

CULTURAL LINGUISTICS:  
THEORETICAL AND APPLIED ASPECTSЛИНГВОКУЛЬТУРОЛОГИЯ:  
ТЕОРЕТИЧЕСКИЕ И ПРИКЛАДНЫЕ АСПЕКТЫ

DOI: 10.22363/2618-8163-2024-22-1-58-72

EDN: PAKCJZ

Research article

**Semantic dynamics of the lexeme ‘pensioner’  
in Russian linguistic culture**Vladimir N. Denisenko , Lyubov A. Safaralievа  , Natalia V. Perfilyeva *RUDN University, Moscow, Russian Federation* [kuznetsova-la@rudn.ru](mailto:kuznetsova-la@rudn.ru)

**Abstract.** Socio-economic changes, reforms of the pension system have transformed the perception of old age by Russian language native speakers. The authors deal with the dynamics of the semantic volume of the lexeme ‘pensioner’, caused by the above-mentioned extra-linguistic factors. The aim of the study is to describe the semantic transformation of the lexeme ‘pensioner’ representing the concepts ‘pensioner’, ‘pension’ and ‘old age’. The material of the research was the data of the National Corpus of the Russian Language for the period from 1995 to 2021, lexicographic sources, data of the associative experiment, which identified the conceptual, value-oriented and image-bearing components of the concepts ‘pensioner’, ‘pension’ and ‘old age’. The method of analysis and generalization of linguistic material from lexicographic sources, associative experiment, and the method of component analysis were used. The analysis of verbal elements reflecting cultural, traditional and value representations of Russian language speakers presented the dynamics of the semantics of the lexeme ‘pensioner’, its semantic transformation, which reflects changes in the Russian linguistic world picture. Semantic merisms identified as a result of contrastive analysis of potential associations allowed to present the semantic volume of the word considering the extra-linguistic data. As a result, the data were obtained, which can be used in lexicographic sources when defining the lexeme ‘pensioner’. Theoretical and practical approaches to modeling of Russian linguistic-cultural concepts are generalized. This reveals cultural and moral dominants of Russian language speakers and sacred meanings of the Russian culture.

**Keywords:** Russian language, semantics, concept, conceptual features, associative experiment

**Article history:** received 13.04.2023; accepted 15.10.2023.

**For citation:** Denisenko, V.N., Safaralievа, L.A., & Perfilyeva, N.V. (2024). Semantic dynamics of the lexeme ‘pensioner’ in Russian linguistic culture. *Russian Language Studies*, 22(1), 58–72. <http://doi.org/10.22363/2618-8163-2024-22-1-58-72>

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## Introduction

Language keeps cultural values and always reflects the smallest changes in the society. N.M. Dmitriyeva, N.L. Chulkina rightly note that “the view on the world of the modern generation depends primarily on the ability to understand the deep conceptual meanings embedded in the words of our language, primarily in the words verbalizing the basic ethical concepts of the Russian mentality” (Dmitriyeva, Chulkina, 2022: 65). Undoubtedly, modeling Russian linguistic-cultural concepts – identifying conceptual, figurative, and value attributes – becomes the most important task of modern linguistics, since it allows not only to go deep in the semantic space of language, but also to reveal the cultural and moral dominants of society. According to V.I. Karasik, the cultural dominants of Russian speakers' behavior are based on “linguistic-cultural values”, which can be classified as follows (Karasik, 2022: 14–16):

- defining the conditions of the biological state of a person, or *basic values of physical existence*;
- characterizing benefits and harms for individuals, or *utilitarian values*;
- revealing the nature of duty and responsibility, or *moral values*;
- explaining the essence of spiritual existence and the meaning of life, or *terminal values*.

The value approach is actively developed within the framework of the linguistic-cultural approach, which involves modeling the national conceptosphere on the basis of linguistic material: lexical units verbalizing the concept, phraseological units, proverbs, sayings reflecting national-cultural images (Vorkachev, 2016; Karasik, 2022). Outstanding representatives of the linguistic-cultural approach in Russian linguistics are also E.Yu. Prokhorov (2009), G.G. Slyshkin (2004), V.M. Shaklein (Shaklein et al., 2021) and others.

Undoubtedly, changes in the political system, socio-economic factors have influenced the basic values of Russian linguistic culture of the XXI century, which could not but affect their perception and comprehension by modern speakers of the Russian language and culture. Thus, various aspects of the conceptual representation of the reality are presented in the works of A. Wierzbicka (2022), S.V. Ivanova, S.N. Medvedeva (2023), A.A. Grigoryan, E.N. Strelchuk (2021), M. Lacková (2021), Sun Yunuo, M.A. Rybakov, M.V. Lysyakova (2022) and others. Therefore, one of the most important directions in cultural linguistics should be interdisciplinary research aimed at modeling the dynamics of linguistic-cultural concepts representing the basic values of Russian culture.

**The aim of our study** is to model the image of a pensioner in Russian linguistic culture by identifying the dynamics of the concepts *pension* and *old age*, which represent the basic ethical value “attitude to people of the older age”.

We should note that in Russian linguistics there is a small number of scientific works describing the above-mentioned concepts and revealing their value,

figurative and conceptual features: the concept of *pension* (Denisenko et al., 2022), the concept of *aging* (Blinova, 2009; Burnaeva, 2011; Kudryashova, 2018; Valiyeva, 2010; Safaralieva, 2021). Under the influence of socio-economic factors, reforming the pension system of the Russian Federation, the perception of old age by the speakers of Russian linguistic culture has changed: old age is now perceived not so much as the final period of a person's life, but rather as the period of life during the old-age pension. Thus, the description of the value “attitude to the elderly people” in Russian culture, represented by the value attributes of the concept *old age*, will be incomplete without modeling the concept *pension*.

### Methods and materials

The reconstruction of the image of the XXI century pensioner in Russian linguistic culture included the interpretation of definitions of lexemes *pension*, *pensioner*, in explanatory, encyclopedic, associative dictionaries, dictionaries of synonyms, word combinability, as well as the data from National Russian Language Corpus, associative experiments. We should note that the associative experiment with the stimuli *pension* and *pensioner* was first conducted at the Faculty of Philology of RUDN University. To write 3 first reactions to the stimuli *pension* and *pensioner* were asked 99 respondents – native Russian speakers. As a result, the stimulus *pension* elicited 135 reactions with 98 were single reactions; the stimulus *pensioner* elicited 153 reactions with 113 were single reactions.

Continuous sampling, descriptive and comparative method, free associative experiment, statistical method were used.

### Results

The change of the pensioner's status in modern society has firstly led to a change in its perception by native Russian speakers. The complex method of analyzing the lexeme *pensioner*, taking into account both the conceptual meaning of the word and the data obtained in the associative experiment, statistical analysis of the material of the National Russian Language Corpus, reflected significant changes in the semantics of this lexeme and also reconstructed the image of the pensioner of the XXI century.

The authors found that the semantic components *pupil* and *artist* in the lexeme *pensioner* were completely lost in the XXI century. This is confirmed during the associative experiment with the stimulus *pensioner*. In addition, the semantics of the word under study is enriched with semes *poor*, *lonely*, which is primarily due to extra-linguistic factors, namely: socio-economic transformations of Russian society and 2019 pension reform.

The free associative experiment with the stimulus *pensioner* allowed us to describe the actual image and value attributes of the concept *pensioner*. Thus, for young speakers of Russian linguistic culture, a pensioner appears as a lonely, poor, infirm, and sick old man who receives payment in the form of a pension and has the so-

cial status of a grandfather or grandmother. According to the respondents, a pensioner should be helped physically due to his/her helplessness and also financially, since the state financial support of the elderly is insufficient to ensure a decent lifestyle.

### Discussion

In recent decades, thanks to the achievements of the modern health care system, improvement of the social support system for vulnerable segments of the population, and the growth of economic support measures, not only the average life expectancy but also the life quality of citizens of the Russian Federation has been increasing, which, accordingly, causes an increase in people over 60 years. Thus, the share of the able-bodied population is gradually decreasing in proportion to the increase in the share of the aging population, which causes an additional burden on the country's economy and requires redistribution of funds for social payments. To address this socio-economic problem, the Russian Federation has decided to gradually raise the retirement age in order to increase the share of the able-bodied population. It should be noted that the understanding of old age as a process of biological withering, physical weakening of the human organism is universal, nevertheless, the age of social old age or old age pension differs in many countries depending on the specific socio-economic situation in a particular country. Let us consider how the pension system and the status of a pensioner were formed in the Russian Federation. For the first time in Russia (the USSR), the age of old age retirement was legislatively approved in 1932: women could retire at 55, men – at 60. It is worth noting that “this indicator was the lowest in the world and remained unchanged until recently” (Uryupina, 2018: 29). But by the mid-1980s, the economic crisis, growing inflation, and an increase in the share of elderly citizens in the USSR led to a significant decrease in the amount of pension payments and an increase in the number of elderly citizens below the poverty line.

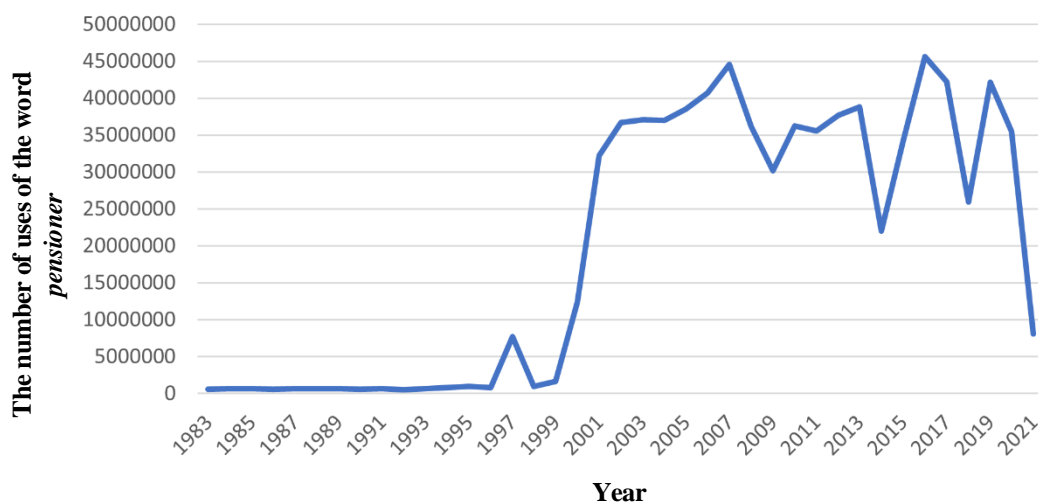
In 1990, the Federal Law “On State Pensions in the Russian Federation” approved a new pension system (Uryupina, 2018: 31) based on the principles of social insurance and initiated the creation of the Pension Fund of the Russian Federation – a new state structure that accumulates pension contributions. As the new system failed in the context of the Pension Fund's budget deficit and the growing number of disabled citizens, a law<sup>1</sup> on raising the retirement age was adopted in 2018, which received a great public response.

The relevance of the pension reform for citizens of working and older age and the subsequent socio-economic transformations of the Russian society contributed to the increase in the frequency of use of the lexemes *pension*, *pensioner*. “According

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<sup>1</sup> Federal Law of October, 3 2018 no. 350-FZ. (In Russ.) Retrieved March 2, 2023, from <http://www.kremlin.ru/acts/bank/43614>

to the data of the newspaper corpus of the National Russian Language Corpus<sup>2</sup>, the word *pensioner* in the period from 2014 to 2017 occurs 14,837 times in media texts, from 2018 to 2021 – 16,236 times” (Denisenko et al., 2022: 118). The statistics of the use of the word *pensioner* in the newspaper corpus is presented in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Statistics of the use of the word *pensioner* in the texts of the newspaper corpus

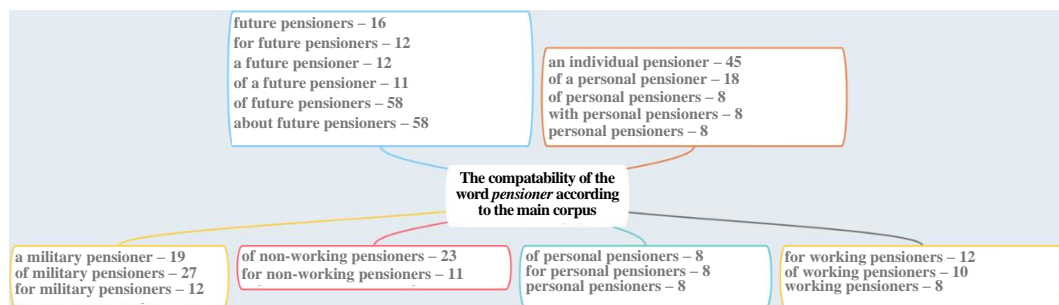
Source: compiled by the authors using Microsoft Excel tools.

The analysis of the above data confirms the increase in the frequency of the word *pensioner* in the first two decades of the 21st century due to the reform of the pension system of the Russian Federation. The peak of the lexeme *pensioner* falls on the periods of economic and social reforms in the Russian society. The lexeme *pensioner* at the peaks reveals such combinations as *non-working pensioner* (2019), *single pensioners* (2019), *working pensioner* (2016), *pensioner's living wage* (2016), *it is impossible to support a pensioner* (2016), *demonstrations of pensioners* (2007), *disgruntled pensioners* (2007).

The analysis of the peaks of the lexeme *pensioner* in the newspaper corpus from 1983 to 2021 leads to the following conclusions: the 2019 reform exposed an acute problem specifically for non-working and single pensioners. The word combinations *lonely* and *non-working pensioner* reveal the highest frequency of use. The combination of pre-reform peaks – 2007 and 2016 – indicates the extreme financial situation of pensioners and the protest mood of the population.

In the main corpus of the National Corpus of the Russian Language, the word *pensioner* occurs 4089 times. The regular combination of the word *pensioner* is presented in Figure 2.

<sup>2</sup> National Russian Language Corpus. (In Russ.) Retrieved March 20, 2023, from <https://ruscorpora.ru>



**Figure 2.** Compatibility of the word *pensioner* according to the main body

Source: compiled by the authors.

At the same time, it should be noted that the word combination *personal pensioner* was actively used in the XX century texts, while combinations of the word *pensioner* with the words *future*, *working*, *non-working*, *military* are more frequent in the texts of the XXI century:

“*Ganchuk was pointing out that he was a personal pensioner, that he was eighty-six and could die every moment, and the gatekeeper was yelling in a hoarse, angry voice that he also was a human being and wanted to come home on time*” (Yuri Trifonov. *The House on the Embankment* (1976))<sup>3</sup>.

The sporadic use of the phrase *personal pensioner* in the texts of the XXI century is explained by the fact that this type of pension existed before the collapse of the USSR; in the Russian Federation, this type of pension is not assigned. In the Great Soviet Encyclopedia, we find the following definition of the concept of personal pension: “In the USSR, [it is] a periodic monetary support paid to citizens of the USSR for special merits in the field of revolutionary, state, public, economic, military and cultural activities”<sup>4</sup>. V.N. Mamyachenkov notes that “the main advantage of personal pensions was not in money, but in the ‘social package’ attached to them, which provided a whole range of benefits: from the preferention in specialized medical care, food orders and buying scarce goods in stores closed for the population” (Mamyachenkov, 2018: 401). At present, the Russian Federation distinguishes the following types of pensions:

- old-age pension (or for the length of service);
- for disability (or illness);
- in case of loss (of breadwinner or ability to work).

The first two types of pensions – old-age or disability insurance pensions – represent the most common types of pensions in Russia<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> National Russian Language Corpus. (In Russ.) Retrieved March 24, 2023, from <http://ruscorpora.ru>

<sup>4</sup> Vavilov, S.I. (Ed.). (1955). *The Great Soviet Encyclopedia* (vol. 32, p. 530) (2nd ed.). Moscow: Bol'shaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya Publ. (In Russ.)

<sup>5</sup> Pension Fund of the Russian Federation. (In Russ.) Retrieved March 23, 2023, from [https://pfr.gov.ru/grazhdanam/pensions/strah\\_pens](https://pfr.gov.ru/grazhdanam/pensions/strah_pens)

### **Semantics of the word pensioner in the XX century**

At the next stage of our research, we turned to dictionary definitions of the word *pensioner*.

In the Explanatory Dictionary of the Russian Language, we find:

“PENSIONER, -a, m. A person who receives a pension. Single pensioner. II Feminine Pensioner, -i. II adjective pensioner, -aya, -oe”<sup>6</sup>.

The Dictionary of the Russian Language says:

“PENSIONER, -a, m. One who receives a pension. Personal pensioner. – Conscientious pensioners, served their time, received a well-deserved vacation, and still help how they can. B. Polevoy, Sayan records”<sup>7</sup>.

The Online Explanatory Dictionary gives the following interpretation of the word *pensioner*:

“PENSIONER, m.

1) One who receives a pension.

2) An artist who received monetary support from the Academy of Arts to travel abroad (in the Russian state before 1917)”<sup>8</sup>.

The Demographic Encyclopedic Dictionary gives the following interpretation of the word *pensioner*:

“PENSIONER, a person receiving a pension. Depending on the reasons for the pension, there are pensioners of old-age, disability, survivor’s one, P. receiving a pension for length of service. Pensioners are also divided into working and non-working ones”<sup>9</sup>.

In the dictionaries of synonyms, we find the following synonymic series:

– pensioner – “a student, elderly, senile, old man”<sup>10</sup>;

– pensioner – “grandfather, pense, elderly, old man, old geezer, old codgee, apprentice, artist”<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> Ozhegov, S.I. (2008–2017). *Explanatory dictionary of the Russian language: Online version*. (In Russ.) Retrieved March 20, 2023, from <https://slovarozhegova.ru/word.php?wordid=30422>

<sup>7</sup> Efremova, T.F. (2000). *New dictionary of the Russian language. Explanatory and word-formative*. Moscow: Russkii Yazyk Publ. (In Russ.) Retrieved March 21, 2023, from <https://lexicography.online/explanatory/efremova/%D0%BF/%D0%BF%D0%B5%D0%BD%D1%81%D0%B8%D0%BE%D0%BD%D0%B5%D1%80>>

<sup>8</sup> Evgenieva, A.P. (Ed.). (1985). *Dictionary of the Russian language* (3rd ed.). Moscow: Russkii Yazyk Publ. (In Russ.) Retrieved March 20, 2023, from <http://feb-web.ru/feb/mas/mas-abc/16/ma304023.htm?cmd=0&istext=1>>

<sup>9</sup> Valentey, D.I. (1985). *Demographic encyclopaedic dictionary*. Moscow: Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya Publ. (In Russ.) Retrieved March 10, 2023, from <https://rus-demography-dict.slovaronline.com/>

<sup>10</sup> Dictionary of synonyms of the Russian language. (In Russ.) Retrieved March 11, 2023, from <https://sin.slovaronline.com/54902-PENSIONER>

<sup>11</sup> Electronic dictionary of synonyms of the Russian language of ASIS system. (In Russ.) Retrieved March 11, 2023, from [https://dic.academic.ru/dic.nsf/dic\\_synonims/114171/%D0%BF%D0%B5%D0%BD%D1%81%D0%B8%D0%BE%D0%BD%D0%B5%D1%80?ysclid=lfxyjv0rqr102442467](https://dic.academic.ru/dic.nsf/dic_synonims/114171/%D0%BF%D0%B5%D0%BD%D1%81%D0%B8%D0%BE%D0%BD%D0%B5%D1%80?ysclid=lfxyjv0rqr102442467)

On the basis of dictionary definitions, we made component analysis and selected the following semantic components of words *pensioner*, in the dictionaries of the XX century:

- the beneficiary of the pension;
- old man;
- student;
- artist or person of the creative profession.

It should be noted that the seme *artist* was updated, mainly in the first half of the 20th century.

### ***The semantics of the word pensioner in the XXI century***

The lexeme *pensioner*, revealing the above-mentioned semes, can verbalize the conceptual features of several concepts: *old age*, *pension* and others, because “...in a word, as in language, there are two forms – external and internal, there are two contents – objective and subjective. Obviously, one of them is linguistic, supported by sound associations, and the other is thought” (Denisenko et al., 2016: 104).

To verify this position, an associative experiment was conducted with 99 students of the Philological Faculty of RUDN University. The “conducting a free associative experiment makes it possible to model an associative field from the verbal reactions of respondents to a certain word-stimulus. Such a field is a linguistic material that realizes linguistic consciousness, and its analysis allows us to identify specific features of the national linguistic consciousness” (Isajeva, Vasilijeva, 2021: 242).

Thus, the words *old age*, *pension*, *pensioner* were proposed as stimulus words. Associative experiments with the stimuli *pensioner* and *pension* were conducted for the first time: there are no above-mentioned stimuli in the associative dictionaries of the 20th century. Since associative-verbal networks of the words *old age* and *pension* were described in detail in our studies (Safaraliev, 2021; Denisenko et al., 2022), we will present the main results of the study.

There were 273 reactions to the stimulus *old age*, where 66 were single reactions. The most frequent reactions are presented in Figure 3.

“New reactions, previously recorded as singular, characterizing old age as a period associated with illness and malaise were revealed: *sickness* (3), *disease* (3), *morbidity* (1). New frequent reactions to the stimulus “old age” were also *receiving pension*, *the period of rest and entertainment*, *wrinkles*, which previously were not recorded in associative dictionaries of the XX century” (Safaraliev, 2021: 13).

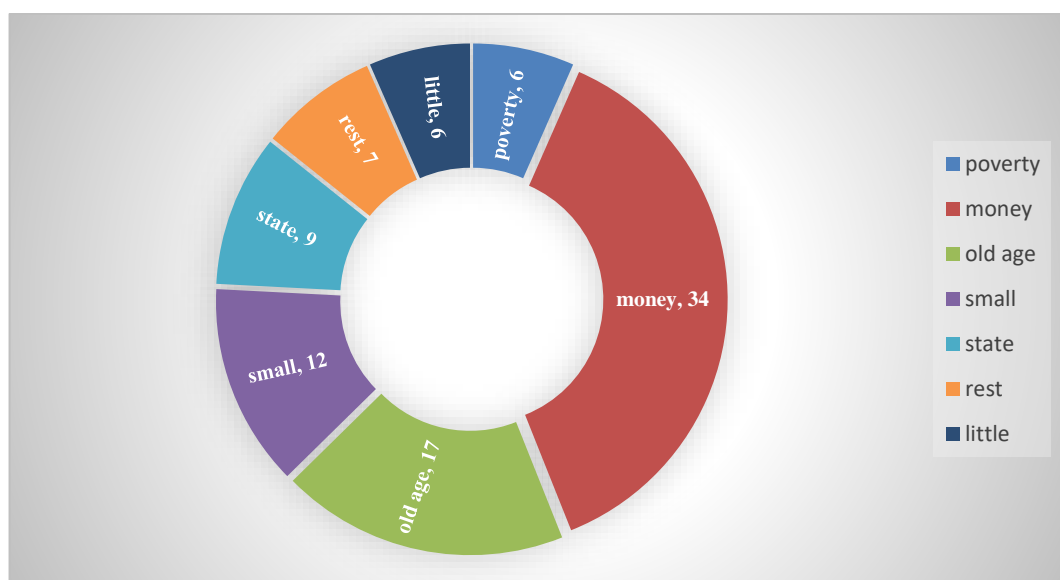
The stimulus *pension* got 135 reactions from respondents – native Russian speakers. There are no stimuli *pension* and *pensioner* in the associative dictionaries of the Russian language. The most frequent reactions to the stimulus *pension* is presented in Figure 4.





**Рис. 3.** The most frequent reactions to the stimulus *old age*

Source: compiled by the authors.



**Figure 4.** The most frequent reactions to stimulus *pension*

Source: compiled by the authors.

Thus, in the minds of young representatives of Russian linguistic culture, pension is “a sum of money (*small, little*) assigned to an elderly citizen (*old age, age*) who has gone on a ‘deserved rest’ (*rest*), but it does not allow him/her to be financially prosperous (*poverty*)” (Denisenko et al., 2022: 120).

The analysis of frequent reactions reveals a stable connection between the concepts of *old age* and *pension*, which has not been yet recorded in the associative dictionaries of the Russian language.

At the next stage of our research, we reconstructed actual attributes of the image of a pensioner among native speakers of the Russian language. As a result of the free associative experiment, 153 reactions were obtained, of which 113 were single reactions:

### *Pensioner*

Old age 16; pension, elderly 12; old man 10; grandmother, age 9; unemployed, home 6; poor, grandfather, money, loneliness 5; poverty 4; benefits, single, allowance, family, old, respect, person 3; helpless, veteran, sadness, grandfather, kindness, bench, wrinkles, man, vegetable garden, rest, glasses, help, work, freedom, work experience, old people, theater, labor, household, khrushchevka 2; bus, aggression, activity, active, pharmacy, poor, eat without salt, defenseless, free travel, helplessness, illness, ex-employee, aged, cheerful, grandchildren, military, opportunity, volunteer, nagging, pay, seniority, newspaper, hero, hungry, state, rudeness, risk group, dacha, Victory Day, village, cheap food, softie, flabby, Europe, pathetic, pity, cheerful, life, merit, honored, immigration, disability, history, qualification, cap, books, end, crutch, jacket, drugs, little mobility, manipulation, place, lots of free time, wise, martyr, cash, tension, discontent, German, injustice, unhappy, beggar, needy, limitation, alone, lake, October, experience, experienced, vacationer, passport, rest, hospital, decent, loss, post office, elderly, privilege, travel, worker, indifference, relatives, fishing, market, self-sufficient, gray hair, orphan, bench, scandal, Nordic walking, weakness, weak, word, old purse, old man, pills, television, wasting time, cane, difficulties, fading, smile, smarts, wise, tired, tiredness, to get tired, morning, pinch, dialogues for hours, economy, apples 1.

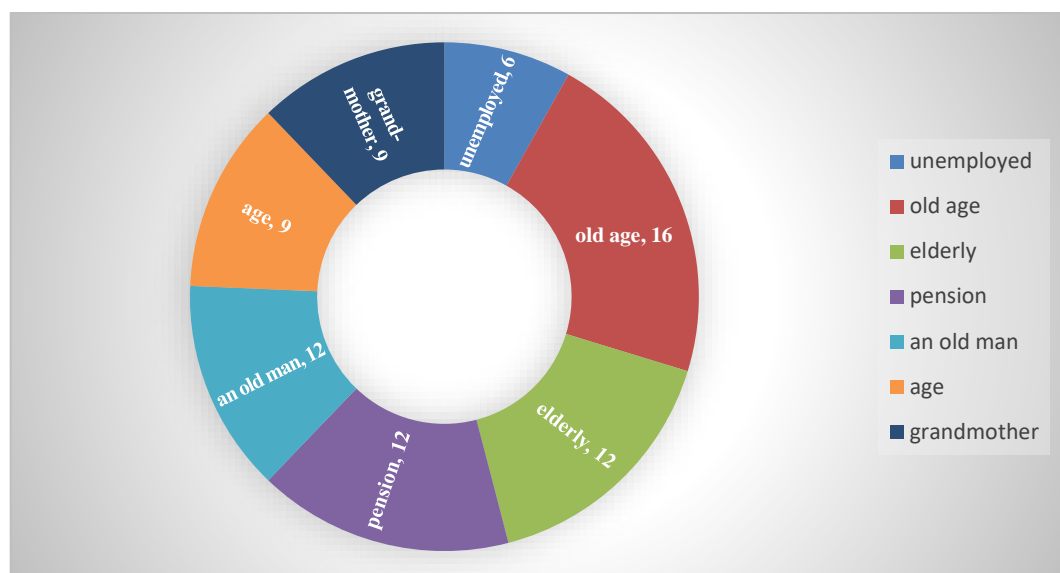
The obtained reactions can be divided into the following thematic groups based on the semantic proximity of the associates:

- physical condition;
- assessment of cognitive abilities, character of the pensioner;
- pensioner's appearance;
- moral state of the pensioner, attitude towards the pensioner;
- age, periodization of a person's life, nomination of a person;
- attributes of a pensioner;
- socio-economic status of the pensioner;
- other reactions.

Quantitatively distinguished frequent reactions are presented in Figure 5.

The analysis of the most frequent reactions revealed that for modern representatives of Russian linguistic culture the pensioner appears as an old person (*old age (16), elderly (12), old man (10), grandmother (9), age (9)*), receiving payments in the form of a pension (*pension (12), unemployed (6)*).

The physical condition of a pensioner is characterized mainly by reactions with pejorative connotation (10): a pensioner is a weak, tired, sick person. Only 2 respondents noted that a pensioner can be active (*activity (1), active (1)*).



**Figure 5.** The most frequent reactions to the stimulus *pensioner*

Source: compiled by the authors.

Most of the respondents characterize the cognitive abilities of a pensioner and his character positively (11 out of 15): a pensioner is a kind, wise, experienced person. Only a small part of respondents sees a pensioner as a dissatisfied, aggressive person.

Out of 27 reactions characterizing the pensioner's moral and ethical state and the attitude of society towards him/her, 19 have negative connotations. For most respondents, a pensioner is a *lonely* (9), *helpless* (3) person in need of outside *help* (4), causing *pity* (2). Only a small group of respondents associates the image of a pensioner with *respect* (3) and a period of *rest* (3), certain *freedom* (2).

First of all, a pensioner is a person who has reached a certain age. The associations *old age* (16), *elderly* (12), *old man* (10) indicate the stable connection between the concepts *pension* and *oldness*, verbalized by the lexeme *pensioner*. Among the reactions denoting age, periodization of a person's life, the reaction *veteran* (2) stands out, reflecting a stable associative connection with the events of the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945 in the Russian linguistic picture of the world. The external features of a pensioner are *wrinkles*, *gray hair*, and a *smile*.

The socio-economic status of the pensioner is reconstructed in the most detail. On the one hand, a pensioner is a person who is in certain economic relations with the state as a recipient of monetary payments (*pension* (12), *money* (5), *allowance* (3), *payment* (1), *state* (1)). At the same time, the connection of the received economic support with the certain length of service is revealed: a pensioner is a person who has reached old age and stopped working (*unemployed* (6), *work* (2), *length of service* (2), *labor* (2), etc.). In the mind of the representatives of Russian linguistic culture, a pensioner appears as a poor citizen (*poor* (5), *poverty* (4), *a poor person* (1), *beggar* (1), forced to save money. Very important for a pensioner are family and support, help from relatives: *family* (3), *grandchildren* (1), *relatives* (1). According

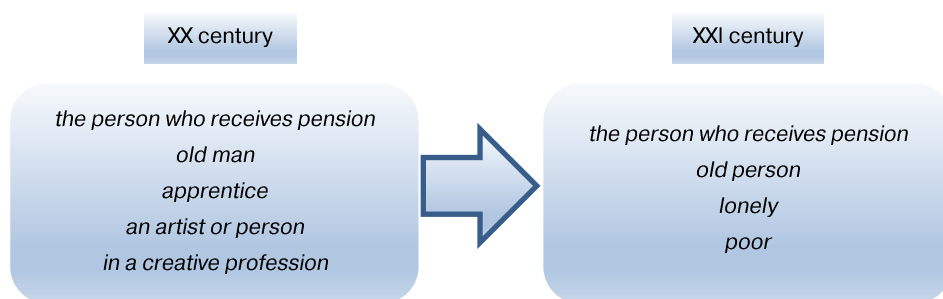
to the representatives of Russian linguistic culture, pensioners spend a lot of time in the country, farming: *vegetable garden* (2), *household* (2), *dacha* (1).

The analysis of individual reactions allows us to reconstruct the everyday life of a pensioner: visiting various institutions (*pharmacy* (1), *hospital* (1), *post office* (1), *market* (1)), walking and communicating with people (*bench* (3), *Nordic walking* (1), *dialogues for hours* (1)). The image of a pensioner in the consciousness of modern representatives of Russian linguistic culture is often associated with the image of a veteran of the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945. Besides the previously mentioned reaction *veteran* (2), such associations as: *military man* (1), *hero* (1), *Victory Day* (1), *Europe* (1), *history* (1), *German* (1) are recorded. That is, in Russian linguistic culture a pensioner is often a participant of the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945.

Our research singles out the following topical attributes of the image of a pensioner:

- pension recipient;
- old man;
- lonely;
- poor.

Thus, the perception of the pensioner in Russian linguistic culture has undergone certain changes: for modern Russian language speakers the pensioner is no longer associated with an artist or a student, i.e. the above-mentioned semes are no longer relevant, but the semes *lonely* and *poor* are now relevant (Figure 6).



**Figure 6.** Dynamics of the semantics of the *pensioner* lexeme in Russian linguistic culture

Source: compiled by the authors.

## Conclusion

The contrastive analysis of the concepts *old age*, *pension* and *pensioner* allowed us to combine the linguistic material from lexicographic sources and extralinguistic data obtained by analyzing the potential associates of the named concepts, which most fully reflected the transformation of the semantics of the word *pensioner*. The analysis of the associates of the named concepts made it possible to recreate the image of a pensioner in the minds of Russian language speakers and to conclude that over the last 20 years not only the semantic volume of the lexeme *pensioner* has changed, but also its perception and reflection have

transformed in Russian linguistic culture. The proposed model of analyzing words as potential associates of concepts includes the identification and description of conceptual, figurative and value attributes of the latter, taking into account linguistic and extralinguistic data. The prospect of future research is seen in the application of this algorithm to representing and comprehending the current state of the Russian linguistic picture of the world. The obtained empirical material can become a basis for compiling lexicographic sources, including associative dictionaries of the Russian language.

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DOI: 10.22363/2618-8163-2024-22-1-58-72


EDN: PAKCJZ

Научная статья

## Семантическая динамика лексемы «пенсионер» в русской лингвокультуре

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**Аннотация.** Социально-экономические перемены, реформирование пенсионной системы привели к изменению восприятия старости носителями русского языка. Рассматривается динамика семантического объема лексемы «пенсионер», обусловленная вышеуказанными экстралингвистическими факторами. Цель исследования – описание семантической трансформации лексемы «пенсионер», репрезентирующей концепты «пенсионер», «пенсия» и «старость». Материалом послужили данные Национального корпуса русского языка за период с 1995 по 2021 г., лексикографические источники, данные ассоциативного эксперимента, позволившего выделить понятийные, ценностные и образные компоненты концептов «пенсионер», «пенсия» и «старость». Применялись метод анализа и обобщения языкового материала лексикографических источников, данных ассоциативного эксперимента, метод компонентного анализа. Изучение вербальных элементов, отражающих культурные, традиционные и ценностные представления носителей русского языка, позволило представить динамику семантики лексемы «пенсионер», ее семантическую трансформацию, которая отражает изменения в русской языковой картине мира. Семантические меризмы, выделенные на основе контрастивного анализа потенциальных ассоциатов, позволили представить семантический объем слова с учетом экстралингвистических данных. Полученные результаты могут быть использованы в лексикографических источниках при определении лексемы «пенсионер». Обобщены теоретические и практические подходы к моделированию русских лингвокультурных концептов, с помощью которых появляется возможность выявить культурно-нравственные доминанты носителей русского языка и сакральные смыслы русской культуры.

**Ключевые слова:** русский язык, семантика, концепт, концептуальные признаки, ассоциативный эксперимент

**История статьи:** поступила в редакцию 13.04.2023; принята к печати 15.10.2023.

**Для цитирования:** Денисенко В.Н., Сафаралиева Л.А., Перфильева Н.В. Семантическая динамика лексемы «пенсионер» в русской лингвокультуре // Русистика. 2024. Т. 22. № 1. С. 58–72. <http://doi.org/10.22363/2618-8163-2024-22-1-58-72>