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## THE EVOLUTION OF ENGLISH EXPRESSIONS OF MODEST BEHAVIOUR: PRAGMATIC-COGNITIVE ANALYSIS

Iryna Shevchenko

V.N. Karazin Karkiv National University, Ukraine  
irina.shevchenko7@gmail.com

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The paper addresses mental issues of interactional styles and their diachronic variation. Using cognitive, pragmatic and discourse analyses as the analytic approaches it focuses on cognitive-communicative properties of the modest communicative behaviour in terms of concepts-properties.

My aim is (1) to explicate the categorization of communicative behaviour lexicalized in the English language with the focus on its properties as contrasted to corresponding speech events and (2) reconstruct the historical variation of modest communicative behaviour in the 14<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. To reach this aim I will first describe the lexical-semantic properties of the concept's name *modest* and its synonyms; then find out categorical characteristics of MODESTY in the English worldview; model the concept's cognitive schemata for various historical periods; describe the range of its cognitive metaphors; analyze its discourse realization through politeness strategies; finally define the type of its evolution along the four epochs: 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> c., 16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and present time.

I claim that MODESTY is a concept-property, an instrument of social control of communicative behaviour, a mandatory ethical stereotype; the historical variation of its cognitive and pragmatic aspects is of anagenetic type and reveals an evolutionary → involutory vector.

The semantic space of lexemes nominating MODESTY is organized as a lexical-semantic field «Modest» with three radial micro fields «Humble», «Decent», «Moderate». In diachronic perspective, the scope of implicated meaning expands in the 14<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> and contracts in the 20<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.

My data reveal the atemporal relational type of predications of MODESTY corresponding to adjectives and adverbs. Taking into consideration the influence of a linguistic form on the mental representation of knowledge I call the concepts of atemporal relations *concepts-properties*.

In the English worldview, MODESTY is a member of the radial network model VIRTUE, the subcategory TRADITIONAL ETHIC VIRTUES and belongs to the basic level of categorization.

The conceptual scheme MODESTY consists of two historically constant slots HUMBLE, DECENT and their variable extensions. After the 18<sup>th</sup> c., their former positive evaluation eventually changes into negative.

MODESTY varies as a target domain in cognitive metaphors. In historical perspective, correlative domains PERSON, OBJECT, CONTAINER, SUBSTANCE prove to be constant source domains for cross-mapping on the target MODESTY, while WAR, DEATH, ANIMAL are variable.

In discourse, concepts-properties of communicative behaviour characterize the entire situation and do not have a separate frame-scenario. They are modelled as slots of quality or manner within the frame of a communicative event.

In discourse, MODESTY is mainly implemented through negative politeness strategies. As historical variables they grow in frequency in the 14<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> century and yield their domination to positive politeness in the 19<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.

To conclude, the cognitive-discursive approach allows for singling out regulatory concept-properties of communicative behavior, lexicalized in the English language. The example of an ethno-cultural stereotype MODESTY proves that concept-properties have dynamic historically gradual cognitive and pragmatic features which vary in terms of anagenesis revealing the change of vectors from evolution in the 14<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> centuries to involution in 20<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> century discourse.