

Shifts in the Associative Continuum of the Concept

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Abstract

The article deals with the problem of detecting shifts in the associative continuum of the concept of “family” in the linguistic consciousness of modern English native speakers.

The study of kinship systems has always been one of the central topics in anthropology. The fact that in most societies’ kinship is one of the most important social institutions, determines the significance of the research topic.

From the perspective of the anthropocentric paradigm a man perceives the universe, in other words, a man creates anthropocentric center in his consciousness which determines his spiritual essence, intentions of his actions and hierarchy of values.

The regulators we need to perform in the universe are historically preconditioned – they are variable in time. The shifts in the world view and its subjects give impetus to values, hierarchy and thinking paradigms.

Detection of the shifts in the associative continuum of the concept provides an opportunity to observe the dynamics of linguistic consciousness, more precisely, to observe the changes in the ideals, principles of perception, values, and spiritual orientation of the linguo-cultural community.

The research of the associative continuum of the concept of “family” has been implemented by applying the method of constructing the associative field on the basis of the analysis of the results of the free associative experiment aimed at revealing respondents’ (English native speakers) reactions to the stimulus “family”.

Keywords: family, shifts, associative continuum, dynamics of linguistic consciousness, extra linguistic realities