

Résumé

The topic of this paper is a survey into the motivations behind the naming of descendents, and the changes in such naming throughout generations. The survey found that when choosing names for their children, parents take into account various factors. The level of influence of these factors undergoes a change throughout time. 396 samples (children) were obtained for assessment from a total of 212 respondents (parents). The aforementioned children were born within the period commencing in the 1940s and stretching up to the present time – 2011.

Altogether, it could be said that the sound of the name itself influences the naming process the most. This is closely followed by aspects of agreement between first name and Christian name, semantics of the specific name and family tradition. All motivations have undergone some degree of change throughout time. The most notable changes are a permanent fall in the influence of family tradition and a permanent rise in other categories of influence. Among the latter we can find those concerning the sound of the name, agreement with Christian name, and semantics of the name.

Two further categories of motivation – naming children after famous personalities and after fictitious characters – although continuously rising, have not yet exceeded 10%. Their influence is therefore limited. All categories, as can be seen from graph 1, are experiencing a rise. This trend may be ascribed to a higher birth-rate in recent years, but also to the fact that parents are influenced by more diverse motivations than in the past.