



## THE TYPES OF MEANING IN STYLISTICS

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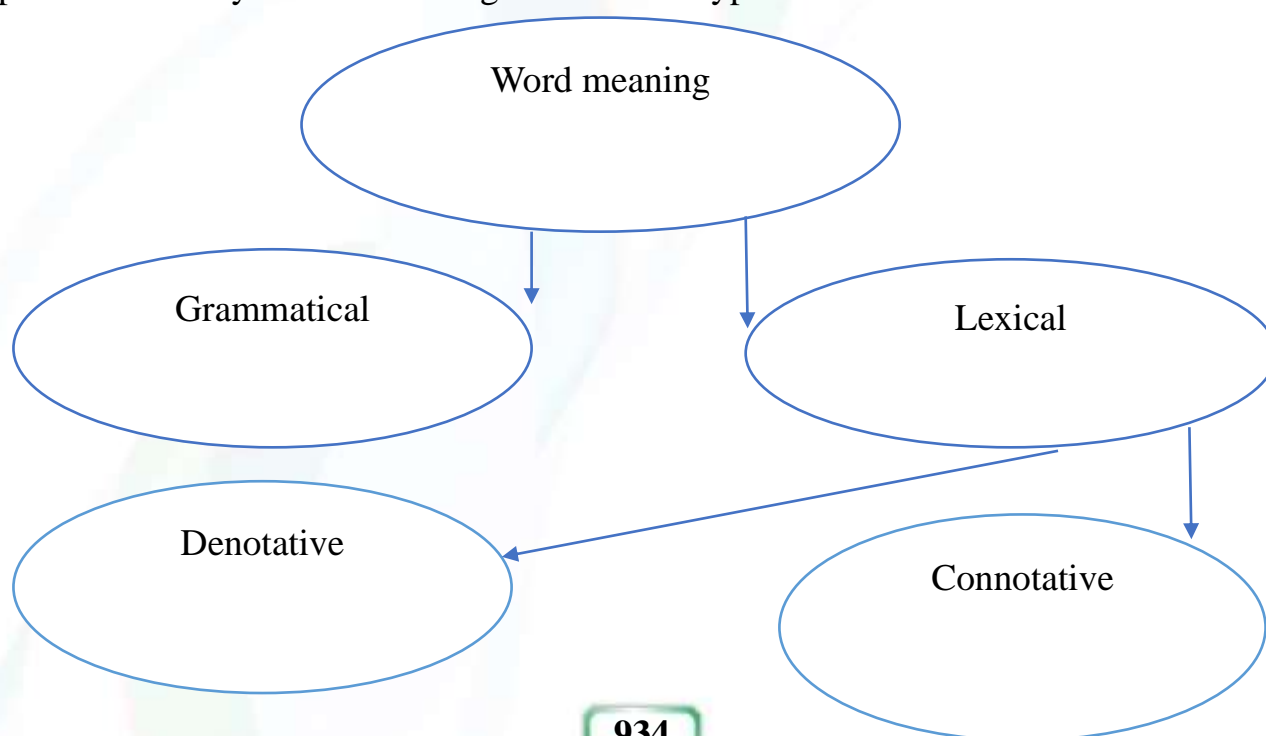
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**Annotation:** The notion of word and its meaning is paramount importance in stylistics. A word as a language sign represents a concept by its forms and meanings. By concept it represents a general idea of some phenomenon, both objective (existing in the material form) and subjective (including feelings and emotions of people). By form a word shows its relation to other form within a sentence. So, the word meaning always directs the mind to the object and represents its membership in the language system. Word meaning is not a simple but a very complex matter.

**Keywords:** lexical meaning, grammatical meaning, denotation, connotation, stylistic meaning, emotive, evaluative, logical meaning.

**Introduction.** At present there is no universal definition of word meaning. But there are more than 100 descriptions of it. "Meaning is one of the most ambiguous and most controversial terms in the theory of language" [2, 82].

It is difficult to define meaning, because it has a complex nature, it has many facets/aspects, each calling for a reflection in the definition: phonemic, morphemic, structural, grammatical, lexical, which in its turn is not homogeneous. It may be presented as a system of meanings of different type of abstraction:





**Lexical meaning** is referred to the phenomena of objective reality (that may be real or imaginary as in table, devil, feel or lightning) and to the concept of these objects or phenomena. That's why lexical meaning is to a greater extent bound to extra-linguistic categories and therefore at some time it was excluded from scientific observation as it was considered itself an extra-linguistic category.

**Grammatical meaning** is the meaning that is referred to a certain grammatical form (marker). It represents the correlation between words in a sentence. Being rather abstract it may label small and large classes or groups of words that perform equal functions in sentences, as a case in point it may be illustrated with a word paradigm of look. The form may be referred to two classes of words — a noun or a verb. Accordingly, it will differ in forms and categorical meanings.

Logical feature of a word is that it expresses the concept of a thing, process, phenomenon, naming (denoting) them. Notion is a logical category; its linguistic counterpart is meaning. Meaning, as our outstanding scholar L. Vygotsky puts it, is the unity of generalization, communication and thinking.

In most general term by word meaning linguists understand constant relations between the object (as a referent or an idea about a referent), the notion named and the name itself: its sound form and contents, or the reflection of the object or notion in our mind.

Prof. I. R. Galperin distinguished three types of lexical meaning — logical, emotive, and nominal, considering logical meaning to be the precise naming of a feature of the idea, phenomenon, or object, the name by which we recognize the concept, and nominal meaning as the indication of a particular object out of a class. These two represent clear idea of the difference between two main aspects of the word meaning — 'nomination' and 'signification'. In other words, these aspects are also called 'reference' and 'signification' or 'denotation' and 'connotation'. Emotive meaning is viewed as the potentiality of words to represent feelings and emotions of the speaker towards the objects: "the emotive meaning bears reference to things, phenomena or ideas through a kind of evaluation of them" [1, 28].

The meaning of a word is liable to historical changes, which are responsible for the formation of an expanded semantic structure of a word. This structure is constituted of various types of macro- and micro components of lexical meaning, the major one being denotational, which informs of the object of communication. The semantic structure also includes connotational component, which informs about the participants' attitudes towards what they speak about, their emotional state and conditions of communication.



Some linguists in addition to denotative and connotative components in the general framework of word meaning also single out such components as significative, referential and pragmatic components, though these subdivisions within lexical meaning are very disputable at present, that's why I won't cover them in my lecture. I will keep your attention mostly with denotative and connotative aspects of lexical meaning and with their stylistic value as universally recognized fact in modern linguo-stylistics.

The denotative component of lexical meaning is the most important aspect of communication because it refers to the notional basis of information conveyed from the speaker to the listener. This information may be called the subject-matter of communication. The denotative component establishes correlation between the name (word) and the object, phenomenon, process or qualification of concrete reality or thought as such, which is denoted by the word. From the contents of the denotative component of lexical meaning it is evident that this component makes communication possible, it keeps to ensure reference to things, common to all speakers of the English language.

This property of the denotative component of lexical meaning is accounted by the fact that it indicates simultaneously the whole class of objects characterized by similar specific features and at the same time an individual object, belonging to the given class through some set of common features (e. g. as a class of tables).

This double reference reminds us that in the process of nomination the object named is presented at the 2 stages in two main forms - in a form of a concrete object - referent, and in the form of a generalized idea of a class of objects - concept. This double reference constitutes the contents of a denotative component of lexical meaning.

All the meanings mentioned here are fixed as the semantic structure of the word. They are the meanings that are found in speech or writing and which form the basis for understanding the concept the speaker is talking about. They form the basis for conceptual transition, inasmuch as they depend on the context they are used in. So, there is another type of meaning that is generally called contextual meaning, as the meaning that derives from a logical one, but lives only in a certain text and disappears if the context is altered. Sometimes it is difficult to decide whether it is a simultaneous materialization of a lexical meaning registered in a dictionary or an interplay of a registered and a newly coined one. The difficulty is caused, on the one hand, by insufficient objective criteria of what should be fixed in dictionaries as already established language facts, and on the other hand, by deliberate political,



aesthetic, moral or other considerations on the part of the compliers of the dictionary. The same can be said about the emotive and evaluative meanings [4, 25].

The connotative component is the second component of lexical meaning. Connotation conveys additional information in the process of communication to what is nominated by denotation of the word. It does not exist independently of denotation but synchronically (simultaneously) with it. It is always a secondary nomination (cf.: connote means “to suggest or imply in addition to literal meaning”; to accompany denotation).

### **Connotation in Stylistics**

There are several approaches in modern linguistics (semasiology) to the problem of connotation. Some of them accept the structured character of connotation. The traditional and the most current approach to connotation includes in its structure emotive charge (emotiveness), expressiveness, evaluation and stylistic charge (reference). Every component represents a specific layer of cognition: evaluative component states the value of the indicated notion; emotive — reveals the emotional layer of cognition and perception, expressive is aimed at intensification of denotative meanings and at creating the image of the object in question, and stylistic component indicates “the register”, or the situation of the communication. It may also point to the sphere of human activity where the word is conventionally used appropriately. Emotive connotation of the word signals of the emotional state of the speaker or his emotional attitude towards the object of nomination or situation of speech [2, 35].

Thus, a very important conclusion must be drawn to the effect, that emotive charge being a part of lexical meaning, is not individual, but common to all speakers of the (English) language community.

Emotiveness is a systematic language phenomenon rather than a speech characteristic. It is stable and repeatedly reproduced in many words and is not restricted to one or two occasional contexts.

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