WUT2018
IX International Conference "Word, Utterance, Text: Cognitive, Pragmatic and Cultural Aspects"

STUDY OF THE DYNAMICS OF THE GERMAN CONCEPT *FAMILIE*

Svetlana Burenkova (a)*
*Corresponding author

(a)   Omsk State Technical University, Mira, h. 11, Omsk, Russian Federation

Abstract

The article is devoted to the study of dynamic processes in the content of the German concept *Familie* through the analysis of the material of explanatory dictionaries of the German language. The purpose of research is to reveal the facts of language, which show some of the content changes of the studied concept and their causes. The author relies on the opinions of respected linguists regarding the variability of concept depending on the social situation, as well as on axiom the reflectivity function of language. Based on the semantic analysis of the name and neologisms, which correlate with the concept, the author reveals the new elements of the content of concept, reflected social and cultural transformations in German society. Semantic generalization of the name, changes in the composition of the nominative field representing the concept are due to the reinterpretation of the norms and values of society, the transformation of family relations, the emergence of new family forms, changes in legislation.

© 2018 Published by Future Academy www.FutureAcademy.org.UK

Keywords: Concept, the nominative field of the concept, family, German linguistic culture.

1. Introduction

Concepts as mental correlates of linguistic units are subjected to dynamics: their content changes in the same way as the semantics and the form of their linguistic signs (Burenkova, 2015). The semantic development of a concept, word formation or derivation of the linguistic elements are determined by changes of the displayed objects and phenomena in the surrounding reality. As a consequence, the concept is rightly interpreted as "a dynamic volume, enormously dependent on the state of society, a social situation" (Popova, 2007). This feature of the concept determines the necessity of reconsideration to the seemingly studied material, a new consideration of concepts, which are already described in the linguistics.

2. Problem Statement

This explains the author's attention to the *Familie* concept, whose structure and content have been thoroughly studied in the works of G.A. Gunyashova, Yu.M. Shchegolikhina et al. (Gunyashova, 2007; Shchegolikhina, 2015). Within the framework of this article, it is proposed to study the dynamics of the concept *Familie* in the German picture of the world by examining changes in the nominative field of the concept in diachrony. As a research material there are data from German dictionaries published at different times.

3. Research Questions

The concept *Familie* is considered to be one of the key concepts of any culture, since the family, being a unit of society and an indispensable condition for the continuation of the human race, plays an important role in the culture of each people. However, the content of this concept varies with the time in the conditions of a developing society, that is reviewing and overestimating many, including traditional and seemingly unshakable norms and values. After the study of possibilities in the representation of the concept *Familie* G.A. Gunashova comes to the conclusion about the change of "value orientations from traditional family blood parameters to the parameters of partnership and personal preferences" (Gunyashova, 2007). The author also notes, in particular, the tendency to "abandon traditional parameters that make up the family for many centuries – marriage, union for life, the union of a man and a woman and their traditional sexual and social roles in the family" (ibd., p. 11). As a consequence, the complex approach to the study of family norms and values and their transformations in modern society remains an urgent research problem.

Indeed, the traditional and fairly common understanding of the family sometimes does not correspond to the real life practice of some people. In modern society other forms of people's life together have spread and they deviate from established ideas about the family (two generations and two sexes, marriage, sibling connections of family members and joint housekeeping). According to the professor of sociology Norbert F. Schneider (Federal Agency for Civic Education, Germany) such the models are: unmarried families with children, same-sex couples who live with the children of one of the partners, single mothers or single fathers, childless couples who can live separately, but take care of each other (Was ist Familie? … http://www.bpb.de/politik/grundfragen/deutsche-verhaeltnisse-eine-sozialkunde/138023/was-ist-familie). The linguistic analysis of the German concept *Familie*, proposed in this article, will supplement the complex description of the phenomenon Family. Dynamic processes in the content of the concept

Familie must find expression in speech and in the dictionary, so an important issue is the analysis of the materials of the explanatory dictionaries of the German language.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to describe the dynamics in the content of the concept *Familie* based on the analysis of dictionary definitions of lexemes representing the concept.

5. Research Methods

The main research methods are: the method of analyzing vocabulary definitions, the method of comparison, the descriptive method.

6. Findings

Diachronic analysis of the materials of German dictionaries allows to state changes in the definition of family, namely the process of semantic generalization or expansion of the meaning of the concept name. Compare the dictionary definitions of the lexeme *Familie* in its first meaning ("a group of people connected by direct kinship, adult members of which assume responsibility for child care", Anthony Giddens: (Sem'ja // Wikipedia. https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%A1%D0%B5%D0%BC%D1%8C%D1%8F) in the dictionaries Duden of different years of publication:

1.a) aus einem Elternpaar u. mindestens einem Kind bestehende Gemeinschaft: *eine verköpfige, große, kinderreiche F.* (Duden, 1996, p. 484).

1.a) aus einem Elternpaar <u>od. einem Elternteil</u> u. mindestens einem Kind bestehende <u>[Lebens]</u>gemeinschaft: *eine verköpfige, große, intakte, kinderreiche F.* (Duden, 2001; Duden online) (underlined by me – *S.B.*).

The reference dictionary system of the German language in history and modernity (das Wortauskunftssystem zur deutschen Sprache in Geschichte und Gegenwart=DWDS) offers the user the next definition of the word *Familie*, dated 1967: 1. Gemeinschaft von Menschen, die miteinander verwandt sind a) Gemeinschaft der Eltern und ihrer Kinder: *Familie Schmidt; eine kinderreiche, vielköpfige, glückliche, gebildete, rechtschaffene, wohlhabende Familie...* (DWDS). Using the step – by – step identification method, it is easy to establish, that *Eltern* means *Vater* und *Mutter*, and *Vater* and *Mutter* are *Mann* and *Frau,* respectively (Duden 2001; Duden online; DWDS).

Despite the fact that the definition of *Familie* does not focus on the marriage relations the lexeme enters into the interpretation of the word *Ehe* – marriage, which emphasis the legal relationship of a man and a woman, compare: *für das Leben geschlossene, gesetzliche Verbindung eines Mannes und einer Frau zur Begründung einer Familie*. However, the developers of the DWDS reference resource pay attention to the irrelevant state of the dictionary information: *Dieser Artikel ist nicht auf dem aktuellen Stand. Er wird im Rahmen des DWDS-Projekts von der Redaktion überarbeitet* (DWDS).

The linguistic corpus of the German Language Institute OWID defines the family as a group of persons who are relatives through birth or marriage: *Mit Familie bezeichnet man eine Gruppe von Personen, die durch Geburt oder durch Heirat miteinander verwandt sind.*The authors of the project

emphasize the narrow understanding of the family as parents and children and a broad understanding of the family as a community of several generations: *In engerem Sinn bezieht sich der Sprecher mit Familie auf eine Lebensgemeinschaft, die aus Eltern und Kindern besteht, in weiterem Sinn auch auf eine Gemeinschaft, die mehrere Generationen umfasst und zu der z. B. die Großeltern, die Geschwister der Eltern und Großeltern einschließlich deren Angehörige usw. gezählt werden* (OWID). Meanwhile, the editorial board of the draft particularly points to the frequency of using the lexeme in the corpus of texts precisely because of its new interpretation, which means not only the traditional family "father-mother-child/children", but also the community of unmarried, singles with children and same-sex couples with children. Text examples of the corps confirm the comments of the drafters concerning the ambiguous assessment of the broad definition of the family by society and public institutions, and not least because of the need to amend the legislation (ibd.).

Indeed, the researchers of family today regard 74 possibilities of coexistence. According to statistics, there are 12 million families in Germany, herewith the family is considered as a household in which parents and children live together *(ein Haushalt …, in dem Eltern und Kinder zusammenleben)*. Approximately a quarter of the families consist of a single parent raising a child/children (*Ein-Eltern-Familie/Alleierziehende*), in 68% of the families parents are married, in 8% of the families parents live civil marriage (information from exhibition "Inclusion" in the museum Universum (Exhibition "Inclusion", 2017).

About 12 000 parents represent same-sex unions *(Regenbogenfamilie* – Familie mit gleichgeschlechtlichem Elternpaar) whoserights are not enshrined in law (information from exhibition "Inclusion" in the museum Universum (Exhibition "Inclusion", 2017). As the editors of the electronic dictionary Duden, the word *Regenbogenfamilie* was first recorded in the spelling dictionary in 2009 (Duden online). DWDS cites only examples of the use of this lexeme, OWID offers a definition of neologism and provides numerous examples of its use, compare: *Sie hat einmal alle Konstellationen von "Regenbogenfamilien" aufgeschrieben, die ihr begegnet sind, und kam auf 16 Variationen. Da gibt es: die alleinerziehende lesbische Mutter; den schwulen Vater mit adoptiertem Kind plus Partner; zwei lesbische Mütter mit Kindern von anonymen Samenspendern; lesbische Paare, die beide Kinder aus früheren Ehen mitgebracht haben; schwule wie lesbische Paare als Pflegeeltern; und es tun sich Lesbenpaare mit Schwulenpaaren zusammen, um zu viert Kinder aufzuziehen. Der Weg zum Kind ist für Schwule und Lesben besonders schwer; dass sie ihn gehen, zeigt, wie stark ihr Kinderwunsch ist.* (Die Zeit [Online-Ausgabe], 31.12.2003, Nr. 02) (OWID).

Neologisms of the nominative field of the concept *Familie* should include the calque from the English language *Patchworkfamilie*, which appeared in the mid-90s of the XX century. *Patchworkfamilie* – Familiengemeinschaft, in der die elterlichen Partner nach Trennung, Scheidung oder Verwitwung eines bzw. beider Partner mit gemeinsamen Kindern und/oder mit Kindern aus den jeweils früheren Verbindungen zusammenleben (ibd.). Electronic dictionaries Duden and DWDS provide this lexeme with the label *umgangssprachlich*.

The change in family relations is evidenced by the neologisms of the Noughties, which have replenished the nominative field of the concept *Familie*:

Elternzeit – bezahlte, gesetzlich geregelte vorübergehende berufliche Freistellung, die die Mutter oder/und der Vater nach der Geburt eines Kindes für dessen Betreuung in Anspruch nehmen können (Since January 1, 2001, both parents can take paid leave to care for their child); compare also: *Vätermonat, Partnermonat* (ibd.);

Latte-macchiato Mutter – Mutter, die ihren urbanen, unbeschwerten Lebensstil auch mit (Klein)kind (in der Öffentlichkeit) bewusst so weiterführen will wie vorher (this nomination registers only OWID);

the neologisms of the tenth years:

Helikoptereltern/Heli-Eltern/Hubschraubereltern/Propellereltern (salopp, oft abwertend) – Eltern, die ihr Kind in einer Weise behüten und umsorgen, die für übertrieben gehalten wird (Duden online; OWID).

OWID drafters point out that the word *Familie* is found not only in the context of defining the nature of the family from the point of view of society and legislation, but also in texts relating to the family and the profession, especially the mother's professional activities (OWID).

Comparing the data of ideographic dictionaries of the German language (Dornseiff, 2010; OWID <(Kollokationen)>; Wehrle/Eggers, 1967), it is possible to suggest some changes in the nuclear part of the nominative field of the studied concept. Thus, many predicates included in the articles *Familie* in dictionaries of previous years (Dornseiff, 2010; Wehrle/Eggers, 1967) are not recorded in OWID as collocations of lexemes, which denote family members (*Wer gehört zu einer Familie (im engeren und weiteren Sinn)?*), for example: *Urenkel, Urgroßeltern, -mutter, -vater; Großonkel, Schwiegermutter, -vater, -sohn, -tochter; Halbschwester, -bruder* and other. Certainly, this circumstance can be explained by the fact, that OWID is not an ideographic dictionary in its pure form. Nevertheless, the composition of the core in the nominative field of the concept could change, what is explained by changes in traditional relations within the modern family. To the same the attitude toward the gender (*male, female, a third – männlich, weiblich, inter/divers* (?); compare the rule on a "third gender" recently recognized in Germany (Bundesverfassungsgericht für drittes Geschlecht im Geburtenregister // Zeit online)) and to marriage in the long term can affect the vocabulary composition of this thematic group.

A separate aspect of the study is a comparison of the nominative fields of the concept *Familie* and the concept *Семья*. Some characteristic features of Russian family relations in comparison with the traditional European family are described in textbooks on regional studies and in popular science publications (Berkov, 2003; Sergeeva, 2017), but the family institution in Russia has also changed in recent decades, so a comparative linguistic study of the content dynamics of key concepts in both linguistic cultures will contribute to a deeper understanding of the social development features in the two countries.

7. Conclusion

Thus, the conducted research allows to draw a conclusion from the volatile nature of the key culture concepts. The reasons for the dynamics of the concept *Familie* can be considered the democratization and liberalization of society, a rethinking of the value system, various types of transformations in society, which are gradually reflected in the ways of verbalization of the concept.

The analysis corroborated the semantic generalization of the concept name, i.e. expansion of its semantics. The study of the German lexicographic materials testifies to the replenishment of the nominative

field of the concept with numerous neologisms representing new family forms, the redistribution of roles in the family, and the revision of traditional relationships within the family.

A study of the concept *Familie* in diachrony also allows one to postulate a thesis about changing the core part of the concept. The development of family relations, the emergence of new family forms, which differ from traditional ones, changes in the legislation bring to life new nominations and determine the dynamic processes in the concept content.

References

Berkov V.P. (2003) Kak my zhivem. Posobie po stranovedeniju dlja izuchajushhih russkij jazyk / V.P. Berkov, A.V. Berkova, O.V. Berkova. – Saint Petersburg: Zlatoust, 2003.

Bundesverfassungsgericht für drittes Geschlecht im Geburtenregister // Zeit online [Electronic resource] // URL: http://www.zeit.de/gesellschaft/zeitgeschehen/2017-11/bundesverfassungsgericht-fuer-drittes-geschlecht-im-geburtenregister(last viewed on 24.01.2018).

Burenkova S.V. (2015) K voprosu o dinamike konceptov (na primere nemeckih konceptov ORDNUNG i SICHERHEIT) // Voprosy Kognitivnoy Lingvistiki. – 2015. – № 4 (45). – P. 30–38.

Dornseiff F. (2010) Der deutsche Wortschatz nach Sachgruppen. – 8. Auflage / F. Dornseiff. – Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2010.

Duden (1996). Deutsches Universalwörterbuch. – 3. Aufl. – Mannheim: Bibl. Institut, 1996.

Duden (2001). Deutsches Universalwörterbuch. – 4. Aufl. – Mannheim, Leipzig, Wien, Zürich: Dudenverl., 2001.

Duden online [Electronic resource] // URL: http://www.duden.de/(last viewed on 24.01.2018).

DWDS=Das Wortauskunftssystem zur deutschen Sprache in Geschichte und Gegenwart [Electronic resource] // URL: https://www.dwds.de/ (last viewed on 24.01.2018).

Exhibition "Inclusion" (2017) // Museum Universum. – Bremen, 2017.

Gunyashova G.A. (2007) Koncept FAMILIE v nemeckoj jazykovoj kartine mira (na materiale tekstov normativnogo i publicisticheskogo diskursov): avtoref. dis. … kand. filol. nauk: 10.02.04 / G.A. Gunyashova – Barnaul, 2007.

OWID=Online-Wortschatz-Informationssystem Deutsch [Electronic resource] // URL: https://www.owid.de/index.jsp (last viewed on 24.01.2018).

Popova Z.D. (2007) Kognitivnaja lingvistika / Z.D. Popova, I.A. Sternin. – Moscow: AST «Vostok-Zapad», 2007.

Sem'ja // Vikipedija [Electronic resource] // URL: https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%A1%D0%B5%D0%BC%D1%8C%D1%8F(last viewed on 24.01.2018).

Sergeeva A.V. (2017) Russkie: Stereotipy povedenija, tradicii, mental'nost' / A.V. Sergeeva. – Moscow: Flinta, 2017.

Shchegolikhina Ju.M. (2015) Koncept FAMILIE v lingvokul'ture rossijskih nemcev Sibiri: avtoref. dis. ... kand. filol. nauk: 10.02.04 / Ju.M. Shchegolikhina. – Tver, 2015.

Was ist Familie? Eine Frage von hoher gesellschaftspolitischer Relevanz // Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung [Electronic resource] // URL: http://www.bpb.de/politik/grundfragen/deutsche-verhaeltnisse-eine-sozialkunde/138023/was-ist-familie (last viewed on 24.01.2018).

Wehrle/Eggers (1967)=Wehrle, H., Deutscher Wortschatz. Ein Wegweiser zum treffenden Ausdruck / H. Wehrle, H. Eggers. – Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag, 1967.