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**Socio-psychological analysis of the perception of the concept of "friendship"
among young people in Russia and Italy.**

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Language proficiency is one of the main features of a person that distinguishes him from other organisms. Some researchers consider language as a certain human ability, conditioned by cognitive mechanisms; as a system whose properties are determined by the conclusion of human knowledge in concepts (Erofeeva, 2007). Language is a constructive cognitive ability of a person, reflecting a particular way of perceiving and organizing the surrounding reality. Through this conceptualization of the world, its picture is formed, reflecting the social ideas about a particular phenomenon. Different ideas that are reflected in the meaning of language units have different interpretations when comparing the world pictures of different cultures.

Friendship is a complex subject of research, because despite the coexistence of many interpretations and social concepts, there is no single definition of this phenomenon in modern science. Russian and Italian linguocultures need to conduct an interdisciplinary study of the perception of the concept of “friendship” by representatives of the Russian and Italian linguocultures, based on the implicit meanings of the lexeme in the Italian and Russian languages.

The chosen topic is socially significant at the present time, since the conceptual and semantic field of the concept of "friendship" in the Russian and Italian pictures of the world do not coincide.

Russian linguo-cultural concept of "friendship", which is key to the Russian language picture of the world, is based on the theory of social representations and is intended to reveal the semantic component of the linguistic and cultural concept of "friendship", reflected in social representations, which contributes to the reconstruction of the features of the mentality and ethno-cultural identity of the Russian and Italian language communities.

Hypotheses of the study: despite the presence of translated equivalents ("дружба"-"amicizia"), in Russian and Italian language pictures of the world, the concept of "friendship" reveals different semantic and connotative meanings that are culturally conditioned.

Sample characteristics. The study involved 163 respondents aged from 18 to 28 years. The sample consisted of 115 female respondents and 48 male respondents.

Most of the sample consists of students of higher educational institutions. 73 of the respondents are indigenous to Italy, and most of them study at the University of Pisa. The Russian sample was made up of students from Moscow universities, most of them are studying at the faculties of journalism, as well as at medical universities.

The study was conducted on the basis of the Hofstede module "VSM 2013" (Hofstede, 2013). This questionnaire was chosen for the study, because it allows to get the scores of the subjects

on 6 parameters and to reveal the degree of their agreement with the belonging of their culture to a particular type.

In this study, the Verges method was used to analyze the structure of ideas about the concept of "friendship" (Grize et al., 1992). In his opinion, the results of the associative methodology should be analyzed by two parameters: the frequency of occurrence of the association given by the respondent and its rank. Thus, each association is assigned a rank depending on the order of its reproduction by the respondent. The most frequent associations were selected from all the associations, and those that made up less than 5% of the total number were excluded from the analysis as the least frequent.

For a more detailed study of social representations and to identify the concepts that are put by Russians and Italians in the concept of "friendship", it is necessary to consider the structure of representations. To do this, the respondents in the questionnaire were asked to write at least five associations to the words "дружба", "друг", "подруга" and "amicizia", "amico", "amica".

The study analyzed associations to three concepts: дружба, друг and подруга; respectively, amicizia, amico, amica in Italian.

Results and discussion.

According to the results of the Hofstede method, there are significant differences between the two samples on the scales of "Power distance", "Individualism", "Masculinity", and "Indulgence". Based on the data obtained, Italian culture is more characterized by such characteristics as power distance, individualism and condescension than Russian culture. Russian culture is more characterized as masculine and collectivist. Also, in the Russian sample, the distance of power is most pronounced, which suggests that people are more likely to expect an uneven distribution of power.

Thus, the hypothesis that there are cultural differences between Russia and Italy, which may affect the perception of the concept of "friendship" is confirmed.

After processing the data using the Verges method, it was possible to identify the elements of the core and the periphery of the ideas of friendship between Russians and Italians.

In the Italian sample, the words love, understanding, empathy, loyalty, trust, respect, and like-mindedness come out in the core zone. Only the trust association matches the Russian sample. In general, the character of the core representation of the Italian sample is more gentle and loyal, there is no indication of help and loyalty as mandatory qualities of friendship. On the contrary, loyalty, understanding, and empathy come to the fore, which may indicate a freer nature of friendship in Italy. Also in the core there is the word love, which in this case is considered as a direct indication of a romantic relationship.

When considering the core of ideas about friendship between Russians and Italians, we can conclude that this concept has a more emotional meaning for Italians, since there are clear indications of empathy, love and understanding in the core. The identification of friendship with romantic relationships in Italy is also clearly visible. In the Russian sample, the concept of "friendship" can be interpreted as more focused on specific actions. The analysis of the data confirms hypothesis 1 about the differences in the cores of the social idea of friendship in the samples of Russia and Italy.

Conclusions:

The presence of identical elements in the cores of representations of the Russian and Italian samples is noted, which indicates the possibility of correlation and comparison of the concept of "friendship" in the Italian and Russian linguistic cultures.

The proposed hypothesis was confirmed. The core of the social concept of friendship differs qualitatively between the Russian and Italian samples. Among Italians, friendship is equated

with love, as well as for this kind of relationship, empathy, understanding and support are necessary. For Russians, the most important characteristics in friendship are such as help, loyalty and trust.

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