



Linguocultural Analysis Of The Internal Form And Etymological Foundations Of The Concept “Family”

Jumanova Dilnavoz Ulugbek Qizi

Independent researcher, Jizzakh State Pedagogical University, Uzbekistan

ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the linguocognitive and linguocultural characteristics of the concept “family” on the basis of the etymology and internal form of its primary nominant. Drawing on Yu. S. Stepanov’s views on the multi-layered nature of concepts, the study examines the borrowing of the Uzbek lexeme “oila” from Arabic and highlights the semantic components reflected in its semantic structure, such as caring for, providing for, taking under one’s care, and responsibility. A comparative analysis is also carried out with the English lexeme family and the Russian lexeme семья (semya) in order to identify the commonalities and differences in the formation of the concept of family across these languages. The results of the analysis serve to reveal not only the universal human content of the concept “family” but also the national-cultural characteristics manifested in Uzbek linguoculture.

Keywords: Family concept, internal form, etymology, linguoculturology, nominant, seme, semantic development, national-cultural characteristic, comparative analysis.

INTRODUCTION

The study employed etymological, semantic, comparative-analytical, linguocognitive and linguocultural methods of analysis. The etymological method was used to establish the origin and historical layers of meaning of the lexeme “oila”; semantic analysis, to identify its semantic features; and the comparative method, to determine the commonalities and differences among the corresponding lexemes in Uzbek, English and Russian. The linguocognitive and linguocultural approaches were used to clarify the connection of the concept “family” with language, thought and national-cultural values. The source base consists of etymological and explanatory dictionaries of Uzbek, Russian, Arabic and English [1–3, 5–7] and Yu. S. Stepanov’s dictionary of cultural constants [4].

Scientific novelty of the research

The scientific novelty of the research lies in the comprehensive analysis of the internal form and etymological foundations of the concept “family” in connection with its modern semantic and linguocultural content. In addition, the historical-semantic characteristics of the Uzbek “oila”, the English family and the Russian семья (semya) are compared, with attention paid to distinguishing the universal and the national-cultural layers of the concept.

In modern linguistics, studying language units in close connection with human thought, national culture and social experience is one of the important scientific directions. With the development of the anthropocentric paradigm, the notion of the concept has become one of the main categories for studying the relationship between language and culture. A concept appears

as a complex mental unit that embodies knowledge, notions, values and cultural meanings about a particular object or phenomenon.

The concept “family” is one of the fundamental notions connected with the social life of humankind, kinship relations, upbringing, love and affection, responsibility, and the continuity of generations. The content of this concept is not limited to the social structure that unites family members; it also reflects the historical experience, moral views, customs and values of a particular people. Therefore, in studying the concept “family” from a linguocultural perspective, it is particularly important to analyze not only its modern semantic content but also the origin and internal form of the word “oila”, its primary nominant.

The aim of the article is to determine the etymological and semantic foundations of the concept “family”, to reveal the meanings embodied in its internal form, and to shed light on the universal and national-cultural features of the concept by comparing the corresponding lexemes in Uzbek, English and Russian.

Theoretical foundations of the internal form of the concept and etymological analysis. Yu. S. Stepanov's views [4] occupy an important place in concept theory. The scholar interprets the concept as a complex phenomenon made up of several layers of content. In his approach, besides the actual features of a concept, the layers that preserve historical and cultural experience are also of great importance. In particular, the internal form of a concept is connected with the historical content preserved in the etymology of a word, which is not always directly perceived in present-day speech usage.

By studying the internal form, it is possible to determine the original meanings of a language unit, the notions underlying its formation, and the directions of its subsequent semantic development. However, it is incorrect to treat the etymological meaning and the modern dictionary meaning as one and the same phenomenon. In the course of historical development, a word may move away from its original meaning, acquire new senses, or lose some of its meanings. Therefore, in studying the internal form of a concept, etymological data must be examined together with modern semantic and linguocultural analysis.

This theoretical approach also serves as an important methodological basis for studying the concept “family”. This is because the origin of the lexeme “oila” and its historical layers of meaning make it possible to analyze the notions associated with this concept in Uzbek, such as taking under one's care, providing for, protecting, and social responsibility.

Etymological and semantic features of the Uzbek lexeme “oila” [1]. The Uzbek word “oila” is explained in the section on Arabic borrowings in volume 1 of Shavkat Rahmatullayev's “Etymological Dictionary of the Uzbek Language” and is related to the Arabic form عائلة (‘ā’ila). This lexeme has a semantic content connected with denoting the family, the household and the people under one's care. In explaining its etymological foundations, it is important to take into account the semantic relations with the notions of feeding, providing for, and taking under one's care. From this point of view, the internal form of the lexeme “oila” helps us understand that a family is not merely a group of people living in one house, but a social unit bound together by mutual relations, material support and responsibility. Mutual care among family members, bringing up children, meeting their needs and protecting them are among the important functions assigned to the family in Uzbek linguoculture.

Arabic lexicographic data clarify this foundation. The word ‘ā’ila is the feminine active participle of the verb ‘āla (ya‘ūlu), “to support, to maintain”, and is connected with the noun ‘iyāl.

According to Lane's Arabic-English Lexicon [6], a man's 'iyāl are those whom he feeds and sustains and whose expenses he must bear: his wife, his young children and a dependent servant. Thus the internal form of "oila" rests not on the idea of blood kinship but on the idea of support and dependence within the household: the family is, first of all, those who are "supported" by the head of the household. For the modern dictionary definitions of the word, see [2].

It should also be noted that Uzbek expresses this notion not by "oila" alone. Alongside it are the Persian-origin words *xonadon* (household) and *ro'zg'or* (household, livelihood) and the Turkic *uy* ("house"), which is also used metonymically for the family (for example, *uydagilar*, "those at home"). This shows that the borrowed "oila" complements an existing lexical field in which the image of the house is central.

In this respect, the following semantic features can be singled out in the semantic structure of the concept "family":

1. Taking under one's care — the interconnectedness of family members and their relation of belonging to one another.
2. Providing for — meeting the family's material needs, running the household and creating the necessary conditions.
3. Protecting — caring for the safety and well-being of family members.
4. Responsibility — fulfilling the duties and obligations toward family members.
5. Care (*g'amxo'rlik*) — relations based on mutual affection, attention and support.

These features should be understood not as invariable etymological semes characteristic of all dictionary meanings of the lexeme "oila", but as analytical features expressing the semantic links between its historical foundations of meaning and its modern linguocultural interpretation.

The content of the notion "family" in Uzbek culture is not limited to these semes. Values such as respect for parents, the upbringing of children, kinship ties, reverence for elders, the continuity of generations and family unity also occupy an important place in it. Thus, although the etymological foundations of a word do not fully express the whole content of a concept, they serve to identify a certain historical-semantic layer of it.

The etymological relationship between the lexemes "oila" and "ayol" (woman) also deserves special attention. The Arabic form 'iyāl is connected with the meanings "people under one's care" and "family members", and is also mentioned in explaining the historical origin of the word "ayol" [1]. Lane's lexicon [6] adds that the plural 'ayā'il is applied to women, which supports the semantic link between the notions of dependents and women in the history of the Arabic word. A full substantiation of the Uzbek etymology of "ayol", however, requires a separate study of the relevant historical-etymological dictionaries. The linguocultural significance of this connection is that it makes it possible to study the semantic closeness, in the history of the language, among the notions denoting the family, the household and its members. At the same time, it cannot be concluded from this that a woman's role in the family consists only of running the household or being dependent on others. Such a view leads to a failure to distinguish historical language material from modern social relations.

Comparative analysis of the names for "family" in English and Russian. To understand the internal form of the concept "family" more deeply, it is advisable to turn to the origin and

semantic development of the lexemes expressing this notion in other languages. The English family and the Russian семья (semya) are important material for comparative analysis.

The English word family derives from the Latin familia. In ancient Rome, familia denoted the people belonging to one household or estate, including the servants of the head of the family. This lexeme is etymologically connected with the word famulus, "servant". In the course of later historical development, the meaning of family changed. In English the word is first recorded in the early fifteenth century in the sense "servants of a household"; the sense "a household with its head" appears in the 1540s, and the narrower sense "parents with their children" only from the 1660s [7]. Notably, in Latin itself the nuclear family was usually expressed by domus rather than familia [7]. In present-day English the word expresses, mainly, the notions of family members, relatives and the family unit.

This shows that the historical content of the lexeme family included features of household, estate and belonging to a particular social unit. However, the economic relations of ancient times cannot be interpreted as the main or sole meaning of the present-day English notion of family. The modern semantic content differs from the historical meaning.

The Russian lexeme семья (semya) [3] is also one of the main units expressing the notions of family and household. Its historical semantic development makes it possible to study notions connected with people living in one household, kinship ties and family members. According to Vasmer [3], семья (semya) is an inherited Slavic collective formed with the suffix -j- from the word *sěmь, "member of a household, domestic", and is cognate with Lithuanian šeima ("family") and Gothic haims ("village"); Trubachev, as summarized in the commentary to the dictionary, associates the Proto-Slavic form with the idea of a territorial community. The popular explanation of семья as "seven + I" (семь + я) is a folk etymology and has no scientific basis. Thus, as in the Latin case, the historical core of the Russian word is the household and the people belonging to it, but the word's etymology cannot be reduced to the notion of "servants" alone; see also [5] on the history of the word.

By comparing the material of the three languages, several important points can be singled out. First, the lexemes expressing the notion of family historically reflect notions connected with the household, living together and social belonging. Second, the modern meanings of these lexemes are broader than their historical foundations and also encompass such content as kinship, emotional closeness, mutual care and social responsibility. Third, the historical development and cultural experience of each language shape distinct facets of the concept "family".

The results of the comparison are summarized in the table below.

Language	Lexeme	Source and historical meaning	Modern meaning and shared core
Uzbek	oila	Arabic 'ā'ila, from 'āla (ya'ūlu) "to support, maintain"; cf. 'iyāl — those whom a man feeds and sustains (wife, young children, dependent servant) [1; 6]	Family, household; the family unit built on care, support and responsibility

English	family	Latin familia “household, family servants”, from famulus “servant”; in English first “servants of a household” (early 15th c.) [7]	Parents and children; blood relatives; the family unit (from the 1660s)
Russian	семья (semya)	Proto-Slavic *sěmьja, a collective formed from *sěmь “member of a household, domestic”; cognates include Lithuanian šeimà and Gothic haims [3]	Family; a group of relatives living together

The table reveals an important regularity. The three words come from unrelated sources (Arabic, Latin, Slavic) and have no common etymon, yet their historical cores converge: Arabic ‘iyāl and Latin familia both denote the people dependent on the head of the household, including the wife, children and servants, while the Slavic *sěmь denotes a member of the household. In other words, the shared historical core is not “blood relatives” but “the household and those who are supported within it”. The modern meanings, which focus on kinship, emotional closeness and mutual care, developed later and in each language independently.

The Arabic origin of the Uzbek lexeme “oila” provides a basis for considering, in its semantic history, the meanings connected with people under one’s care and with material support. The connection of the English family with the Latin familia, in turn, makes it possible to analyze historically the social relations within the household and estate. The Russian lexeme семья (semya) [3] likewise serves as important language material for expressing the family unit and kinship relations.

Thus, the comparative analysis shows that the etymological origins of these lexemes are not identical, yet a common historical core (the household and its dependents) and certain common notions in their modern semantic fields can be identified. This justifies the need to distinguish the universal content of the concept “family” from the features specific to a particular language and culture.

Universal and national-cultural features of the concept “family”. In studying a concept from a linguocultural perspective, it is important to analyze its universal and national-cultural layers in their mutual relationship. Although the family appears in all societies as an important form of social relations, its content, functions and place in the system of values have distinctive features in different cultures.

The universal layer of the concept “family” is made up of such content as relations among family members, kinship, the continuity of generations, the upbringing of children, mutual assistance and care. These features serve the formation of general notions about the family. However, the forms in which they manifest themselves are not the same in every society.

In Uzbek linguoculture, the concept “family” often appears in connection with such values as respect for parents, the upbringing of children, maintaining ties with relatives, reverence for elders, family harmony and responsibility. These values are reflected in the people’s proverbs,

set expressions, customs and everyday speech practice. In this respect, it is not sufficient to study the concept “family” only within the framework of dictionary meanings. To reveal its cultural content, it is also necessary to analyze the paremiological and phraseological units preserved in the people’s linguistic memory. For example, the proverb “Ota ko’rgan o’q otar, ona ko’rgan to’n bichar” (literally, “he who has seen his father shoots an arrow, she who has seen her mother cuts a robe”) reflects the transmission of experience between generations and upbringing by example, while the saying “Ota-ona rozisi — Xudo rozisi” (“the parents’ approval is God’s approval”) expresses reverence for parents. A systematic analysis of such units goes beyond the scope of this article and constitutes the next stage of the research.

Etymological analysis, for its part, is significant as the initial stage of this research. Although the origin of a word does not fully determine the modern content of a concept, it helps in understanding its historical layers. For this reason, in the comprehensive study of the concept “family”, it is advisable to combine etymological, semantic, cognitive and linguocultural methods of analysis.

Conclusion

The analysis of the internal form and etymological foundations of the concept “family” allows the following conclusions.

First, Yu. S. Stepanov’s interpretation of the concept as a multi-layered phenomenon serves as a theoretical basis for studying the historical and modern content of the concept “family” in their interrelation. The internal form of a concept makes it possible to identify the historical content preserved in the etymology of a word.

Second, the fact that the Uzbek lexeme “oila” was borrowed from Arabic is an important factor in studying its historical-semantic foundations. The meanings connected with feeding, providing for, and taking under one’s care help to interpret linguoculturally those aspects of the family that relate to social responsibility and care.

Third, the comparison with the English family and the Russian семья (semya) shows that the notion of family has had its own historical development in different languages. Although the etymological sources of these units differ (Arabic, Latin, Slavic), their historical cores converge on the notion of the household and the people supported within it, while their modern semantic content shares features connected with kinship, emotional closeness and the family unit.

Fourth, it is necessary to distinguish the universal content of the concept “family” from the values specific to Uzbek linguoculture. Features such as respect for parents, the upbringing of children, kinship ties, family harmony and responsibility occupy an important place in shaping the national-cultural interpretation of this concept.

Fifth, in order to reveal the content of the concept “family” fully, it is necessary to continue the etymological analysis with the analysis of proverbs, phraseological units, associative relations and speech genres. This will make it possible to understand more deeply the relationship among historical notions of the family, modern social views and national values.

Thus, studying the internal form of the concept “family” is an important stage in determining its semantic and linguocultural characteristics. By combining etymological data with modern language material, the historical layers, universal content and national-cultural identity of the concept can be consistently elucidated.

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