

THE LEXICAL-SEMANTIC FIELD ‘FAMILY’ IN THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE

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Abstract

This article examines the lexical-semantic field “family” in the Russian language as an important fragment of the linguistic picture of the world. The study analyzes the structure of this field, its core and periphery, as well as the semantic relationships between the lexical units included in it. Particular attention is paid to the systemic relations within the field, including hyperonymy, synonymy, and derivational connections. The results of the research show that the lexical-semantic field “family” has a complex multi-level structure and reflects the cultural and social values of Russian society.

Keywords: lexical-semantic field, family, Russian vocabulary, semantics, linguistic picture of the world.

Introduction

Modern linguistics pays considerable attention to the study of lexical-semantic fields, as they reflect the structural organization of a language's vocabulary. The concept of the lexical-semantic field has been actively developed in the works of many linguists who consider it as a system of interrelated lexical units united by a common semantic component.

One of the most important concepts in the linguistic picture of the world is the concept of “family.” The family functions as a fundamental social institution that shapes the cultural and moral values of society. Therefore, the lexical-semantic field “family” occupies a significant place in the system of Russian vocabulary.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the structure and functional characteristics of the lexical-semantic field “family” in the Russian language.

Theoretical Foundations of the Study

The theory of the lexical-semantic field is based on the idea of the systematic organization of a language's vocabulary. According to this theory, words are grouped together on the basis of shared meaning.

Concept and Significance of the Field “Family”

The lexical-semantic field “family” encompasses lexemes that denote family members, kinship relations, as well as concepts associated with family relationships, responsibilities, and traditions. It is a part of the linguistic picture of the world, as it reflects how language speakers structure and perceive the social and cultural values of the family.

The field “family” includes not only biological connections (mother, father, children) but also social ones (spouses, father-in-law, mother-in-law, daughter-in-law), as well as emotional and normative aspects (home, family hearth, care, respect for elders).

A lexical-semantic field is understood as a set of lexical units connected by semantic relations and united by a common theme or concept. Within a field, the following components are usually distinguished:

- core
- near periphery
- far periphery

The core of the field consists of words with the most general and frequently used meanings, while the periphery includes more specific or contextually conditioned lexical units.

Structure of the Lexical-Semantic Field “Family”

Core of the Field

The core of the field consists of lexemes that directly denote family members:

- family
- parents
- mother
- father
- children
- husband
- wife

These words are the basic elements of the field, as they denote the main roles in family relationships.

Near Periphery

The near periphery includes lexemes that denote second-level kinship relations:

- brother
- mother-in-law (wife’s mother)
- son-in-law
- daughter-in-law

These lexemes reflect more complex family relationships connected with marriage and the extended kinship system.

Semantic Relations within the Field

Hyperonymy and Hyponymy

Within the lexical-semantic field “family,” hierarchical genus–species relations can be observed. For example:

family → parents → mother / father

Word-Formation Relations

Lexemes belonging to the field “family” actively participate in word-formation processes:

- family → familial / family-related → family group
- mother → maternal → motherhood
- father → paternal → fatherhood

These relations demonstrate the productivity of the derivational system of the Russian language.

Cultural Aspect of the Concept “Family”

The lexical-semantic field “family” reflects the cultural values of Russian society. In the Russian linguistic picture of the world, the family is traditionally regarded as the foundation of social life. This is reflected in a large number of proverbs and set expressions:

- “When the whole family is together, the soul is at peace.”
- “A family is strong when there is harmony.”

Conclusion

The analysis of the lexical-semantic field “family” in the Russian language has shown that this lexical group has a complex structure that includes a core, a near periphery, and a far periphery. Various semantic relations function within the field, including hierarchical, synonymous, and word-formation relations.

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