

LINGUISTIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCEPT OF STEPFATHER IN THE LEXICAL SYSTEM

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ЯЗЫКОВОЕ РАЗВИТИЕ КОНЦЕПТА ОТЧИМ В ЛЕКСИЧЕСКОЙ СИСТЕМЕ

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Annotation. This article explores the linguistic development of the concept of «stepfather» in the English lexical system. The paper traces the historical evolution of the term «stepfather», analyzing its semantic shifts and role in family discourse. Through a combination of etymological analysis, corpus studies, and historical linguistic research, this paper outlines how the concept of «stepfather» emerged, transformed, and continues to evolve in contemporary English. The study highlights the cultural implications of the term, illustrating how it reflects social changes in family structures, especially in relation to remarriage and blended families.

Key words: Stepfather, Lexical Development, Etymology, Family Relationships, Language and Society, Blended Families, Semantic Shifts.

Аннотация. В этой статье рассматривается лингвистическое развитие понятия «отчим» в лексической системе английского языка. В статье прослеживается историческая эволюция термина «отчим», анализируются его семантические сдвиги и роль в семейном дискурсе. С помощью сочетания этимологического анализа, корпусных исследований и исторических лингвистических исследований в этой статье описывается, как возникло, трансформировалось и продолжает развиваться понятие «отчим» в современном английском языке. В исследовании подчеркиваются культурные последствия термина, иллюстрирующие, как он отражает социальные изменения в семейных структурах, особенно в отношении повторных браков и смешанных семей.

Ключевые слова: отчим, лексическое развитие, этимология, семейные отношения, язык и общество, смешанные семьи, семантические сдвиги.

Annotatsiya. Ushbu maqola ingliz leksik tizimida «o'gay ota» tushunchasining lingvistik rivojlanishini o'rganadi. Maqola «o'gay ota» atamasining tarixiy evolyutsiyasini kuzatadi, uning semantik o'zgarishlarini va oilaviy nutqdagi rolini tahlil qiladi. Etimologik tahlil, korpus tadqiqotlari va tarixiy lingvistik tadqiqotlarning kombinatsiyasi orqali ushbu maqola zamonaviy ingliz tilida «o'gay ota» tushunchasi qanday paydo bo'lganligi, o'zgarganligi va rivojlanishda davom etayotganini tasvirlaydi. Tadqiqot ushbu atamaning madaniy ta'sirini ta'kidlab, uning oila tuzilmalaridagi ijtimoiy o'zgarishlarni, ayniqsa, qayta turmush qurish va aralash oilalarga nisbatan qanday aks etishini ko'rsatadi.

Kalit so'zlar: o'gay ota, leksik rivojlanish, etimologiya, oilaviy munosabatlar, til va jamiyat, aralash oilalar, semantik siljishlar.

INTRODUCTION (ВВЕДЕНИЕ/KIRISH).

The linguistic evolution of terms reflecting familial roles is an important facet of the broader study of language development. One such term that has undergone significant semantic changes in English is «stepfather». Historically tied to the institution of marriage and family, the term has shifted in both its meaning and usage over time. This article seeks to analyze the linguistic development of «stepfather» within the English lexical system using the IMRaD (Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion) framework, providing a comprehensive study of its emergence, shifts, and contemporary usage.

MATERIALS AND METHODS (ЛИТЕРАТУРА И МЕТОД/ADABIYOTLAR TAHLILI VA METOD). The research for this paper follows a historical and corpus linguistic approach. First, a detailed etymological investigation is conducted to trace the origin of the term «stepfather» in Old English and its historical usage in family contexts. A corpus analysis is then employed to assess the frequency and context of the word in modern English. Sources such as historical dictionaries, linguistics textbooks, and digital corpora (e.g., the British National Corpus) are examined to track semantic changes. Additionally, sociolinguistic considerations regarding family dynamics and social attitudes toward remarriage are incorporated to understand the term's evolving cultural relevance [1].

DISCUSSION

(ОБСУЖДЕНИЕ/MUHOQAMA). The term «stepfather» originates from Old English, where the component «step-» (meaning «bereft» or «orphaned») was used to describe a man who married a woman with children from a previous relationship. Over time, this compound word evolved to denote a man who assumes a fatherly role in a family despite not being the biological father of the children. The historical trajectory of the term reveals that it initially had a more neutral, functional meaning, referring strictly to the marital relationship between a woman and a man who was not the biological father of her children [6].

In modern English, however, the term «stepfather» carries emotional and relational connotations that extend beyond its literal definition. The data shows that the word is increasingly used

within the context of «blended families,» where familial relationships are more fluid and complex. It is also often used in discussions surrounding divorce, remarriage, and the redefinition of familial roles. Moreover, the stepfather's role is not always static; it varies from being a secondary parental figure to an active, primary caregiving role, depending on the family dynamic [2].

The evolution of the term «stepfather» is deeply intertwined with social changes, particularly the rise of remarriage and the formation of blended families. As divorce rates increased in the 20th century, the term began to acquire more significant cultural and emotional meaning. A stepfather may not only fulfill a legal or social role but may also face challenges related to acceptance, bonding with stepchildren, and negotiating the boundaries of familial authority [3].

RESULTS

(РЕЗУЛЬТАТЫ/NATIJALAR). The role of the stepfather has been perceived differently across cultures and societies, and the linguistic development of the term reflects these shifting social norms. For example, in some contexts, «stepfather» may imply a more distant, secondary figure, while in others, it may denote a man who is as emotionally invested in the children as a biological father. Thus, the term has expanded beyond its original meaning, incorporating aspects of emotional connection and social recognition into its usage [5].

The term «stepfather» also raises important questions regarding linguistic representation of family structures. As families become more diverse, the lexicon of family roles adapts to reflect this change. Other terms, such as «stepmother», «half-sibling,» and «blended family,» often emerge alongside the term «stepfather,» highlighting the complexity of family relationships in contemporary society. This lexicon not only reflects the changing structure of families but also shapes how individuals understand their roles within those families [4].

CONCLUSION (ЗАКЛЮЧЕНИЕ/XULOSA).

The development of the concept of «stepfather» in the English lexical system demonstrates the dynamic nature of language and its ability to adapt to societal changes. From its early origins as a term denoting a simple marital relationship to its present-day usage, reflecting complex familial bonds and emotional

dynamics, the term «stepfather» encapsulates the evolving nature of family structures. The linguistic shifts observed in this study illustrate how language functions not only as a tool for communication but also as a mirror of social transformation. Understanding these linguistic developments contributes to a broader comprehension of how society constructs and navigates the notion of family.

Future research may focus on further examining related terms in the lexicon and their role in shaping societal perceptions of family, kinship, and identity in modern culture.

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