

**LEXICOGRAPHIC REPRESENTATION OF ABSTRACT-PHILOSOPHICAL VOCABULARY IN ENGLISH: HISTORICAL EVOLUTION AND CONCEPTUAL TENDENCIES****Sadullaev Denis Bakhtiyorovich**

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**Abstract:** The study explores the evolution of English abstract-philosophical vocabulary in the context of lexicographic description. The analysis focuses on how major English dictionaries have represented key philosophical terms such as *being*, *reason*, *essence*, and *truth* over time. The research aims to identify the semantic tendencies and conceptual shifts reflected in lexicographic definitions, revealing the dynamic interaction between language, thought, and philosophical tradition.

**Keywords:** lexicography, philosophical terminology, semantics, abstraction, conceptual evolution, English dictionaries, linguistic philosophy.

## 1. Introduction

The development of philosophical terminology is inseparable from the history of human cognition. Philosophical language serves as a medium through which abstract reasoning and ontological reflection are expressed. In English, philosophical terms have undergone continuous semantic modification, influenced by historical, cultural, and intellectual contexts. Lexicography, as a system of describing and recording words, provides a valuable source for tracing such changes. Examining how English dictionaries define philosophical terms allows researchers to uncover the historical layers of meaning embedded in these lexical units.

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the lexicographic representation of selected abstract-philosophical terms in English and to trace their semantic evolution from early dictionaries of the 17th century to modern lexicographic sources. Such an analysis not only demonstrates the transformation of lexical semantics but also reflects the changing epistemological paradigms of English-speaking philosophical thought.

## 2. Historical Evolution of Lexicographic Description

The earliest English dictionaries, such as Robert Cawdrey's *A Table Alphabeticall* (1604), presented philosophical terms in a rudimentary form, often reducing them to moral or theological explanations. For example, *reason* was defined primarily in a moral sense, referring to "that faculty whereby man differeth from beast." This early definition illustrates the anthropocentric and religiously colored worldview of the early modern period.

By the 18th century, in Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary of the English Language* (1755), a more rational and empirical perspective emerges. Johnson's definitions of philosophical concepts often combine moral and logical interpretations, showing the influence of Enlightenment rationalism. The entry for *truth* is defined as "conformity to fact or reality," which marks a clear departure from purely theological understanding toward a more epistemological view.

In the 19th and 20th centuries, with the rise of modern philosophy and linguistics, lexicographers began incorporating contextual and usage-based nuances. The *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) became a comprehensive repository of philosophical and scientific terminology, documenting both historical and contemporary meanings. The OED's multi-layered definitions of *being* and *essence* reflect the philosophical diversity of modern English thought — from Aristotelian metaphysics to existential and phenomenological interpretations.

### 3. Conceptual Tendencies in Lexicographic Definitions

Lexicographic representations of philosophical vocabulary demonstrate several major tendencies:

1. **Semantic expansion:** Over time, many terms broadened their meaning beyond strict philosophical discourse, entering general usage while retaining their conceptual depth. For example, *existence* and *reality* now appear in both scientific and everyday language.
2. **Contextualization:** Modern dictionaries increasingly account for the contextual variability of meaning, acknowledging that philosophical terms may differ across schools of thought (e.g., analytic vs. continental philosophy).
3. **Epistemological neutrality:** Whereas earlier lexicography reflected the worldview of its time, contemporary dictionary definitions aim for descriptive objectivity, avoiding overt ideological or theological bias.
4. **Interdisciplinary overlap:** Many philosophical terms have acquired new relevance in cognitive science, linguistics, and artificial intelligence, showing how lexicographic records adapt to new epistemological environments.

These tendencies confirm that lexicography is not a static record of meanings but a reflection of ongoing intellectual processes. The evolution of dictionary definitions mirrors the history of ideas and the philosophical understanding of the human mind.

### 4. Conclusion

The lexicographic analysis of English abstract-philosophical vocabulary demonstrates that the representation of philosophical terms in dictionaries serves as a reliable indicator of historical and conceptual change. From early moral-theological explanations to contemporary descriptive objectivity, the evolution of definitions reflects the progressive secularization and diversification of philosophical discourse.

Lexicographic sources thus function not only as linguistic reference tools but also as epistemological archives that preserve the traces of humanity's conceptual development. The study of dictionary entries for philosophical terms enables linguists and philosophers alike to observe how language continuously adapts to the changing forms of thought and cognition.

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