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**VERBAL EXPLICATION OF THE NOTION OF FRIENDSHIP IN  
ENGLISH LEXICOGRAPHY**

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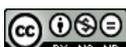
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*Abstract*

Raising linguists' awareness towards the issue of lingual identity can be explained by the development of sociocultural processes and multicultural communication. Theoretical comprehension of conceptual systems, which enables to show the interaction of language, culture and lingual identity, plays a significant role. In modern linguistics the aforementioned issues can be viewed through lingual conceptual notions being of great importance in the value system of any lingual society. Carrying out of definition and componential analysis of lexical units relating to the conceptual notion can contribute to highlighting its original etymological meanings and underlying links in the perception of English-speaking lingual society. Research of lexicographic data can help linguists to outline specificity and universality of definitions of the given conceptual notion. The conceptual notion “Friendship” plays an essential role in the value system of all lingual identities. It relates to patriotic discourse and is considered to be the national specific element of culture.

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**Keywords:** Definition, lingual society, categorical meanings, analysis, etymology, lexical unit.



## 1. Introduction

Friendship is the most essential life-constituent part for every representative of the lingual society. The conceptual notion of Friendship has various linguistic means of its linguistic realization. Lexical units, which represent the studied notion, are the basis of derivative forms, statements, phraseological units and aphorisms. In the present research we attempt to outline the peculiarities of the functioning of the given conceptual notion and characterize its linguistic meanings.

Definition and componential analysis of nuclear elements can contribute to determining the basic semantic structure of the conceptual notion and characteristic features of national and cultural conception of its lexical meanings. It can be related to linguistic realization of the conceptual notion of Friendship in etymologic, linguistic-cultural dictionaries and encyclopedias.

The main function of dictionary definition, being a specific type of text, is to provide a laconic lexicographic representation of semantics of a word, which names a particular notion as the result of human activity.

It is worth examining the etymology of the word “friendship” in English. This lexical unit is originally an English word, which consists of the root “friend” and the suffix “ship”. “Friendship” derives from Middle English word *frend* (Old English *frēond*), the participle of present tense *freon*, *freogan*, which had two meanings “loving” and “blood relation” (Skeat, 1958). In the German language “Freundschaft” originates from verbs “freien“ and “fruen” (Duden Deutsches Wörterbuch, 1989). In the past it had a meaning of “friendship”, “kindred”, “common home” and “common background”. In the eleventh century suffix “scaf” was changed in suffix “scaft”. In Middle German “Vriuntschaft»” meant “kindred”. In the eighteenth century the word “Vriuntschaft” was changed in “Freundshaft” which is still used in modern German language.

Thereby the inner form of the conceptual notion of Friendship according to its etymology in the English language included the component “Friend” which meant a beloved person, a kinsman. At present time the word “Friendship” has acquired its initial meaning “a friend is a kinsman”. According to our research native speakers usually associate Friendship with family, relatives, and siblings.

## 2. Problem Statement

It goes without saying that lexicography plays an important role in preservation and development of languages. The analysis of dictionary entries and the nominative field enables linguists to trace back some shifts in lexical meanings and changes in the semantic structure of the key conceptual notions. Therefore determining the peculiarities and specific elements of the conceptual notions may contribute to reconstructing linguistic worldview and updating data in lexicographic sources. Globalization has lead to expanding boundaries in relations between lingual societies which can be widely reflected in languages and linguistics.

## 3. Research Questions

The primary focus of the research involves studying the etymology of the notion “Friendship”, analyzing its definitions in various dictionaries and the nominative field and assessing the role of Friendship in modern English-speaking lingual society. In addition, the research seeks to address three questions that are related to the primary question:

- What are the most essential nuclear elements of the lexical unit “Friendship”?
- Did the given notion retain its lexical meanings at present time which were initially underlying in its etymology?
- What are the national specific nuclear elements of the conceptual notion?

#### **4. Purpose of the Study**

In accordance with the principal research question, the purpose of the study includes the following points:

- To examine dictionary entries of the conceptual notion of “Friendship” in various English dictionaries.
- To classify all lexical units which actualize the notion in accordance with its categorical meanings.
- To outline universal and national specific components of the notion “Friendship” in English-speaking lingual society.
- To determine the role of the conceptual notion “Friendship” in English linguistic worldview.

#### **5. Research Methods**

This section discusses the methods that will be used to collect and analyze relevant data in relation to the research questions. Specifically, it discusses the definition, componential and semantic methods used to collect and analyze data. The main research methods used were analysis, description, generalization, classification, which contributed to the achievement of goal. The materials involved dictionary entries given in various lexicographic sources such as encyclopedias, etymologic and linguistic-cultural dictionaries.

#### **6. Findings**

In modern English dictionaries there are no differences in definitions of lexical units “friend” and “friendship”. In a narrow sense a friend is “a person you like, who is not usually a member of your family” . Dictionaries define the lexical unit “friend” in various ways. We would like to give a short overview of definitions:

Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary (Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, 2012):

- 1) a supporter, a person who supports an organization, a charity, etc., by giving and saving money;
- 2) a person who has the same interests and opinions as yourself, and will support you;
- 3) a silly, annoying person, somebody you don’t know who has done smth. silly;
- 4) (in Britain) used by a member of parliament to refer to another member of parliament or by a lawyer to refer to another lawyer in a court of law;
- 5) a member of the Society of Friends.

Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English, (Hornby, 2006):

- 1) a helpful thing/ quality;
- 2) a helper/ sympathizer.

Collins English Dictionary (Collins English Dictionary, 1995):

- 1) a person known well to another and regarded with liking, affection and loyalty;
- 2) an ally in a fight;
- 3) a patron or supporter.

Collins COBUILD Advanced Learner's English Dictionary (Collins COBUILD Advanced Learner's English Dictionary, 2006):

- 1) someone who you know well and like, but who is not related to you;
- 2) The friends of a country, organization, or a famous politician are the people and organizations who help and support them;
- 3) If one country refers to another as a friend, they mean that the other country is not an enemy of theirs.

Merriam-Webster English Dictionary (Merriam-Webster English Dictionary, 1989):

- 1) a: one attached to another by affection or esteem b: acquaintance;
- 2) a: one that is not hostile b: one that is of the same nation, party, or group;
- 3) one that favors or promotes something;
- 4) a favored companion.

Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language, (Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language, 1989):

- 1) a paramour of either sex;
- 2) someone who acts as a friend of, favours, countenances or befriends;
- 3) one who looks propitiously on an institution, a project and the like; a favourer, a promoter;
- 4) one not inimical or hostile; one not a foe or enemy; also, one of the same nation, party, kin. The word is sometimes used as a term of friendly address;
- 5) one who entertains for esteem, respect, and affection of other people, a well-wisher, an intimate associate, sometimes an Attendant;
- 6) one of a religious sect characterized by disuse of rites and an ordained ministry, by simplicity of dress and speech and by opposition to war and a desire to live at peace with all men. They are popularly called Quakers.

Having analyzed dictionary entries of English dictionaries, we can classify all lexical units which realize the notion of friend into the following groups according to its categorical meanings:

- 1) lexical units with the categorical meaning of *presentiveness*: supporter, ally in a fight, helper, sympathizer, patron, paramour, thing, quality, companion, partner, acquaintance, favourer, promoter, well-wisher, associate;
- 2) lexical units with the categorical meaning of *adjectivity*: silly, helpful, annoying, not hostile, intimate, not inimical;
- 3) lexical units with the categorical meaning of *procedurality*: acts, favours, countenances, befriends, helps, supports, entertains, has, gets.

Interdependence of categorical meanings and definitions of the conceptual notion of Friendship indicates its multidimensionality: the content and the categorical expression.

According to the card file of lexicographic data, which have been chosen from 70 English dictionaries, the lexical unit “friend” and “friendship” constitute a huge synonymic row. All synonyms take a different position in the nominative field of the studied conceptual notions. The notion “friend” is a constituent part of friendship.

The synonymic row with predominant part of friendship has a complex structure. All synonyms can be divided into micro-groups due to its basic meaning. The central component is a nuclear member which takes a centered position. The main feature in the semantic structure of this component is determinative. Peripheral members take a peripheral position in the nominative field of notions “friend” and “friendship” and include secondary marked meanings. It can be viewed as follows:

1. A friend is a companion (*Friend is a person you know well and regard with affection and trust*).

*The centered position* is a companion. *The peripheral position* includes the following lexical units: alter ego, amigo, best friend, comrade, buddy, chum, crony, pal, sidekick, partner, fellow, associate, confederate, coworker, confidant, intimate, flatmate, girlfriend, light, mate, rommie, roommate, roomy, bedfellow, playmate, main man, soul mate, cobbler, bosom friend, companion, bosom buddy, boyfriend, confrere, sidekick, hon.

2. A friend is a supporter (*Friend is as associate who provides cooperation or assistance*).

*The centered position* is a supporter. *The peripheral position* includes the following lexical units: ally, Maecenas, adherent, protagonist, champion, contributor, admirer, booster, associate, blood brother, cohort, sponsor, advocate, patron, backer, investor, peer, equal, match, compeer, partisan, protagonist, benefactor, adherent, well-wisher, colleague.

3. A friend is an acquaintance (*Friend is a person with whom you are acquainted*).

*The centered position* is an acquaintance. *The peripheral position* includes the following lexical units: individual, mortal, soul, person, bunkmate, campmate, connection, end man, homeboy, familiar, messmate, pickup, class fellow, classmate, school fellow, schoolmate, schoolfriend, beau.

The meanings of lexical nominative elements of the notion “Friendship”, which take a centered position, acquire specific semantic components such as:

1. friendship - attachment – the centered position; relationship, bond, alliance, community, link, association, tie – the peripheral position;

2. friendship - friendliness – the centered position; affection, harmony, goodwill, intimacy, company, amicability, camaraderie, affinity, familiarity, closeness, rapport, fondness, companionship, good will, amity, concord, benevolence, comradeship, amity, acquaintanceship, good-fellowship – the peripheral position. In this micro-group antonyms take a peripheral position: unfriendliness, conflict, hostility, hatred, resentment, strife, animosity, aversion, antagonism, antipathy, enmity, bad blood.

3. friendship - closeness – the centered position; love, regard, affection, intimacy, warmth, fondness, cordiality, comradeship – the peripheral position.

The nominative field of the conceptual notion “friendship” is verbalized by synonymic rows and has a complex structure, which consists of nuclear and peripheral members.

Our research has proved that in English-speaking lexicographic and semantic space the meaning of the notion of Friend has retained its initial meaning of being a kinsman. In modern English lingual society a person is named a friend if he or she belongs to the same family and kindred. Regarding the interrelation of family relations and friendship a friend can also be a beloved person or a common-law spouse.

The aforementioned lexical units actualize the conceptual notion, which is being analyzed. In the perception of English-speaking lingual identity the notion of friend is connected with such conceptual notions as a patron and a homeland defender.

It is necessary to underline that the study of semantics of the lexical unit “friend” in the English language has shown that its definition is broader if compared to other Germanic languages. For instance, the meaning “an ally, a defender” is registered only in English dictionaries. This meaning relates to patriotic discourse and is considered to be national specific element of culture.

The study and the analysis of English-speaking thesauruses provide an insight into variety of lexical meanings of Friendship in the English language. We can indicate the following lexical row of units: attachment, relationship, bond, alliance, association, tie, friendliness, affection, harmony, goodwill, intimacy, affinity, familiarity, rapport, fondness, companionship, concord, benevolence, comradeship, amity, good fellowship (New Roget's thesaurus and Webster's dictionary, 1998).

According to English lexicographic data the lexical unit of Friendship is defined as “the quality or state of being friends». The other meanings include:

- A friendly relationship ;
- Friendliness; good will;
- blood brotherhood – the friendship characteristic of blood brothers;
- companionship, fellowship, society, company;
- confidence, trust – a trustful relationship;
- a relationship between two countries in which they help and support each other;
- kindly aid; help; assistance,
- aptness to unite; conformity; affinity; harmony;
- friendly relation, or attachment, to a person; affection arising from mutual esteem and good will; friendliness; amity (Longman dictionary of English language and culture, 2000).

Regarding the data of English lexicographic sources we may make a conclusion that despite universality of definitions of the lexical units national and cultural specificity of Friendship notion can be viewed in the perception of English-speaking lingual identity. In English dictionaries the notion “Friend” is defined in both narrow and broad senses of the word.

The results of our research have shown that in English linguistic worldview the lexical unit “Friendship” has a variety of definitions. In the perception of English-speaking lingual identity a friend is not only a person who can help his or her family, but also someone who contributes greatly to the society and the state.

The component “kindred” embedded in the etymology of Friendship has not lost its significance and is still used in the literal meaning – a friend is a family member who is deeply attached with the others.

O.A. Arapova has analyzed the semantic space of concept Friendship in both Russian and English languages and stated that extra linguistic factors which influence the concept in its development, actualize potential meanings of words representing the concept and extend the boundaries of its semantics (Arapova, 2004). The analysis of the conceptual notion on the basis of other linguistic data has contributed to outlining some analogous tendencies and proved the thesis of differences in the linguistic perception of various lingual identities and native speakers.

## **7. Conclusion**

In the perception of English-speaking lingual identity as according to the results of research there is a deep connection between the notions of kindred and friendship because the etymological meaning of friendship can be traced back in synonymous triad: friendship – friend – being friends. Lexical units of the aforementioned triad denote close and dissymmetrical relations between the elder and the young. The semantics of this triad has developed being based on inner affection and common targets.

We may claim that mentality and perception of any lingual identity are unique and universal due to the complex of moral standards typical of all lingual societies. The present thesis can be proved by the results of associative experiment. The conceptual notion “Friendship” plays an essential role in the value system of all lingual identities.

The analysis of lexicographic data indicates that English dictionary definitions abound in emotionally coloured words. In English-speaking lingual society friendship is based on trust relationships and reliance and has its direct function of supporting friends. This statement has been reflected in our research to a wide extent.

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