

THE CONCEPT OF “AGE”: COGNITIVE STRUCTURE, CULTURAL CONTENT AND ROLE IN SOCIAL DISCOURSE

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The concept of age is an important component of a person's worldview and socio-cultural experience, and its cognitive and semantic structure is a separate object of research. The complex nature of this concept requires its analysis at different levels and dimensions.

The central core of the concept of age is formed around the concept of biological time, which reflects the changes that occur throughout the human life cycle. The main core of the concept includes three fundamental components: biological age (the level of physiological development of the organism), chronological age (the amount of time that has passed since birth) and psychological age (the level of mental development of a person).

The immediate periphery located around the core contains meanings formed in the socio-cultural context. This layer contains the social role associated with age. For example, such social categories as childhood, adolescence, youth, middle age and old age are the main elements of this layer. Each category is characterized by its own characteristics, tasks and social positions. The far periphery includes the cultural and ethnic specifics of the concept, individual experiences and associative connections. This layer contains traditions, rituals, holidays and cultural practices associated with a certain age. There are also metaphors, symbols and images associated with age.

The concept of age is not a single isolated unit, but a complex system closely related to other conceptual areas [Telia V.N. Russian phraseology. Semantic, pragmatic and linguistic cultural aspects. – M.: School “Russian Culture”, 1996. – 288 p.]. The most important connections are with the concepts of time, life, death, health, beauty, wisdom, experience, learning and development.

The connection with the concept of time determines the temporal nature of the concept of age. Age is perceived as changes that occur as a result of the passage of time. Through this connection, age is understood not only as a static state, but also as a dynamic process. People evaluate age in the context of the past, present and future.

The connection with the concepts of life and death forms the existential aspects of the concept of age. Age helps to understand the finiteness of life and the irreversible nature of time. Through this connection, each age stage acquires its own value and meaning.

The semantic structure of the concept of age is divided into several microfields. Each microfield is represented by its own lexical unit, phraseologism and discursive forms. The temporal microfield includes time indicators associated with age. Here, temporal determinants such as “early”, “late”, “on time”, “before the deadline”, “after the deadline” play an important role. Also, direct age indicators such as “young”, “old”, “middle-aged”, “adult” are included in this microfield.

The evaluative microfield reflects the axiological meanings associated with age. Here, there are positive assessments (“prosperous age”, “golden age”, “best years”), neutral assessments (“ordinary age”, “average age”) and negative assessments (“old”, “outdated”, “weak”) indicators.

The social microfield expresses social roles and statuses associated with age [Krysin L.P. Sociolinguistic aspects of studying modern Russian language. – M.: Nauka, 1989. – 188 p.]. Within this microfield, family roles (“child”, “parent”, “grandfather-grandmother), professional roles (“young specialist”, “experienced worker”, “pensioner”) and social positions (“youth leader”, “member of the council of the elderly”).

The concept of age is conceptualized differently in different cultures. In Uzbek culture, the concept of age is closely related to the system of traditional values. Respect for the elderly, support for young people and recognition of the specific tasks of each age stage are characteristic features of the Uzbek concept of age.

At the linguistic level, the concept of age is expressed through various linguistic means. At the lexical level, it is expressed through direct age-determining words (“boy”, “young man”, “girl”, “older”), relative words (“younger”, “older”) and metaphorical expressions (“spring age”, “autumn years”).

At the grammatical level, the concept of age can be expressed through various grammatical constructions [Бондарко А.В. Функциональная грамматика. – Л.: Наука, 1984. – 136 p.]. For example, age-indicating suffixes, relative degree and time forms. At the syntactic level, the concept of age is expressed through complex sentences, comparative constructions.

The concept of age performs important pragmatic functions in speech activity [Dejk T.A. van. Language. Cognition. Communication. – M.: Progress, 1989. – 312 p.]. It is used to regulate the mutual relations of communication participants, determine the social hierarchy and activate appropriate norms of behavior. In the process of communication, the concept of age is used mainly in choosing politeness strategies, determining methods of showing respect and regulating social distance. For example, such forms of address as “uncle”, “sister”, “grandmother” express not only kinship relations, but also the hierarchy of age and juniority.

List of references:

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2. Krysin L.P. Sotsiolinguticheskie aspekti izucheniya sovremennogo russkogo zyzyka. - M.: Nauka, 1989. - 188 p.
3. Bondarko A.V. Functional grammar. - L.: Nauka, 1984. - 136 p.
4. Dyke T.A. van. Yazyk. Poznań. Communication. - M.: Progress, 1989. - 312 p.