

## Semantic-Functional Features of Adjectives Describing Character in English

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### Abstract

This article describes semantic-functional features of adjectives and semantic meanings of adjectives in English, there are some examples from Theodore Dreiser's book "Sister Carrie".

### Keywords:

semantic meaning, semantic-functional features, semantics, semantical, syntactical and ontological features of adjectives.

Adjectives denote some properties of things. Adjectives can be defined in texts in several ways: from semantic, lexical, syntactical and grammatical viewpoint. Adjectives describe the features of objects, events, situation and partially actions. This article describes semantic-functional features of adjectives and this article is based on the set of examples of semantic types of adjectives from the great English writer, Theodore Dreiser's book "Sister Carrie".

As an inseparable part of linguistics, adjectives like other parts of speech, nouns and verbs, play a great role in Uzbek and English languages. Few researches were conducted on the lexical-semantic features of adjectives. Uzbek scholars A.G'ulomov, Sh.Rahmatullayev and others worked on the semantic-syntactic features of adjectives in Uzbek. Besides several researchers' works (Dixon, Leech, Quirk) on semantic-syntactic features of adjectives were example for this article. As Dixon pointed out that "the lexical roots in every language can be arranged in numbers of semantic types." According to this, adjectives are classified into several semantic types. Semantically adjectives define the character, color, taste, shape, weight-measure of objects. Adjectives describing character are the words to describe the human properties, their behavioral, intellectual, social and personal features and they refer to the features of objects also. This kind of adjectives are divided into several groups:

1. These adjectives can be positive and negative: a) adjectives defining the positive features of human: polite, kind, gentle, well-bred, intelligent, loyal, peaceful, skillful, clever, brave, cheerful, good, truthful, and etc..

b) Adjectives describing negative sides of human: cruel, bad, tyrant, scoundrel, villain, haughty, flirtatious, selfish, sly and others. Adjectives referring to the characteristics of human may also define people's speech, intention and the parts of body. For example: *He was, for the order of*

*intellect represented, **attractive**, and whatever he had to recommend him, you may be sure was not lost upon Carrie, in this, her first glance.*

c) There are also some types of adjectives describing character, of which positive and negative features are not evident in their forms, but they may be described by the context. For example: apathy, extravagant, playful, talkative, proud, obstinate, despot and etc. We can see the positive meaning “talkative” in this example: “She can easily get along with people, she is talkative” and its negative meaning in this example: “He always distracts me, he is talkative”.

2. Adjectives defining the characteristics of objects, animals and situations: *artificial, urgent, splendid, disturbing, jibbing, homemade, natural, expensive, cheap, original and others.*

3. Adjectives describing both objects and people are *exciting, good, bad, wonderful, resistant and etc.* For example: *There was something **satisfactory** in the attention of this individual with his **good** clothes; There were, in the last place, a few **good** followers, neither rich nor poor, famous, nor yet remarkably successful, with whom he was friendly on the score of good-fellowship.*

The adjective *soft* is used to describe the objects: *He has very soft cushions and he can sleep very well at night; soft toys, soft-leather shoes.* But sometimes we can see this adjective describing people also: *He was very soft and gentle with the children.* The adjective “soft” describes several meanings:

1. Soft and gentle effect: *A breath of soft spring wind went bounding over the road, rolling some brown twigs of the previous autumn before it. (p. 56)*

2. Softly behavior and speech: *They were soft and noiseless, and he got his fingers about them and crumpled them up in his hand. (p.28)*

From this adjective some verbs such as *soften, softening* and the noun *softness* are formed. For example: *There was a softness in the air which speaks with an infinite delicacy of feeling to the flesh as well as to the soul. (p.50); At dinner Drouet, warmed up by eating and drinking and softened in mood, fancied he was winning Carrie to her old-time good-natured regard for him.(p.204)*

The adjective *soft* may refer to the character and also it may describe the situation and condition. In this case it may be sometimes an adverb in the context: *"All right," he answered, softly.*

In this article we will describe some adjectives describing character which define character peculiarities and mental state of people and objects. They are given in their positive and negative meaning in the examples. Some adjectives have several meaning, they have their denotative and connotative meanings. For example, the adjectives *agile, nimble, adroit, dexterous, skillful, deft* have the same meaning in the context but in some examples their meaning may differ from each other. We can see very few examples of these words in the book “Sister Carrie”: *He met them all blandly, becoming deft in excuse. (p.183).*

The adjectives *heavy*, *light* have meanings of measuring the things and also another portable meaning. For example: *heavy bag*, *heavy living*. If these adjectives describe people, they refer to the human properties. In cases they describe objects, they refer to some challenged things. The adjectives *heavy*, *light* have denotative and connotative meaning. There are some examples for their connotative meaning which describes objects: *light breeze*, *heavy step*, *heavy living*. If they refer to human peculiarities, they describe character, e.g. *heavy behavior*.

In conclusion, in some cases adjectives describing character may also refer to other semantic types of adjectives, like color, measurements, shape, taste, their meaning may be obvious in the context. They may define positive and negative effects of human and objects.

### Literature:

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