

BỘ GIÁO DỤC VÀ ĐÀO TẠO
TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC DÂN LẬP HẢI PHÒNG



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HAIPHONG PRIVATE UNIVERSITY
FOREIGN LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT

GRADUATION PAPER
A STUDY ON DENOTATION AND CONNOTATION IN
ENGLISH

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Class:

Na1001

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HAI PHONG - 2010

BỘ GIÁO DỤC VÀ ĐÀO TẠO
TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC DÂN LẬP HẢI PHÒNG

Nhiệm vụ đề tài tốt nghiệp

Sinh viên:.....Mã số:.....

Lớp:.....Ngành:.....

Tên đề tài:

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Nhiệm vụ đề tài

1. Nội dung và các yêu cầu cần giải quyết trong nhiệm vụ đề tài tốt nghiệp
(về lý luận, thực tiễn, các số liệu cần tính toán và các bản vẽ).

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2. Các số liệu cần thiết để thiết kế, tính toán.

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3. Địa điểm thực tập tốt nghiệp.

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CÁN BỘ HƯỚNG DẪN ĐỀ TÀI

Người hướng dẫn thứ nhất:

Họ và tên:.....

Học hàm, học vị:.....

Cơ quan công tác:.....

Nội dung hướng dẫn:.....

Người hướng dẫn thứ hai:

Họ và tên:.....

Học hàm, học vị:.....

Cơ quan công tác:.....

Nội dung hướng dẫn:.....

Đề tài tốt nghiệp được giao ngày 12 tháng 04 năm 2010

Yêu cầu phải hoàn thành xong trước ngày 10 tháng 07 năm 2010

Đã nhận nhiệm vụ ĐTTN

Sinh viên

Đã giao nhiệm vụ ĐTTN

Người hướng dẫn

Hải Phòng, ngày tháng năm 2010

HIỆU TRƯỞNG

GS.TS.NGƯT Trần Hữu Nghị

PHẦN NHẬN XÉT TÓM TẮT CỦA CÁN BỘ HƯỚNG DẪN

1. Tinh thần thái độ của sinh viên trong quá trình làm đề tài tốt nghiệp:

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2. Đánh giá chất lượng của khóa luận (so với nội dung yêu cầu đã đề ra trong nhiệm vụ Đ.T. T.N trên các mặt lý luận, thực tiễn, tính toán số liệu...):

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3. Cho điểm của cán bộ hướng dẫn (ghi bằng cả số và chữ):

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Hải Phòng, ngày tháng năm 2010

Cán bộ hướng dẫn

(họ tên và chữ ký)

NHẬN XÉT ĐÁNH GIÁ

CỦA NGƯỜI CHĂM PHẢN BIỆN ĐỀ TÀI TỐT NGHIỆP

1. Đánh giá chất lượng đề tài tốt nghiệp về các mặt thu thập và phân tích tài liệu, số liệu ban đầu, giá trị lí luận và thực tiễn của đề tài.

2. Cho điểm của người chấm phản biện :

(Điểm ghi bằng số và chữ)

Ngày..... tháng..... năm 2010

Người chấm phản biện

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Hai Phong, June, 2010

Student

Nguyen Thi Thanh Thao

Table of contents

Acknowledgements

part 1 : introduction	1
1.Rationale of the study	1
2.Aims of the study	1
3.Scope of the study.....	2
4.Method of the study	2
5.Design of the study	2
Part2: development	4
Chapter1: Theoretical background	4
1. Word meaning	4
1.1What is word meaning	4
1.2.Types of word meaning	5
1.2.1. Literal meaning	5
1.2.2 Figurative meaning	6
1.3. Components of word meaning.....	7
1.3.1. Denotative meaning	7
a.Conceptual meaning.....	9
b.Referential meaning.....	9
1.3.1.1. Denotation and reference	10
1.3.1.2. Denotation and sense	10
1.3.2. Connotative meaning	12
a.Stylistic meaning.....	14

b.Affective meaning	14
c.Evaluative meaning.....	14
d.Intensifying meaning	14
1.3.3 Structural meaning	15
a. Reflected meaning.....	15
b. Collocative meaning	15
c. Associative meaning	15
d. Thematic meaning.....	16
1.3.4. Categorical meaning.....	16

Chapter 2: An insight into denotation and connotation in

English 17

2.1.Relatedness between denotation and connotation

2.2. Distinction between denotation and connotation..... 27

Chapter 3: Some problems facing students in studying denotation and connotation and suggested solutions to overcome them:..... 40

3.1.Some problems facing students in studying denotation and connotation..... 40

3.2.Some suggested solutions to overcome them

part 3 : conclusion:..... 44

1. Conclusion

2. Suggestion for further study

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

1. Rationale of the study

English is considered to be an international language used in the many field. It has been taught in Vietnam for decades. Recently the learning and teaching of English have been paid much attention to. English is, nowadays, widely recognized as the key language in the intergrating process into the world.

To have a good command of English, Vietnamese leaners have to face a lot of difficulties such as using English grammar, using vocabulary ,etc. In English , the word is not always used directly or literally. Traditionally, linguists have refered to the meaning of words in two part that are denotation and connotation. For example, when someone gives you a rose.we need that a rose in denotative meaning is a red rose with a green stem, but in the connotative meaning ,it is a symbol of passion and love – so when they give you a rose ,it mean that they love you. But sometime we don't pay attention about that and sometimes we misunderstand and get confused

Clearly, studying semantics in general and the components of word meaning (denotation and connotation) in particular is necessary for students of English so that they can understand and use them better. That is reason why the author decide to choose the reasearch titled “ **A study on denotation and connotation in English**”

2. Aims of the study

This study aims at several points:

Firstly, its aims to help students distinguish between denotation and connotation clearly.

Secondly, it can enhance knowledge about denotation and connotation for students. So students can apply them well and use them easily and avoid misunderstanding and confusion

Finally, it discusses some problems learners of English face when studying denotation and connotation; and suggests some solutions to overcome those problems

The author hope that this study will be an useful material for the English students who are interested in semantics especially denotation and connotation

3. Scope of the study

Within the shortage of time, experience, and references, my graduation paper can not cover all aspects of word meaning. Its mainly focuses on the main features of denotation and connotation in English and give typical examples for illustration

4. Method of the study

This research is carried out basing on the main method which analyzes and gives examples for denotation and connotation.

Firstly , to do this research, the author essentially collected my knowledgment about semantic , especially about denotation and connotaion . And then, the author systemized them and analyzed them. Moreover, the author differentiated denotation and connotation. After that, the author illustrate them by some examples. Besides it, to do this research, the author refered so websites online , dictionary and different books on semantics

5. Design of the study

The research paper comes into three parts in which the second is the most important

The first, INTRODUCTION , writes about the rationale, aim, scope, method, and design of the study

The second, namely DEVELOPMENT, consists of three chapters:

- Chapter 1: the theoretical background informs readers about basic knowledge of denotation and connotation, the types of denotation and connotation and examples
- Chapter 2 : discusses denotation and connotation to distinguish them clearly
- Chapter 3: some problems in studying denotation and connotation , and suggested solutions

The third, CONCLUSION, summarizes what have been investigated in the previous section and suggestions for further study

PART 2: DEVELOPMENT

CHAPTER1: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

1.Word meaning

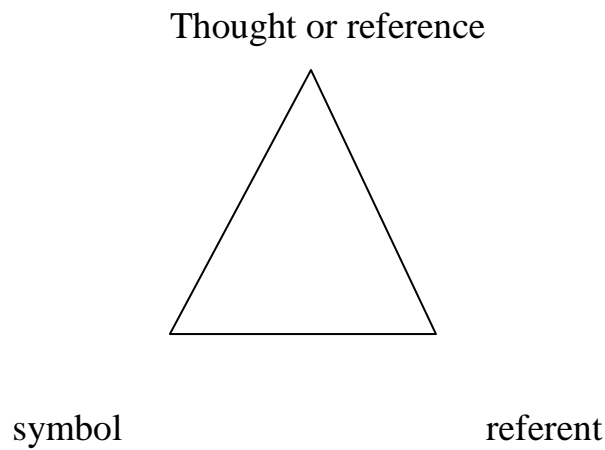
1.1. What is word meaning?

The issue of defining the meaning of the words is by no means an easy task. There has been quite a number of attempts designed to define what the meaning of the word is. For example, one of the oldest views is that the word in a language stands for, or refers to an object. In other words, words are names or labels for things- hence the theory of naming

However, there are certain facts of which we can be reasonably sure, and one of them is that the very function of the word as a unit of communication is made possible by its possessing a meaning. Therefore, among the word's various characteristic, word meaning is certainly the most important

According to Nguyen Manh Hung (English lexicology,2000:34) : Generally speaking, “ meaning can be more or less described as a component of the word through which a concept is communicated, in this way endowing the word with the ability of denoting real objects, qualities, actions and abstract notions”

The complex and somewhat mysterious relationships between referent, concept and word are traditionally represented by the following triangle



On the other hand, there is a hypothesis, according to which concepts can only be realized through words. It seems that thought is dormant till the word wakens it up

The mechanism by which concepts are converted into words and the reverse process by which a heard or a printed word is converted into a kind of mental picture are not yet understood or described

1.2. Types of word meaning

1.2.1. Literal meaning:

According to the website www.philosophy.hku.hk: “Literal meaning is a property of linguistic expressions. Roughly speaking, the literal meaning of a complex sequence of words is determined by its grammatical properties and the meanings that are conventionally assigned to those words. The literal meaning of a statement should be distinguished from its *conversational implicature* - the information that is implicitly conveyed in a particular conversational context, distinct from the literal meaning of the statement.”

For example, suppose we ask Lily whether she wants to go to the cinema and she replies, "I am very tired." Naturally we would infer that Lily does not want to go to the cinema. But this is not part of the literal meaning of what is said. Rather, the information that she does not want to go is conveyed in an

implicit manner. Similarly, suppose we hear Lala says, "Po likes books". We might perhaps take Lala to be saying that Po likes to read. But this is only the conversational implicature, and not part of the literal meaning of what is being said. It might turn out that Po hates reading and she likes books only because she regards them as good investment. But even if this is the case, Lala's assertion is still true.

1.2.2. Figurative meaning

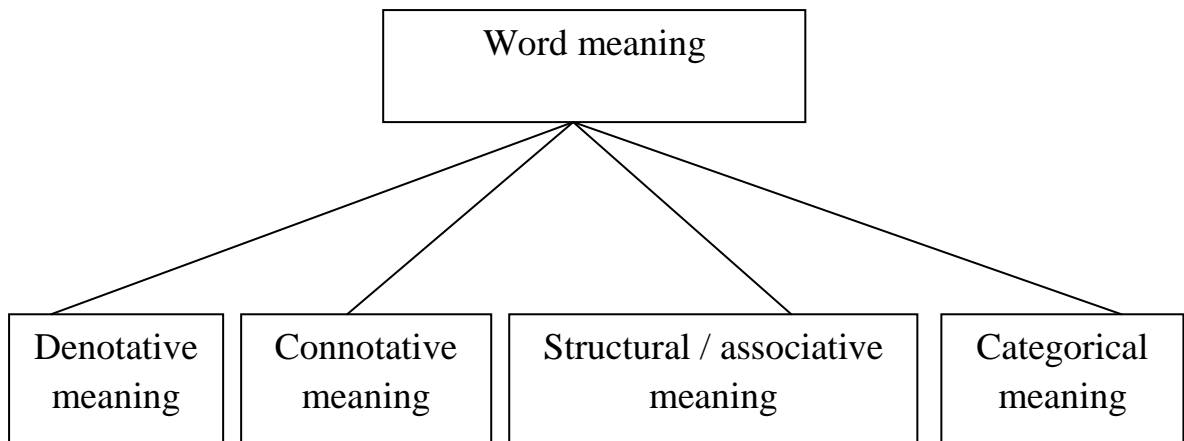
According to the website www.learnoutlive.com :“Figurative” has the same root as “figure,” which is another word for a diagram, display; an image or illustration. A “figurative” meaning is a meaning that is not literal; the meaning used is not the meaning of the word or phrase itself, but a different meaning implied by it. This meaning is dependent on culture and history. This is the “indirect” meaning.

For example, one expression for a bad excuse is “the dog ate my homework.” The reference is not usually to a child literally, that is, in reality, claiming that his homework was eaten by his family dog. This excuse is considered representative of all bad excuses, because it is very unlikely a dog actually ate your homework! Far more likely is that you (or the child, rather) was lazy and unmotivated and simply did not work hard enough to finish the homework on time.

“The dog ate my homework” therefore has a **figurative** meaning of “making a ridiculous, bad excuse for failure.”

Words used in their “figurative” meanings like this are often called metaphors, because they point elsewhere for their true meaning; expressions, because they express an idea without having to be “literal” and therefore slower; and sayings, because they are “things people say” to express ideas. However, a “saying” is usually a complete sentence; metaphors and expressions can be smaller than a sentence.

1.3. Components of word meaning



1.3.1. Denotative meaning

The meaning of the word is very rich. It reflects culture and tradition of each nation in the most reliable way. Hence, there are also many concepts of denotation

However, it seems quite difficult to give a clear out definition to them,for it possesses several meaning, which might cause us confusion. Some definitions introduced as follows will help the reader answer the question what denotation is.

According to **Online dictionary Wikipedia**: “*the denotation of a word or phrase is a part of its meaning; however, the part referred to varies by context: Denotation is often associated with symbolism, as the denotation of a particular media text often represents something further; a hidden meaning (or an Engima Code) is often encoded into a media text (such as the images below)*”.



the denotation of this example is a red rose with a green stem.



The denotation is a brown cross.

According to **Hoang Tat Truong (Absic English lexicology,1993:54)**: “The denotative meaning indicates (denotes) or points out things, concepts, etc”. For instance, bird denote an animal that can fly. Father, dad and daddy denote the male parent. Ran, shine denote the phenomena of nature.

According to **About.com** “*Denotation is the direct or dictionary meaning of a word*”.

E.g : The **denotation** of the word *home* is simply "a place where one lives"

According to **Nguyen Hoa (understanding English semantic,2004, 98)** : “*Denotation is the ability of a word or expression to identify all the objects covered by a word*”

E.g : The word “computer” is used to denote a wide range of computing machines in different shapes and sizes, which may be called computers

According to **Holt.Rinehart and Winston (An introduction to language, 205)** : “*Denotation is what we have been discussing so far.It is that type of meaning which may be described in terms of a set of semantic properties which serves to identify the particular concept associated with the word in question*”

The denotation include : conceptual meaning and referential meaning

a) Conceptual meaning:

According to **Nguyen Hoa (understanding English semantic, 2004,51)**: “*This kind of meaning is widely assumed to be the central factor in linguistic communication. It has a complex and sophisticated organization (it is useful to be reminded that there are two structural principles that seem to lie at the basis of all linguistic patterning :contrastiveness and structure)*”

E.g : A word “chair” ; a piece of furniture designed for one person to sit upon

According to **Online Dictionary Wikipedia** :” *A **conceptual definition** is an element of the scientific research process, in which a specific concept is defined as a measurable occurrence. It basically gives you the meaning of the concept. It is mostly used in fields of philosophy, psychology, communication studies. This is especially important when conducting a content analysis.*”

E.g : A word “weight” : A measurement of gravitational force acting on an object

b) Referential meaning :

According to **Lexicology.com** “*Referential meaning referring or pointing to something*”

According to **Nguyen Hoa (Understanding English semantic ,2004,52)** : “*This is the ability to refer to objects or things (often called referent)*”

E.g : *Can you get me a book ?*

Nguyen Hoa(2004:52)

It could be a history book , a notebook, or whatever image appears before the mind’ s eye representing to that person; a book

1.3.1.1. Denotation and reference

As mentioned above, Denotation by definition is the ability of a word to identify all those things or objects that are correctly covered by it. For example, the word “hat” is used to help the speaker of a language to see and recognize all the things that may be called hat. In this respect, it is the conceptual component of the lexical meaning of a word. Thus, the denotation of a word or expression is the invariant and utterance-independent: it is as J. Lyons (1994) puts it, part of the meaning which the word has in the language-system, independently of its use on particular occasions of utterance. Reference, on the other hand, is the relationship that holds between a word or expression and the objects it refers to (called referent). When one says: “*I saw a car in the corner*”, the phrase “a car” or “my car” or “his car” will refer to a particular member of the class on a particular occasion. Therefore, reference is variable and utterance-dependent. Regrettably, the difference between denotation and reference is often ignored

Another point we want to make clear is by means of reference, a speaker wants to indicate a particular thing in a particular situation, not things in general. Thus, in the following sentence:

- *My daughter wants to be a doctor*

Reference occurs merely in “my daughter”, not in “a doctor”. Put differently, only “my daughter” can be perceived to have a referent, not “a doctor”. In:

- *A good student is a person who studies well*

There is no reference, or in other words, no referents.

1.3.1.2. Denotation and sense

According to Lyons (1977: 207), by the denotation of a lexeme is meant “the relationship that holds between that lexeme and persons, things, places, properties, processes and activities external to the language-system.” A lexeme, in general, denoted a class of entities in the world. For example, the

lexeme ‘shirt’ denotes a class of pieces of clothing worn on the upper part of the body; the lexeme ‘student’ denotes all the students in the world; and the lexeme ‘happy’ denotes the property of being happy. Denotation, thus, is invariant and context-independent.

Lyons makes a distinction between denotation and reference. He defines reference as the relationship that holds between a language expression such as *this shirt* or *that student* and what that expression refers to on particular occasions of its utterance. The expression *this shirt* may refer to one shirt or another depending on who utters the expression. Reference is, consequently, utterance-dependent. Lexemes do not have reference, but may be used as components of referring expressions in particular contexts of utterance. Some authors, however, do not distinguish denotation and reference. They consider the denotation and reference of a language expression are the same. Allan (quoted in Bright 1995: 410) argues that “the denotation of a language expression is what a speaker or writer uses it to mean on the world evoked by a text in which the word appears”. The denotation or reference of ‘my car’ and ‘yesterday’ in the sentence: “*I totaled my car yesterday*”. It depends on who makes the utterance (which distinguishes his or her car) and when (which dates yesterday).

Lyons also makes a distinction between denotation and sense. Unlike denotation, sense is defined to “hold between the words and expressions of a single language” (1977: 206). The sense of a lexeme is a set or a network of the relations between that lexeme and other lexemes or expressions of the same language. Such relations are called sense-relations, which is wholly internal to the language-system. Denotation and sense are related to each other: we would not know the one without having some knowledge of the other.

Denotation and sense can be applied to a lexeme or a larger expression. The denotation and sense of a composite expression is “a compositional function of the denotation and sense of its component parts” (Lyons 1995: 81). For example, the lexeme ‘shirt’, apart from its denotation, is also related, in various ways, to other lexemes: ‘clothing’, ‘clothes’, ‘blouse’, etc.; and the composite expression ‘a yellow shirt’ has its denotation and sense, which combines the denotation and sense of ‘yellow’ and ‘shirt’.

To put it in a nutshell, denotation, reference and sense are closely related to one another. The denotation and sense of a lexeme are of important value in making up of its descriptive meaning. Meaning is not only descriptive, but expressive and social as well. The following section will be about the expressive and social meaning, termed ‘connotation’.

1.3.2. Connotative meaning

Like denotation, there are many different definitions of connotation

According to **Nguyen Hoa (2004:52)** :” *Connotative meaning is the communicative value that an expression has by virtue of what it refers to, over and above its purely conceptual content. This kind of meaning is rather unstable : that is they vary considerably according to culture, historical period, and the experience of the individual*”

E.g : A word “ snake”

- To people in general: neutral connotation: a cold- blooded, legless, reptile, has little emotional content
- To snake- bitten people: negative connotation: horrible, dangerous, scary animal

Some, such as **Holt. Rinehart and Winston (an introduction to language; 205)**: “*Connotations arise as words becomes associated with certain*

characteristic of the items to which they refer". For instance, The burdening of women for many year with attributes such as frailty, inconstancy and irrationality has resulted in these becoming connotations of the word *women* for many people. The word "for many people" are important here; connotation are related to the real- word experience that one associates with a word, and they will therefore vary (unlike denotative meaning) from individual to individual, and community to community. The word *women* is thus likely to have different connotations for a misogynist than it will have for a feminist

According to **About. Com** " *Connotation is The emotional implications and associations that a word may carry*". For example, The name *reservation* has a negative **connotation** among Native Americans-an intern camp of sorts."

According to **Brighthub.com** : " *Connotation is the associated or secondary meaning of a word or expression in addition to its explicit or primary meaning.*"

According to **Eng.fju.edu.tw** : "*Connotation, on the other hand, refers to the associations that are connected to a certain word or the emotional suggestions related to that word.*". This definition can be understood clearly through the example 'snake'. The connotations for the word *snake* could include evil or danger.

According to **Blurit.com** : " *Connotation is a feeling, having to do with association or implication*" In other way, connotation related to feeling of speaker. Taking the example " A red rose " .Its connotation is the symbol of love and passion.

Like the denotation, it is difficult to give exact definition of connotation. But the author think connotative meaning is the communicative value an expression has by virtue of what it refer, over and above its purely conceptual content. Connotations can be considered as an additional meaning to denote .

The connotation is vary considerably according to culture, historical period and personal experience.

➤ **Types of Connotation: stylistic, affective, evaluative, and intensifying**

a. Stylistic meaning :

When associations at work concerns the situation in which the word is uttered, the social circumstances (formal, familiar, colloquial...), the social relationships between the interlocutors (polite, rough) , the type of purpose of communication (learned, poetic, official), this connotation is stylistic.

E.g: Horse vs steed, help vs assist, residence vs house

b. Affective meaning(or emotional)

Affective meaning is acquired by the word as a result of its frequent use in contexts corresponding to emotional situations or because the referent conceptualized and named in the denotative meaning is associated with emotions. For example: “*beseech*” means to ask eagerly and also anxiously

c. Evaluative meaning

Evaluative meaning expresses approval or disapproval

E.g : *magic, witchcraft and sorcery.*In which the words “*magic, sorcery*” have positive meaning but “*witchcraft*” has negative meaning

d.Intensifying meaning: which is expressive and emphatic

E.g : *magnificent, gorgeous, splendid, superb, terrbly, extremely.* In which the word “*gorgeous, terribly*” are expressive. An the words “ *magnificent, splendid, superb, extremely*” are emphatic

1.3.3. Structural / associative meaning

It includes: reflected meaning, collocative meaning, associative meaning, thematic meaning

a. Reflected meaning

This is the meaning which arises in cases of multiple conceptual meaning, when one sense of a word forms part of our response to another sense. For example, *the 40th president of the US* and *the Great Communicator* both refer to Ronald Reagan. *The Great Communicator* sounds better, and is more about Reagan's personality than his job (*the 40th President of the US*), which sounds cool

b. Collocative meaning

It consists of the associations a word acquires on account of the meanings of words which tend to occur in its environment

It should be noted that reflected, collective, social and affective meanings have more in common with connotative meaning than with conceptual meaning; they all have the same open-ended, variable character, and lend themselves to analysis in terms of scales or ranges

E.g: Artificial limb / flower

False teeth / passport

c. Associative meaning

This is also the meaning which arises because of its association with other meanings

E.g : good vs bad; buy vs sell; hard vs soft.

When a person hears the word "good" for example, he is more likely to think of "bad" as well

d. Thematic meaning

This is the kind of meaning which is communicated by the way in which a speaker or writer organizes the message in terms of ordering, focus, and emphasis

E.g : A man is waiting in the hall vs there's a man waiting in the hall

The dog chased the cat vs the cat was chased by the dog

1.3.4.Categorical meaning

Categorical meaning is one part of grammatical meaning which words derive from being a member of one category rather than another

E.g: Strong(adj) strength(n)

Strengthen(v) strongly(adv)

In brief, the word meaning has four components. That are : denotative meaning, connotative meaning, structural meaning, and categorical meaning. These components are very important. But,in my study, the author also study denotative meaning and connotative meaning

CHAPTER 2: AN INSIGHT INTO DENOTATION AND CONNOTATION

2.1. Relatedness between denotation and connotation

As mentioned above, the author gave many definitions of denotation and connotation. In general, we may distinguish between two types of meaning, denotation and connotation. Denotation is the ability of a word or expression to identify all the objects covered by a word. These objects, which are diverse in reality, do share certain features relevant enough to be identified as covered by a word. For example, the word “computer” is used to denote a wide range of computing machines in different shapes and sizes, which may be called computer. This is the particular concept associated with the word / expression in question

Some scholars argue that the denotation of a word/expression includes another part called the referential component (or reference)- hence a confusion between denotation and reference

In addition, a word may convey certain affective or evaluative associations, generally referred to as connotation. Connotation arises as words become associated with certain characteristics of the items to which they refer. The term ‘connotation’ is particularly rich in technical senses. In this study, it is used in opposition with denotation and sense – the components of descriptive meaning of a lexeme. Connotation is, in fact, less stable than denotation because it is often dependent on the context, open-ended, and inevitably encodes culture information. Let us consider words such as *WC*, *toilet*. These words by themselves may be said to be devoid of any connotative values. Since the objects they name are unpleasant, in the course of time, these words have become ‘unpleasant’ as well. Such words as democracy, freedom, for instance, frequently occur with emotive connotations that we are all aware of.

“Cheap’ and “ inexpensive’ may have the same denotation but the connotation of “shoddiness” which is normally carried by “cheap’ does not occur in “inexpensive” to “cheap” in certain contexts. Connotative meaning is open-ended in the same way as our knowledge and beliefs about the universe

In general, we can understand simply that Denotation shows the concepts, and connotation shows characteristics related to the concepts. So, connotation comes from the denotation.

We can understand clearly through some examples:

* The word “dumbness” :

+ it denotes "the condition of being mute," and it connotes "the condition of being stupid."

* The word “blue” :

The denotation is the pure color of a clear sky; the primary color between green and violet in the visible spectrum.

The connotation :

+ the negative connotation :it make u feel bored, depressed about something

+ the positive connotation : blue is significant in religious beliefs, brings peace, or is believed to keep the bad spirits away. The color blue, a nature color, from the blue of the sky, is one of the coolest colors a universal color. The cool, calming effect of blue makes time pass more quickly and it can help you sleep

* The word “green”:

The denotation is the color of growing foliage, between yellow and blue in the spectrum

The connotation is the color of love because it is life color. So, everything green in life has a soul and full of life because they are inseparable. The color green signals affect each one of us and give us a sense of relief, comfort, and love.

* The word “yellow”:

Its denotation is a color like that of egg yolk, ripe lemons, etc.; the primary color between green and orange in the visible spectrum.

Its connotation :As we know, pure, bright and sunny yellow is the easiest color to see. People who are blind to other colors can usually see yellow. Yellow is full of creative and intellectual energy. So sometimes , it connotes to self- confident person. Moreover, Yellow symbolizes wisdom. Yellow means joy and happiness. People of high intellect favor yellow. Yellow daffodils are a symbol of unrequited love. Sunday's color is yellow-gold.

* The word “dog”:

Its denotation is the name of one kind animal, domesticated canid, *Canis familiaris*, bred in many varieties.

Its connotation:

- In Arabic culture, it brings negative connotation of dirt and inferiority
- In Vietnam culture, it brings negative connotation of a despicable man or youth
- In British culture, it brings positive connotation of friendship and loyalty

* The word “snake”:

Its denotation is the name of one kind species inhabiting tropical and temperate areas.

Its connotation: - to people in general: it brings neutral connotation of a cold-blooded, a treacherous person; an insidious enemy, legless reptile, has little emotional content

- to snake - bitten people: it brings negative connotation of horrible, dangerous, scary animal

* The word "sheep":

Its denotation is the name of numerous ruminant mammals closely related to the goats, raised in many breeds for wool, edible flesh, or skin.

Its connotation: the sheep are of a gregarious nature...meaning they love to be with the herd, they are herbivores. Sheep must have a leader (shepherd) and must be told what to do and where to go, other wise they'll wander off and get lost. So from this, it bring neutral connotaion of timid, silly, or easily-led person

* The word "goat":

Its denotation is the name of numerous agile, hollow-horned ruminants

Its connotation : During the Middle Ages, the Devil was portrayed in the form of a male goat or with various goat-like traits either because of the animal's supposed lechery or its association with various pagan deities and images such as the Goat of Mendes, Pan, and Baphomet. (At this time "Baphomet" was wrongly used as a name for Satan.) According to folk belief, his blood then starts to boil with lust and becomes hot enough to melt diamonds. The adult male is the symbol of lust and the lecherous man whose craving for sex cannot be controlled or satisfied; 240 women are not enough for his needs. So, A goat often brings neutral connotation of a licentious or lecherous man; lecher

* The word “fox”:

Its denotation is the name of several carnivores of the dog family, smaller than wolves, having a pointed, slightly upturned muzzle, erect ears, and a long, bushy tail.

Its connotation: fox is animal bring some characteristic like cleverness, observational skills, cunning, stealth, camouflage, feminine, courage, invisibility, ability to observe unseen, persistence, gentleness, swiftness, wisdom, reliable friend, magic, shape shifting, invisibility. so it brings neutral connotation of a cunning or crafty person.

* The word “lamb”

It denote a young sheep.

Sheep is an animal which must have a leader (shepherd) and must be told what to do and where to go, other wise they'll wander off and get lost. A young sheep is easy gotten lost. So lamb connotes a person who is gentle, meek, innocent, easily cheated or outsmarted, esp. an inexperienced speculator

* The word “bee”

Bee is any hymenopterous insect of the superfamily Apoidea, including social and solitary species of several families, as the bumblebees, honeybees, etc.

The bee reminds us of the value in expanding our perception of what is possible. For this tiny creature, whose wings are deemed too small to support its body aerodynamically in flight, does in fact achieve the seemingly impossible: it soars through its speed, determination, and perseverance. It manages to collect and carry more than its own weight in nectar, gathering more sweetness than one would expect. It's community and hive are models

of unity in the structure, function, and order that enable the entire community to thrive.

There is much to admire about the bee and its ways, much that we can learn and incorporate into our own lives:

- The rewards of focus, dedication, and staying on task.
- The value in pollinating ideas and helping others to create and bloom.
- The importance of working harmoniously in community.
- The joy of finding and experiencing the “honey” in life.

Besides it, bee connote to the person who work very hard, laborious

- * The word “rose”:

Its denotation is a red rose with a green stem.

The connotation is that it is a symbol of passion and love - this is what the rose represents.

- * The word “carnation”:

Its denotation is any of numerous cultivated varieties of the clove pink, *Dianthus caryophyllus*, having long-stalked, fragrant, usually double flowers in a variety of colors

The meanings of carnations include fascination, distinction, and love. Like many other flowers, different messages can also be expressed with the flower’s different color varieties. Light red carnations, for example, are often used to convey admiration, whereas the dark red version expresses deeper sentiments of love and affection. White carnations are associated with purity and luck, and pink carnations are often given as a sign of gratitude. In the early part of the 20th century, carnations became the official flower of

Mother's Day in addition finding particular significance in many other cultures worldwide.

* The word “pink carnation”:

Its denotes the name of one kind of carnation flowers

Pink carnations have the most symbolic and historical significance. According to a Christian legend, carnations first appeared on Earth as Jesus carried the Cross. The Virgin Mary shed tears at Jesus' plight, and carnations sprang up from where her tears fell. Thus the pink carnation became the symbol of a mother's undying love.^[6]

* The word “ daisy”

It denotes any of various composite plants the flowers of which have a yellow disk and white rays, as the English daisy and the oxeye daisy.

It connotes of a high- minded person and someone or something of first-rate quality

* The word “lotus”

It denote any aquatic plant of the genus *Nelumbo*, of the water lily family, having shieldlike leaves and showy, solitary flowers usually projecting above the water. having red, pink, yellow, or white flowers.

Almost lotus related to the Buddhist symbol so when mention to the lotus, we need it bring some connotations like:

- *White Lotus* This represents the state of spiritual perfection and total mental purity (bodhi). It is associated with the White Tara and proclaims her perfect nature, a quality which is reinforced by the color of her body.

- *Red Lotus* This signifies the original nature and purity of the heart (hrdya). It is the lotus of love, compassion, passion and all other qualities of the heart. It is the flower of Avalokiteshvara, the bodhisattva of compassion.
- *Blue Lotus* This is a symbol of the victory of the spirit over the senses, and signifies the wisdom of knowledge. Not surprisingly, it is the preferred flower of Manjushri, the bodhisattva of wisdom.
- *Pink Lotus* This the supreme lotus, generally reserved for the highest deity. Thus naturally it is associated with the Great Buddha himself.

* The word ‘violet’:

The denotation : Violet denote any chiefly low, stemless or leafy-stemmed plant of the genus Viola, having purple, blue, yellow, white, or variegated flowers. Compare violet family .

The Greek word for violet is io. Io is a character in Greek mythology and the daughter of King Argos. Zeus loved her. However, Zeus was concerned that Hera would discover their illicit affair, so he turned Io into a heifer and then created the sweet-scented flowers that we now know as violets for her to eat while in her heifer form. Another story, The scent of violets was the favorite perfume of Josephine Bonaparte. When Napoleon returned from banishment in Elba, Josephine was dead. He picked a bouquet of violets for her grave before then being exiled to Elba. When Napoleon died, violets and a lock of Josephine’s hair were found in a locket. through these love story, violet (forget – me – not) connotes loving remembrance, faithful love, constancy and undying hope.

* The word “heart”

Its denotation is hollow, pump like organ of blood circulation, composed mainly of rhythmically contractile smooth muscle, located in the chest between the lungs and slightly to the left and consisting of four chambers

Heart is the center of the total personality, esp. with reference to intuition, feeling, or emotion. It is capacity for sympathy; feeling; affection. So the connotation of heart is a symbol of love and affection, not in the way of a rose, but a symbol of true love.

* The word "police"

It denotes to anybody of people officially maintained or employed to keep order, enforce regulations, etc.

It connotes for the regulation and control of a community, esp. for the maintenance of public order, safety, health, morals, etc

* The word "breezy":

In denotation it means that there might be some wind today.

In connotation, these words/feelings come to mind: Cool, light, refreshed, summer, spring, fall, etc.

* The word "father" :

"father" *denotes* the male parent.

Father is a person who has begotten. so it *connotes* prior existence, greater experience, affections, guidance

* The word "ugly"

It *denotes* what is unpleasing to our sight; it *connotes* repellent effect or immunity from the dangers peculiar to beauty.

* The word “chair”

“Chair” may be defined denotatively as a piece of furniture with a back and four legs designed to be sat upon.

The connotation of a word would reveal the speaker's emotional response to the word. For example, if you've been walking all day and you finally get a chance to rest you might see a chair and say "Ah! At last a chair." The word would have a positive connotation. If however, you were walking through a dark room and tripped over a chair, hurting yourself, you might say "Stupid chair!" and the word would have a negative connotation.

Through the examples, we can see that all words have a denotation, and most have connotations. Sometimes connotations are based on a general idea or stereotype of the word/term and sometimes it can be based upon the user/hearer of that term's personal experience. Denotation is the dictionary definition of a term, while connotation is the feeling you get when you hear/use that term. So, for example, the word "politician" has the denotation, or definition of:

- a leader engaged in civil administration
- a person active in party politics

However, the connotation of the word "politician" can be very different...when you think of a politician or hear that word, what do you think of? What do you feel? That's the connotation. Most of the time, the term "politician" has a negative connotation...it's a word that doesn't make you feel good . You think of deceit, negativity, selfishness, or, as **wordnet.princeton.edu** puts it, "a schemer who tries to gain advantage in an organization in sly or underhanded ways". That's a very negative connotation!

2.2. Distinction between the denotation and connotation

In general, a word's denotation is whatever the word directly refers to, roughly equivalent to its lexical definition. Thus, the word "atheist" denotes a person who disbelieves in or denies the existence of gods. A word's connotation refers to any subtle nuances that might or might not be intended by its use. For example, one possible connotation for the word "atheist" might be someone who is immoral and wicked, depending upon who is doing the speaking or listening.

Separating denotation from connotation is important because while one might assume that a word's denotation is fully intended, whether a word's connotations are intended is much more difficult to determine. Connotations are often emotional in nature, and thus if they are intended, it may be for the purpose of saying a person's emotional reactions rather than the logical evaluation of an argument.

If there are misunderstandings about how a person is using a word in a particular debate, a primary source of that misunderstanding might lie in the word's connotations: people might be seeing something not intended or the speaker may be intending something people don't see. In constructing your own arguments, it's a good idea not merely to look at what your words denote, but also what they connote.

At least, that's what some philosophers argue. Others disagree and argue the contrary: that a word is used to first describe a list of objects thought to be similar in some important ways and then, once this denotation of the word is established, the connotation is developed by teasing out a set of reasonable characteristics from the list of objects. Thus, the connotation is determined by the denotation.

Actually, I think that to find out the distinction between the denotation and connotation is very difficult. There are many different ideas of many specialists about them. Let us see these ideas:

Beyond its 'literal' meaning (its denotation), a particular word may have connotations: for instance, sexual connotations. In semiotics, denotation and connotation are terms describing the relationship between the signifier and its signified, and an analytic distinction is made between two types of signifieds: a *denotative* signified and a *connotative* signified. Meaning includes both denotation and connotation.

“Denotation” tends to be described as the definitional, 'literal', 'obvious' or 'commonsense' meaning of a sign. In the case of linguistic signs, the denotative meaning is what the dictionary attempts to provide. For the art historian Erwin Panofsky, the denotation of a representational visual image is what all viewers from any culture and at any time would recognize the image as depicting (Panofsky 1970a, 51-3). Even such a definition raises issues - *all* viewers? One suspects that this excludes very young children and those regarded as insane, for instance. But if it really means 'culturally well-adjusted' then it is already culture-specific, which takes us into the territory of connotation. The term 'connotation' is used to refer to the socio-cultural and 'personal' associations (ideological, emotional etc.) of the sign. These are typically related to the interpreter's class, age, gender, ethnicity and so on. Signs are more 'polysemic' - more open to interpretation - in their connotations than their denotations.

Consequently, whilst theorists may find it analytically useful to distinguish connotation from denotation, in practice such meanings cannot be neatly separated. Most semioticians argue that no sign is purely denotative - lacking connotation. Valentin Voloshinov insisted that no strict division can be made between denotation and connotation because 'referential meaning is moulded

by evaluation... meaning is always permeated with value judgement' (Voloshinov 1973, 105). There can be no neutral, objective description which is free of an evaluative element. David Mick and Laura Politi note that choosing not to differentiate denotation and connotation is allied to regarding comprehension and interpretation as similarly inseparable (Mick & Politi 1989, 85).

Some, such as The philosopher John Stuart Mill was one of the earliest modern advocates of a direct reference theory beginning in 1843. In his *A System of Logic* Mill introduced a distinction between what he called "connotation" and "denotation." Connotation is a relation between a name (singular or general) and one or more attributes. For example, 'widow' denotes widows and connotes the attributes of being female, and of having been married to someone now dead. If a name is connotative, it denotes what it denotes in virtue of object or objects having the attributes the name connotes. Connotation thus determines denotation. The same object can, on the other hand, be denoted with several names with different connotations. A name can have connotation but no denotation. Connotation of a name, if it has one, can be taken to be its meaning in Mill.

According to Mill, most individual concrete names are connotative, but some, namely proper names, are not. In other words, proper names do not have meaning. All general terms, on the other hand, are according to Mill connotative. In sum, Mill's overall picture resembles very much

According to **www.instructorweb.com** : The difference between denotation and connotation is very simple. Denotation is the straight definition of the word and connotation is the feeling or sense that it gives you

E.g. the word "breezy". In denotation it means that there might be some wind today. In connotation, these words/feelings come to mind: Cool, light, refreshed, summer, spring, fall, etc.

In addition to that, Connotation is often emotional in nature, so if it is intended, it may be for the purpose of showing a person's emotional reactions rather than the logical evaluation of an argument, i.e. happiness, "A feeling of luck, good spirit." It would be the dictionary definition of happiness. The connotation can be something like marriage, flowers, bright colors, rainbows, smiles etc. These would be words that would come into our mind when we thought of happiness.

According to **grammar about.com** : Denotation is the dictionary meaning of a word. Connotation is the emotional overtones or nuances that the word is understood to have, but which don't necessarily show up in the dictionary.

So, for example, the words "youngster" and "child" both have the same denotation. However, they have slightly different connotations. "Youngster" seems more of a playful, light-hearted word while "child" is more neutral.

Another example is the difference in connotation between the words "house" and "home." They can both mean the same thing, but "home" has a much warmer connotation than house.

Other, like Lyons (1977:287) and Leech , do not accept the binary distinction and prefer to use denotation and connotation in a rather specific sense. However, these divergent views can not conceal the fact that connotation is closely associated with synonymy. In other words, synonyms may have the same denotation, i.e cognitive, or conceptual meaning , but differ in connotation

E.g : For example, both "**woman**" and "**chick**" have the denotation "adult female" but in North American society, but "chick" has somewhat negative connotations, while "woman" is neutral.

E.g : The words **home**, **house**, **residence** and **dwelling** all have the same denotation, but the connotation of each word is very different.

Denotation: Where a person lives at any given time.

Connotation:

+ Home: its connotations (feelings) of warmth, security, love, and cozy, comfortable

+ House: its connotation is the actual building or structure

+ Residence: its connotation is cold, no feeling

+ Dwelling: its connotation is primitive or basic surroundings

E.g: The words “**slim**” and “**skinny**”

"That girl is so slim!" The connotation of the word "slim" is positive. This is a compliment. The evaluation we as a society have put on this word is that it is good to be slim

"That girl is so skinny!" The connotation of this word is negative. Generally it's not good to be "skinny". That being said, with a society more and more obsessed with weight and with a "thin is in" mentality, the connotation of "skinny" is much more positive than in the past.

To look these words up in the dictionary, you would find that their literal meanings (denotation) are very similar, it mean” very lean or thin; emaciated” but we as people evaluate words as being more positive or negative (connotation).

E.g : The words **to shiver** – **to shudder**

They have only denotation which is that a tremble or quiver but its connotation is different

- Shudder :to tremble with a sudden convulsive movement, as from horror , disgust, etc
- Shiver : to shake or tremble with cold, fear, excitement, etc.

E.g : The words **celebrated and notorious**

Denotative meaning, it means widely known

Connotative meaning:

- Notorious: widely and unfavorably known but for criminal acts or bad traits of character
- Celebrated: renowned; well-known but for special achievement in science, art, etc

E.g: The words **mouth and trap**

Both *mouth* and *trap* denote the opening in the body through which food is ingested. *Mouth*, however, is what might be called a neutral term; it conveys information but has no connotations. *Trap*, on the other hand, is a slang word and is often considered to be somewhat vulgar.

E.g: the words **to surprise –to astonish – to amaze**

Their denotation are to make somebody have a sudden feeling of wonder

But their connotation :

- To surprise: to strike or occur to with a sudden feeling of wonder or astonishment, as through unexpectedness
- To astonish: to fill with sudden and overpowering surprise or wonder; amaze
- To amaze: to overwhelm with surprise or sudden wonder; astonish greatly.

E.g: The words **Innocent** and **genuine**

They both denote an absence of corruption, but the connotations of the two words are different: *innocent* is often associated with a lack of experience, whereas *genuine* is not.

E.g: The words **money** and **dough**

They both denote any circulating medium of exchange, including coins, paper money, and demand deposits. But their connotation is different. Money has positive connotation and dough has negative connotation

E.g: The words **face** and **mug**

They denote the front part of the head, from the forehead to the chin. But face connotes the negative meaning, and mug connotes negative meaning

E.g : The words **horse** and **steed**

They both denote a large, solid-hoofed, herbivorous quadruped, *Equus caballus*, domesticated since prehistoric times, bred in a number of varieties, and used for carrying or pulling loads, for riding, and for racing

The horse connotes the neutral meaning . And the steed connotes the positive meaning

So we can see that the biggest different between denotation and connotation is that :denotation shows the concepts that the word expresses. But connotation shows how the concepts are expressed. But to understand the connotation , we first need to know the stylistic aspects of vocabulary:

* *Stylistically english words are divided into two main layers: standard words and non- standard words.*

➤ *The standard word consists :*

- *Neutral word: which take up the majority of the English vocabulary. They are used in all styles, all spheres of human life, neither formal nor informal. They are used in both bookish and colloquial language*
- *Colloquial words:there are two main types of colloquial words:standard colloquial and non- standard colloquial.Colloquial words are used in spoken language rather than in written language.They are informal, casual, lively. They may be also friendly or humorous*

Bbookish words(which are divided into: general bookish word ,scientific/ learned words , poetic and archaic words,and non-assimilated foreign words)

➤ *The non- standard words consists:*

- *Slang word:there are general slang(which used by all people but considered as sub- standard (non- standard) due to excessive informality); special slang(which is used within some social or professional group and is understandable to the members of these group only*
- *Vulgar words: which are “dirty” words used by few people. They are not generally used in public*
- *Dialectal words: belong to only a definite territory or locality*

When we understand the layer of connotation , we can see more clearly about the biggest difference between the denotation and connotation.The connotative meaning of a word conveys the speakers’s attitude, emotions and so on. Especially, it depends on the cultural very much .And then I will give you some example to prove this idea:

E.g: The word “**dog**”: its denotation is simply the name of one kind animal-domesticated canid. But its connotation is different, it depends on the cultural

very much . Like in British culture: England has considered a dog as a friend because they are very useful and loyal to protect their boss even if to be died. So as for England, “dog” brings positive connotation of friendship and loyalty. But in Vietnamese cultural, dog is simply a animal which is raised to keep house. So as for Vietnamese, a dog sometime is used to show a despicable man or youth

Another example, “*bald eagle*” denote any of several large, soaring birds of prey belonging to the hawk family Accipitridae, noted for their size, strength, and powers of flight and vision. But the connotation is different. In the American culture the bald eagle represents American justice and truth, so we can see the symbol “bald eagle” in USA’s flag.

Some , such as the word “*privacy*”. In general it denote the state of being free from intrusion or disturbance in one's private life or affairs. But In English, privacy means state of being away from others, alone and undisturbed while it usually refers to personal secrets and the secrets and unusual behaviors of personal life in Chinese.

Exploitation means use or utilization, esp. for profit. But in English it means using or developing fully so as to get profit while in Chinese, it usually brings negative connotation of selfishly and unfairly for one’s own advantage or profit.

In English culture, *family* usually refers to the family of two generations including parents and children, even refers to the family of a couple, which does not want children. However, in Chinese, the family refers to the family of three generations including grandparents, parents and children; sometimes it even refers to the family of four generations.

The red color is a word denote any of various colors resembling the color of blood; the primary color at one extreme end of the visible spectrum, an effect

of light with a wavelength between 610 and 780 nm. But, in English culture, *red stands for danger*, but in Chinese, *red* brings positive connotations of *happiness, fortune and authority*.

The blue color is the pure color of a clear sky; the primary color between green and violet in the visible spectrum. But in English culture, Blue conveys importance and confidence without being somber or sinister, hence the blue power suit of the corporate world and the blue uniforms of police officers. Long considered a *corporate color*, blue, especially darker blue, is associated with intelligence, stability, unity, and conservatism. Just as *seeing red* alludes to the strong emotions invoked by the color red, *feeling blue* or getting *the blues* represents the extremes of the calm feelings associated with blue, i.e. sadness or depression, lack of strong (violent) emotion. Dark blue is sometimes seen as staid or stodgy — old-fashioned.

In Iran, blue is the color of mourning while in the West the *something blue* bridal tradition represents love.

The tiger in general is a large carnivorous feline mammal (*Panthera tigris*) of Asia, having a tawny coat with transverse black stripes.

But in Japan the tiger is the emblem of the great aristocratic warriors famously known as the samurai. The tiger represents the virtue of courage. It also means revision, improvement, change, and the zen good. In Chinese culture, tiger bring neutral connotation of dignity, ferocity, sternness, courage,. Also a symbol of protection, the image of a tiger is often seen on clothing or in the home to ward off harm any semblance of harm and assure safekeeping. In certain areas of China and Asia, the Tiger is regarded as the God of Wealth. **tiger hunting was the symbol in the construction of British imperial and masculine identities**

The word *police* connotes for the regulation ,especially for the maintenance of public order, safety, health, morals, etc. But in some culture, people call police with different attitudes. For example, in Britain, police sometimes is called Cop or Copper . It is also believed that the term **Copper** was the original, unshortened word, popularly believed to represent the copper badges American officers used to wear at the time of origin, but in fact probably used in Britain to mean "someone who cops" long before this. Crackers is A slang term for the police in Florida especially in south Florida. Apartly, these term is called by crimes with unfreindly attitude

The word “**light- darkness**” . If their denotation shows us whst light and darkness are, their connotation show us know light- darkness symbol for what? As we know, darkness connote falsities and the light connotes truths. But in the Bible, the light connote the Lord and the darkness connote the hell.

However, it is sometimes difficult to draw the line between “connotation” , which is essentially stylistic , and “denotation”. To illustrate this point, Lyons (1977:618) argues that in Scots English, the word *loch* (vs. *lake*) can be regarded either as a dialectally marked variant of the Standazd English word or as a different lexeme, with a specific “descriptive meaning” or “denotation” , and a connotation of “Scottishness”

For the supporters of the binary distinction between denotation and connotation, denotative meaning refers to the relationship between a linguistic sign and its denotatum or referent. However ,connotations constitute additional properties of lexemes, e.g. poetic, slang, baby language, biblical, casual, colloquial, formal, humorous, legal, literary, rhetorical. Denotation and connotation are both important in order to determine word meaning in a given context.

As a final observation, it must be acknowledged that words are not normally used in isolation, but are combined with other words to form larger units

expressing various relationships. These units constitute the linguistic context in which a specific word operates

Through the ideas of many specialists, we can see clearly the distinction between the denotation and connotation. They gave many examples to analyse their ideas. In brief, the author thinks the distinction between denotation and connotation can be that:

Denotative meaning	Connotative meaning
The explicit, literal meaning dictionary definition	Values, judgments, evaluative implications behind the literal meaning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denotation involves a broader consensus. The denotational meaning of a sign would be broadly agreed upon by members of the same culture, and by different cultures • The denotative meaning has neutral content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connotative meaning is determined by the cultural codes to which the interpreter has access • The connotative meaning of a word can have a strong emotional content

Word meaning is very important, especially, is denotative meaning and connotative meaning. Through them, we can understand what the speaker wants to say with us. They, especially connotation, play a major role in the language of advertising, of politics, and of literature. Indeed in these varieties connotations may be so powerful that they swamp the denotative meaning altogether. Words such as democracy, freedom, and communism, for instance, frequently occur with emotive connotation of such a highly-charged nature that speakers may be blind to the fact that there is no agreed-upon definition

underlying their use. It is their potent affective meanings which makes such words attractive to the propagandist, or political fanatic who wishes to arouse strong feelings without inviting critical examination of his case.

CHAPTER 3: SOME PROBLEM FACING STUDENTS IN STUDYING DENOTATION AND CONNOTATION

AND SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS TO OVERCOME THEM

3.1. Some problems facing students in studying denotation and connotation

Up to now we've been talking only about the representational part of a word's meaning, but this isn't the only important aspect of a word's total meaning. It's quite common, in fact, for several words that mean the same, or nearly the same, thing to have vastly different impacts on a reader. This is because in addition to the strictly rational part of meaning (called *denotation*) words also carry emotional overtones (called *connotations*). These connotations are stronger in some words than in others. While a word like "mixed-breed" is a neutral way to describe a dog that is not "pure-bred," "mongrel" adds a slightly unfavorable judgment about the dog, and "mutt" proclaims it nearly worthless.

Learning to recognize the emotional overtones in our language allows us greater control over the way readers respond to our writing. Not only do we avoid creating an undercurrent that works against our central purpose, we gain a valuable tool for shaping readers' attitudes toward our subject

But nowadays, students feel difficult to study word meaning, especially, denotation and connotation. As myself, when the author study semantic, the author do not understand it. The author recognized that the main problem which students face is that they do not understand the connotative meaning. General they only understand the denotative meaning. So, when studying the word 's meaning, they confused very much, and misunderstood. For example, if an England present you a violet. You do not understand which mean it is. You simply think that he present you flower. If you think that , you misunderstood. He give you violet, he want to talk with you that he love you faithfully, constantly.

Almost learners when study the word meaning having difficulties to understand . It is caused by the different culture such as living conditions, customs, history, religions and values of life. I recognize that they have been met some difficulties by some reasons:

- The first reason is the different culture. One word has many meanings. To understand the word's meaning depend on the culture. Vietnamese and English have different the culture. This is main difficult making student in Vietnam to misunderstand
- The second reason is the different the context .For example, The word *black* in the context of the following quotations changes its meaning a great deal opening up its innermost layers:
 - a. The Green & the Black.
 - b. The future is black.

The *black* in The Green & the Black refers to Africa as contrasted to the Green which in this context connotes the Libyan president who painted his flag, pamphlets and ideology green. Green has the further connotation of stupid. In the third connotation, Baldwin refers to the possible supremacy of black power in the future while, in the same time, hinting at the destiny waiting those who may choose to counteract this power and foil the black drive to survive. *Black* contextualized, loses its blackness; for more than any other color it is archetypal, deeply-rooted in man's consciousness and it has, all the way through history, been strongly associated with darkness, evil and tragedy.

With the above example, we can see that if we do not know the context, we can not understand the connotative meaning

- The third reason is that we have not known many vocabulary. In studying english, we can not know all word in English. So when we

meet a new word, we do know either the denotative meaning or connotative meaning

- A problem is that students who are not familiar with English, or who are relatively new to writing, may pick a word from the thesaurus that has the same denotation but a totally different connotation. Suddenly a venerated *leader* has instead become a *despot*. While it is good to avoid repetition, it is worse for someone to call himself a cruel and heartless dictator when describing his work with his son's Cub Scout pack.

A further example of the importance of connotation: Look at how many words and phrases there are that all have the denotation *homeless person*, but that have widely differing connotations: hobo, bum, derelict, vagrant, wino, bag lady, king of the road, drifter, wanderer, no-fixed-address, street urchin, free spirit, down-and-out, displaced, refugee ... the list goes on. The choice of word creates an emotional response that influences how the reader thinks about the person the writer describes. A thesaurus isn't going to help the writer to find the right connotation; thus, a writer should avoid the unfamiliar words and stick to the ones whose connotation she knows

3.2. Some suggested solutions to overcome them

People always think that learning a language is just to learn its vocabulary (it means that they also need to know the literal meaning), but they do not understand the other meaning of this word. So , they can be confused if this word meaning has not got in dictionary.

To avoid misunderstanding the meaning word ,the author will give you some suggestions:

- Vietnamese learners must put great effort into learning more about English culture and pursue Vietnamese tradition as well. We must be aware of the cultural differences and national features of them.

- In practice, the most effective way to possess the cultural background knowledge is reading. We can also read those books introducing English and Vietnamese cultures. In addition, if our learning is impeded by new word, we can turn to a dictionary for help. Furthermore, we can gain some knowledge by communicating with foreigners

In fact, the author myself have ever faced much trouble in researching English word's meaning. As far as the author experience, the best way to research as many as possible word's meaning is learning by heart and applying them in suitable context. We should memorize them whenever we meet

One of good habit that is to look up a new word' meaning in good dictionaries to know its meaning exactly. We also find an interesting way to learn English idioms through reading books, newspaper, and magazines in order to understand more about culture, people and society. For example, we can learn it through picture stories in newspaper. Or we have a handbook to write down any word in with their meaning and usage. This will help to remember these word especially difficult ones. we have learnt with our friends, teacher in daily life so that we can remember them easily.

PART 3: CONCLUSION

1. CONCLUSION:

In any language, getting exactly the right word can be difficult. Because English, especially American English, has been built from many different languages, English has even more words than most languages, and more overlapping meanings. Thus, even more than in other languages, English has more words to choose from, with more subtle connotations.

To be successful at choosing exact words for each particular context, you have to understand the denotation and connotation of words. Every word has a denotation, its explicit meaning. You can find the denotation of a word by looking it up in a dictionary. For example, if you look the word “fat” in a dictionary, it will say “having too much adipose tissue”

Some words have connotation, or emotional overtones. These connotation can be positive, negative or neutral. For example, fat has a negative connotation in our fitness- obsessed society. Being sensitive to a word’ denotation and connotation is essential for clear and effective creative writing. It can also help you use the right word and so avoid getting your nose punched out because you insulted someone. Finally, you can use these connotations to create an emotional response in your reader

2. Suggestion for further research

Due to the limitation of my knowledge and time, this paper could not go through all aspects of English idioms. Here are just a few examples with culinary themes. So in order to get a more comprehensive understanding of this subject, the author strongly recommend further researches. The author hope that in the future the author would like to continue researching this interesting subject. And the author would like to take factors relating this theme such as history, society, religion etc... into account to get a more objective view in the research.

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