



ON CERTAIN LEXICAL UNITS REPRESENTING THE “STAGES OF CHILDHOOD”

Nurdinbayeva Nargizaxon Maxammadjon qizi

Doctoral student at Namangan State University

e-mail: nurdinbayevanargiza058@gmail.com

+99894-855-17-73

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Annotation: This article analyzes the lexical-semantic and stylistic features of units expressing the "youth period" of a child. Lexical units expressing the youth period of a child play a special role in our language, they are used not only to describe emotional and social situations related to children, but also reflect cultural and social values, upbringing, and moral ideas. Depending on the growth and development of a child, these units can have different meanings and contexts.

Key words: youth period, child, childhood, infant, newborn, adolescent

The concept of “child” is directly related to the notion of childhood, as the two are interconnected and represent a unity within the category of age. A childhood refers to the stage of a person's life when they are not yet fully grown or matured; it is the period of youth, considered the primary phase in the physical, mental, and psychological development of an individual [1, p. 523]. During childhood, the absence of developed skills or competencies and an overwhelming tendency toward obsession or fixation on certain things is a typical characteristic.

According to D. Yuldasheva [2, p. 148], childhood is characterized by submission, irresponsibility, spontaneous reactions, and a high level of unregulated activity. In this state, the child expresses their emotions not through words, but through feelings and actions. This highlights the emotional and instinctive nature of childhood behavior, where verbal communication is often secondary to emotional expression and spontaneous activity.

The foundation of the concept of age lies in the stages of life. Age is defined as the total number of years a person has lived, starting from birth; it represents the length of one's life.

In Uzbek linguistics, the study of nouns that describe a person's age, especially when used as terms of address in speech, was first comprehensively examined by M. Narziyeva. She categorized nouns describing a person in terms of age into four groups. The first group includes words like chaqaloq (a newborn), go'dak (an infant), and bola (a child), which refer to the youngest stages of childhood. According to Narziyeva, these terms reflect the earliest stages of a child's development and are gender-neutral, meaning that they do not specify the gender of the child. [3, p. 14]



Thus, M. Narziyeva's work provides valuable insight into how age-related nouns are employed in the Uzbek language, particularly in relation to the ways in which individuals are addressed or described based on their stage of life.

O.Bazarov's doctoral dissertation "O'zbek tilida darajalanish" ("Degree Modulation in the Uzbek Language") explores how denotative meanings of gradation can be observed across the lexical-semantic fields of different parts of speech. He emphasizes that gradation in meaning can be seen in lexemes (especially nouns) expressing subjects or objects, particularly when it comes to the semantic field of age. Bazarov identifies a gradational structure within the lexemes related to the concept of "age" in Uzbek, showing a clear progression from one stage of life to the next. This progression is captured through the following stages: a newborn, an infant, a child, a boy/girl, a man/woman, an old man/old woman, an elderly person. [4, p. 25]

In her doctoral dissertation, M. Umurzakova analyzed the issues of the age factor in the development of a linguistic personality and divided linguistic personalities into children, adolescents, young people, middle-aged people, and the elderly according to their age. [5, p. 16]

In her dissertation, young researcher N. Dusmatova sheds light on the gradual indicators of personal naming in Uzbek and Russian. She explains the Uzbek lullaby along with the Russian equivalents of the words baby, child, child, girl, girl, teenager, teenager, young man, girl, man, woman, old man, old woman. [6, p. 60]

The work done on the age category did not reflect information about the period of the child's life in the womb and the terms that designate this period, which indicates the need for research into these terms.

Some rituals are even performed before the birth of a child. According to ancient traditions, some rituals related to the baby begin during a woman's pregnancy and are aimed at protecting the unborn child from various dangers [7, p. 10].

In our study, we analyzed the lexical units denoting the "age periods" of a child in the Uzbek language, dividing them into the following groups:

1. Units denoting the period in the mother's womb: embryo, fetus (presumptive, burden, new guest, child, hanpusht).
2. Units denoting early childhood: baby, infant, child in the cradle, preschool child.
3. Units denoting adolescence: school-age child, teenager, young man/girl, adolescent, middle-aged child, older child.



The lexemes representing “age periods” contrast with each other according to the child’s age, level of physical and mental development, and form a single group in terms of the generalizing meaning of “age sign.” The units naming “age periods” are preceded by lexemes representing the period in the mother’s womb.

Nouns such as Embrion, homila, chaqaloq, go’dak, bola (embryo, fetus, baby, infant, child) represent the young age of the child. Those who had a new child would certainly put the baby on their lap. (S.Ahmad. “Ufq”) At that time, Shamsiddinim was a newborn who had not yet set foot on the road (S.Ahmad. “Turnalar”) The word homila (fetus) is not actively used in speech. Instead of this word, euphemisms such as gumona, yuk (load), yangi mehman (a new guest), bola, hanpusht are used in relation to a newborn or about to be born child. The gumona in the womb is six months old (there is an additional certificate from a gynecologist). (O’Hoshimov. “Tug’ma iste’dod”)

The words “bola” (a child), “go’dak” (an infant) are used figuratively to express the meanings of “not having much experience, simple” in relation to adults, and these words create a sarcasm phenomenon in the text. – Be calm, I hate betrayal. But you want to fly far without growing your own wings, child! Be careful, don’t dive in again (O’Hoshimov. “Bahor qaytmaydi”). The word “child” was used by Anvar to Alimardon, and this word reflects the meanings of “simple”, “raw”. – Look at me, child! I accuse you of three things. (S.Ahmad. “Jimjitlik”) The word “child” used by Lukmanov in relation to Mirvali expresses the meanings of warning, threat, and severity.

Baby – a newborn child; means a baby [1, p. 730]. In the explanatory dictionary, the words baby and baby are given synonymously. In Uzbek culture, a 40-day-old (chilla period) child is called a baby. When the chilla period ends, he is considered a baby: Those who had a new child would certainly put the baby on their lap. (S.Ahmad. “Ufq”) The day you saw the world and your baby’s voice rang out, we would have a small wedding at our house with simple village women. (Oybek. “Qutlug’ qon”)

Adolescent is a child aged 12-16, in the period of transition from childhood to adulthood. (O’TIL.VI.451) E.G’oziyev, in his book “Psychology of Ontogenesis”, explained that adolescence is a period of human maturation, which, with its unique characteristics, sharply differs from other stages of maturity. The author notes that adolescents are children aged 6-15, and teenagers are children aged 15-18 [8, p. 147].

Adolescent a young man who has not reached puberty. [1, p. 452] A group of adolescent boys from the neighborhood gathered at the Laylakmachit's bridle and



were playing with each other. (G'.G'ulom. "Shum bola") In some places, there is confusion in the use of the words adolescent and adolescent. This is considered a stylistic error.

Lexical means expressing the concept of "child" occupy a special place in the development of the literary text. In Uzbek culture, lexical units denoting the concept of "child" are expressed based on the national character, Uzbek worldview, and general ideas about the world.

It can be concluded that, lexical units representing the age periods of a child, that is, words related to children at different age stages, are specific to each culture and language and include terms related to the processes of child upbringing, socialization, and development. In the Uzbek language, lexical units related to the age periods of children are formed in a specific social and cultural context, and these words describe the stages of children's development. The linguistic and cultural characteristics of the units that represent the child's early years are closely related to the cultural traditions of society, the parenting style of parents, social strata, and the needs of the child in the process of growth. Language and culture are important tools in expressing these periods and influencing the child's development.

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