as one of the central issues in linguistics that requires thorough analysis. Alongside the lexical (denotative) meaning of a word, the additional meanings attached to it – connotations – have also attracted significant scholarly interest and are considered a topic that must be studied from multiple perspectives. Connotation reflects the emotional, expressive, and stylistic dimensions of a word, thereby enriching its use in discourse.

R. Jakobson (1960) interprets connotation as "an additional semantic layer beyond the primary meaning of the word." He articulated this view in his work Linguistics and Poetics [1]. In our opinion, this definition accurately reflects the significance of connotation in linguistics, as it allows for a deeper analysis of the semantic layers of words.

V. Gak (1971) defines connotation as *"an evaluative and emotional additional meaning that arises in the process of speech"* [2]. He presented this perspective in his book *Pragmatics and Semantics*. This definition highlights the role of connotation in the process of speech, as it demonstrates how the meaning of a word shifts according to context. Other definitions have also been proposed. For instance, connotation (from the Latin *connotatio* – "additional meaning") is understood as the emotional, evaluative, or stylistic coloring that accompanies the lexical meaning of a word [3]. While denotative meaning expresses the direct reference of an object or phenomenon, the connotative layer reveals its subjective and cultural value [4].

Scholars have expressed different views regarding the emergence of the term *connotation*. For instance, L.B. Kropotova argues that the word *connotation* appeared around the year 1200, noting that it derives from the Latin *connotare*, meaning "together" or "to know," and that it was used in philosophical and theological debates concerning the meaning of words in scholastic logic [5]. Another group of linguists, however, attributes the origin of the term to the 16th century. According to the English etymological dictionary, the definition of *connotation* dates back to the 1530s, when the term began to be employed as a word denoting "additional meaning." It is derived from Medieval Latin *com* ("together") + *notare* ("to mark"), and as a logical term it originally meant "to

_____

add an attribute to the primary meaning" [5]. Nevertheless, the full recognition of the term's function in expressing additional meaning is credited to the English linguist James Mill in the 19th century. In his work *Analysis of the Phenomena of the Human Mind* (1829), Mill explained the concepts of connotation and denotation using the example *"white horse."* In this example, the denotative layer is straightforward: *"horse"* denotes the animal, while *"white"* denotes its color. The connotative layer, however, adds supplementary meaning; for instance, the word *"white"* may symbolically convey purity, innocence, beauty, strength, or courage. In this way, Mill demonstrated that while denotative and connotative layers are distinct, their interconnection enhances the expressive power of language [7].

In Uzbek linguistics as well, valuable research has been conducted on connotative meaning and its use in artistic discourse. Sh. Rakhmatullaev (1982) examined the denotative and connotative layers of Uzbek words as distinct phenomena. A. Madvaliev (2010) provided an in-depth analysis of the semantic potential of evaluative units in Uzbek lexicology. S. Otamirzayeva (2005) investigated the linguopoetic features of connotative units in literary texts. U. Tursunov (1990) wrote about the role of connotation in revealing the stylistic potential of the Uzbek language. N. Mahmudov (2012) emphasized that connotative units ensure rhetorical skill and expressiveness in speech. Meanwhile, G'. Abdurakhmanov (2008) discussed connotation as an additional semantic layer of word meaning in the context of general linguistics. Beyond Uzbek linguistics, influential contributions have also been made by international scholars.

S.I. Apresyan (1974) analyzed connotation within a linguistic framework, distinguishing emotional, evaluative, stylistic, symbolic, and cultural types. He laid the foundational theoretical principles and demonstrated the structural nature of the connotative layer of words [6].

More recently, M.V. Suntsova (2021) conducted an applied analysis of connotation in Russian, building upon Apresyan's theory and illustrating its various types through examples from real texts [7].

According to S.I. Apresyan's theory, the classification of connotation is as follows:

1. Emotional connotation – expresses feelings and emotions.

_____

2. Expressive (evaluative) connotation – creates imagery and emotional impact.

3. Stylistic connotation – marks the register of usage, such as literary, colloquial, or formal.

4. Symbolic connotation – conveys symbolic meanings.

5. Cultural connotation – reflects the customs, traditions, and historical experience of a people.

We will now examine each type of connotation, analyzing and illustrating them with examples.

Emotional connotation refers to a word or phrase that evokes a particular feeling in the listener or reader. For instance, in Abdulla Qodiriy's novel *O'tkan kunlar* (*Bygone Days*), the expression *"darkness like the trap of mountains"* conveys an atmosphere of fear and anxiety associated with darkness [8].

Evaluative connotation adds either a positive or negative judgment to a word. In Cho'lpon's *Kecha va kunduz* (*Night and Day*), the term *"bravery"* reflects a hero's positive trait, while *"deceit"* conveys a negative evaluation [9].

Stylistic connotation enriches meaning through the register or stylistic layer appropriate to the context, whether artistic, colloquial, or formal. For example, in the poetry of Hamid Olimjon, the word *"flower"* functions as a literary symbol of beauty and tenderness [10].

Symbolic connotation endows a word with cultural or historical symbolism. In the poetry of Erkin Vohidov, the image of the *"white bird"* symbolizes freedom and purity [11].

Cultural connotation reflects meanings shaped by cultural values and traditions. In Abdulla Qahhor's *Oltin devor* (*The Golden Wall*), the expression *"celestial star"* refers not only to astronomical objects but also to the values and aspirations of the Uzbek people [12]. Thus, the various types of connotation enable the joint study of linguistic and cultural layers of meaning and are widely employed in Uzbek literature.

In linguistics and cultural linguistics, the interconnection between connotation and connotative units, which are studied simultaneously, as well as their similarities and differences, are of particular importance. The key distinctions are as follows. Connotation is the layer of emotional, evaluative, and cultural meanings associated with a word or phrase in addition to its lexical (denotative)

_____

meaning. It adds supplementary semantic and affective value, reflecting a people's cultural heritage, historical experience, and social relations [13]. In this regard, scholars have emphasized that connotation represents an "additional meaning," comparable to a garment layered upon denotation. For example, the word *"house"* in its denotative sense simply refers to a dwelling. Yet its connotation conveys associations of love, safety, and tranquility. In Uzbek culture, the home is considered the place where family bonds and affection are preserved, and these values are encapsulated in the lexeme *"uy."*

Konnotativ birlik esa lug'aviy ma'nodan tashqari konnotativ (emotsional, baholoviy, madaniy) ma'nolarni o'zida mujassam etgan til birligi hisoblanadi. Bu so'z yoki so'z birikmasi bo'lishi mumkin.[14] Ikkinchi tadqiqotchimiz fikrlariga tayanadigan bo'lsak, konnotativ birliklar o'z nomi bilan alohida bir birlik ya'ni shakl demakdir.

Yanada soda qilib tushuntirilsa, "ona" so'zining denotative ma'nosi biologik jihatidan ayol jinsiga mansub, tug'ish xususiyatiga ega inson. konnotatsiyasi - mehr, g'amxo'rlik, himoya ma'nolari. Shakl jihati uning konnotativ birligidir. Shunday qilib, konnotatsiya — bu ma'no qatlamidir, konnotativ birlik esa bu qatlamni o'zida ifodalovchi til elementi sifatida qaraladi. Yana bir olimimizning fikrlariga yuzlanadigan bo'lsak u har ikki terminning o'xshash tomonlari har ikkalasida ham lug'aviy ma'nodan tashqari qo'shimcha, baholoviy va madaniy ma'no yukini o'zida saqlashini va tilning boyligini oshirishga xizmat qilishda ekanligini aytib, Farqi esa konnotatsiya abstrakt semantik tushuncha bo'lib, konnotativ birlik esa tilshunoslikda aniq so'z yoki ibora shaklida namoyon bo'lishda ekanligini ko'rsatadi[15]

Konnotativ birliklarning paydo bo'lishi haqida olimlarimiz turlicha fikrlarni kletirib o'tishadi. Ulardan biz Yusupov fikrlariga tayanishni ma'qul ko'rdik. Konnotativ birliklarning dastlabki paydo bo'lishi bosqichini tilning ilk shakllanish davriga ya'ni folklor(xalq og'zaki ijodi) orqali paydo bo'lganligiga taqaydilar. Bu davrda xalqning tabiat, hayvonot, va ruhiy tushunchalarga bo'lgan munosabati ifodalanuvchi iboralar keng tarqalganligini ko'rsatib, miifologik elementlar ko'p uchrashini dalil sifatida keltirib o'tishgan. Masalan, bo'ri kuch va jasorat ramzi sifatida, tulki ayyorlik va munofiqlik ma'nosi sifatida nafaqat o'tgan davr folkor namunalarida balki bugungi badiiy adabiyot namunalarida

_____

ham ko'p uchrashi fikrimizning yorqin dalili bo'la oladi. Konnotativ birliklar 5 ta bosqich asosida shakllanadi. Har qanday birlik shu bosqichdan o'tmasdan turib konnotativ birlikka aylana olmaydi.

The Formation of Denotative and Connotative Meanings

1. Formation of the denotative meaning. Every word has an initial, primary—denotative (lexical)—meaning. This meaning generally conveys an objective, universal concept (for example, *"house"* — a place of residence).

2. Emergence of emotional and evaluative meanings. When words are used in everyday speech, in various social and cultural contexts, they acquire additional emotional and evaluative shades of meaning. For instance, the word *"house"* may also signify safety and affection. This process is closely tied to the feelings, values, and experiences of language users.

3. Acquisition of cultural-contextual meanings. Words may also gain cultural layers of meaning. These are shaped by traditions, customs, and historical events. For example, the word *"Navruz"* is not only the name of a holiday but also symbolizes renewal and the awakening of nature.

4. Integration into language as a connotative unit. A word or phrase that develops such additional meanings evolves into a connotative unit. This unit becomes entrenched in language and fulfills its cultural and emotional functions.

5. Stabilization as a fixed connotative unit. When a connotative unit is consistently used in texts and discourse, it enters the codes of language and culture. At this stage, the word or expression is firmly established within the linguistic system with both its primary and additional meanings. This process is inseparably linked with the development of language and the cultural transformations of society. In some cases, connotative units arise under the influence of historical events or socio-political circumstances.

Types of Connotative Units from a Linguistic Perspective

To facilitate a clearer understanding of connotative units, it is useful to classify them according to their linguistic form. They often appear in the following forms:

1. Words (Lexemes). A single word, beyond its basic (denotative) meaning, may carry a connotative (additional, emotional) meaning. Example: "Mother" — a symbol of love and compassion; "Homeland" — a symbol of loyalty and pride.

_____

2. Word combinations (non-phraseological). These are multi-word expressions that are not fixed idioms but nonetheless contain latent connotative meaning. Example: "Freedom Square" — not only a physical place but also a social concept; "Rule of law" — conveys the sense of justice and stability.

3. Phraseological units (Idioms). Fixed expressions that are employed in an unchangeable form, often carrying connotative or metaphorical meaning distinct from their literal sense. Example: "To light the fire" — to initiate conflict; "To remain within four walls" — to be restricted or confined.

4. Metaphors and metonymies. Though primarily stylistic devices rather than independent linguistic units, they frequently function as connotative elements. Example: "To melt the heart" — to produce emotional impact (metaphor); "A great power" — referring to a state or organization (metonymy).

5. Connotative differences among synonyms. Synonyms with similar denotative meaning may differ in connotative (emotional or evaluative) associations. Example: "House" and "Family home" — the latter conveys stronger associations with warmth, affection, and familial intimacy.

In Uzbek linguistics, the foundations of studying connotative units began to take shape in the early 20th century, when linguists turned their attention to the analysis of phraseology and emotional meanings. Among the pioneering scholars in this field are Abduqodir Qodirov, Shukrjon Kho'jayev, and Munira Qodirova, whose research contributed to the establishment of this line of inquiry.

Through the analysis of classical literature, particular attention was given to the expression of such units in the works of Navoiy, Bobur, and other writers. Connotative units in the works of Navoiy and Bobur, in particular, have been studied by a number of researchers, including Qodir Yo'ldoshev, Shukur Kho'jayev, and Mavluda Sobirova, who have focused their scholarly efforts on this domain.

Over time, the meanings conveyed by connotative units may shift from positive to negative, or vice versa. During the Soviet era, for instance, ideological influence transformed the connotations of certain terms, introducing new evaluative dimensions. For example, the word *"Quloq"* originally denoted a wealthy farmer in rural communities, but Soviet propaganda recast it with the negative connotations of *"enemy of the people"* and *"exploiter."* Similarly, the

_____

term *"Intelligentsia"* traditionally referred to cultural and scientific elites, yet under Soviet discourse it was often tied to political activity and sometimes carried critical or dismissive connotations. The term *"Bourgeoisie"* once functioned as a neutral designation of an economic class, but in the Soviet period it came to embody negative associations, representing a hostile social stratum and a symbol of opposition to communism.

In the 21st century, under the influence of the internet and modern technologies, certain words have begun to acquire new connotative meanings. For example, *"Cloud"* traditionally referred to masses of water vapor floating in the sky, but in contemporary usage it has gained the connotation of technology for storing and sharing data online. The word *"Like"*—originally meaning "to enjoy" in English—through its application on social networks such as Facebook and Instagram, has taken on connotations of approval, support, trendiness, and social validation. Similarly, *"Troll"* once denoted a mythical folkloric creature, yet in internet discourse it now refers to a user who provokes or deliberately disturbs others.

In this period, some terms have also shifted from positive to negative connotations. For instance, the word *"Doston"* in its traditional sense referred to an epic poem, but in the 21st century, particularly on social media, it has acquired the colloquial connotation of a "life story" or "personal anecdote," sometimes trivialized in everyday speech.

Connotative units in the Uzbek language are thus a direct reflection of national culture and worldview. Their emergence and evolution are closely linked to major historical events and cultural transformations within society. In linguistics, connotations should not be studied solely as semantic or phraseological units but within a linguo-cultural context, as this allows for a more comprehensive understanding of their meaning.

Furthermore, the correct rendering of connotations in translation and linguistic communication remains a significant challenge, as they are deeply rooted in national culture and may not be easily transferable across languages.

_____

Conclusion

Connotation is a significant phenomenon in linguistic research, revealing the deeper semantic layers of a word. It not only enriches the denotative meaning but also reflects national culture, historical experience, and aesthetic values. The findings of this study demonstrate that the various forms of connotation enhance the expressiveness of words and provide additional layers of meaning to texts. In Uzbek linguistics as well, the study of connotation holds particular importance, as it ensures imagery and expressiveness in literary discourse. Therefore, further research on connotation—especially at the intersection of semantics, pragmatics, and linguoculturology—is expected to yield even more fruitful results.

References

1. Yakobson, R. (1960). Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics. In T.A. Sebeok (Ed.), Style in Language (pp. 350–377). MIT Press.
2. Gak, V. (1986). Semantika i struktura yazyka. Moskva: Nauka.
3. Vinogradov, V. V. (1977). Izbrannyye trudy: Leksikologiya i leksikografiya. Moskva: Nauka.
4. Crystal, D. (2008). A dictionary of linguistics and phonetics (6th ed.). Oxford: Blackwell.
5. Кропотова Л.В. История развития лексической коннотации //Язык и культура. 2010. № 1. С.33–47
6. Apresyan, S.I. (1974). Connotation as a structural element of lexical meaning
7. Suntsova, M.V. (2021). Connotative meaning in Russian language.
8. Abdulla Qodiriy. Oʻtkan kunlar. Toshkent: Gʻafur Gʻulom nashriyoti, 1948.
9. Choʻlpon. Kecha va kunduz. Toshkent: Akademnashr, 1935.
10. Hamid Olimjon. She'rlar toʻplami. Toshkent: Sharq, 1957
11. Erkin Vohidov. Tanlangan she'rlar. Toshkent: Sharq, 1979.
12. Abdulla Qahhor. Oltin devor. Toshkent: Fan, 1965.
13. Ibrohimov, Gʻ. Gʻ. Til va tafakkur. Toshkent: Oʻzbekiston, 2002
14. Qodirov, M. Lingvomadaniyatshunoslik asoslari. Toshkent: Fan, 2015.
15. Karimova, M. Madaniyat va til: Konnotativ birliklar tadqiqi. Til va adabiyot jurnali, 2022(3), 45–52.