

REALISATION OF VALUE CONCEPTS IN OLD ENGLISH TEXTS OF THE 7TH–11TH CENTURIES

РЕАЛІЗАЦІЯ ЦІННІСНИХ КОНЦЕПТІВ У ТЕКСТАХ ДАВНЬОАНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ VII–XI СТ.

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The article examines the linguistic realisation of value concepts (Tradition, Power, Benevolence, Self-Direction, Stimulation, Conformity, Achievement, Universalism, Hedonism, Security) in Old English texts of the 7th–11th centuries and, on this basis, reconstructs the value picture of the world of the Old English culture. The study is based on the theory of the ten basic values of S. Schwartz's model, which constitute the axiological core of linguocultural concepts; these values are considered universal across cultures, whereas their priorities within the value pictures are variable. The material is a corpus of 2,953 contexts of usage of 76 evaluative adjectives (42 positive and 34 negative) from 285 Old English texts of the religious and secular discourses; since a single usage may conceptualise from one to four values simultaneously, the unit of analysis is the value realisation, which yields 9,266 instances. Value concepts were attributed based on three independent criteria – the dictionary profile, the etymology of the adjective, and the collocational frame. It is established that the value picture of Old English differs depending on the approach applied: by frequency of co-realisation, the frequent value concepts on the positive pole are Universalism (1,265 realisations) and Benevolence (1,212 realisations), whereas by focal (primary) value, the picture is headed by Tradition (629 realisations), Benevolence (495 realisations), and Power (445 realisations). A similar divergence is observed on the negative pole, where Tradition predominates in both overall frequency and focal conceptualisation (295 realisations in all, 263 of which are focal). At the same time, Benevolence and Security are more often used as accompanying values, with low rates of focal use. This gap reveals the principal regularity of the value system: background values (e.g., Universalism, Security), which are frequent in realisation but rarely focal, differ systematically from focal values (e.g., Tradition).

On the whole, positive values are evenly distributed across the Conservation, Self-Enhancement, and Self-Transcendence areas. In contrast, the area of Openness to Change, through the value concept of Self-Direction, is almost entirely marginal (125 realisations), which reflects the collectivist, hierarchical character of the culture. The negative pole displays the dominance of Conservation through the anti-values Security (27.5%), Tradition (23.5%), and Conformity (6.0%), which explains Old English concept of the bad/evil as something that, first and foremost, violates the norm. It is argued that the value picture of Old English is an integral structure with domain-modulated priorities, in which the same concept is realised differently across the religious, heroic, aesthetic-cosmological, and other domains, and in which Christianization gradually reweights priorities in favour of Conservation values.

Key words: Old English, value concept, S. Schwartz's value model, value picture of the world, evaluativity.

У статті досліджено мовну реалізацію ціннісних концептів (Традиція, Влада, Доброзичливість, Самостійність, Стимуляція, Конформність, Досягнення, Універсалізм, Гедонізм, Безпека) у текстах давньоанглійської мови VII–XI ст. і на цій основі відтворено ціннісну картину світу давньоанглійської культури. Дослідження виходить із того, що десять базових цінностей моделі Ш. Шварца становлять аксіологічне ядро лінгвокультурних концептів; структура цих цінностей постулюється як універсальна для різних культур, тоді як змінними є їхні пріоритети. Матеріалом слугує корпус із 2953 контекстів уживання 76 оцінних прикметників (42 позитивних і 34 негативних), дібраних із 285 давньоанглійських текстів релігійного та світського дискурсу; оскільки одне вживання може концептуалізувати від однієї до чотирьох цінностей водночас, одиницею підрахунку є ціннісна реалізація, що становить 9266 випадків. Ціннісні концепти приписувано за трьома незалежними опорами – словниковим профілем, етимологією прикметника та колокаційним фреймом. Установлено, що ціннісна картина давньоанглійської мови різниться залежно від застосованого критерію: за частотою співреалізації провідними на позитивному полюсі є концепти Універсалізм (1265 реалізацій) і Доброзичливість (1212 реалізацій), тоді як за фокусною (первинною) цінністю картину очолюють Традиція (629 реалізацій), Доброзичливість (495 реалізацій) та Влада (445 реалізацій). Подібна різниця спостерігається і на негативному полюсі, де Традиція переважає і загалом по реалізаціям (295 реалізацій загалом, 263 фокусні), а от Доброзичливість та Безпека показують себе частіше супровідними цінностями з незначними показниками фокусних вживань. Цей розрив виявляє головну закономірність ціннісної системи: фонові цінності (Універсалізм, Безпека), що часті за реалізаціями, але рідко бувають фокусними, системно відрізняються від фокусних (Традиція). Загалом позитивні цінності охоплюють рівномірно три сфери: Збереження, Самозвеличчання та Самопоходження, а ось сфера Відкритість до зміни через ціннісний концепт Самостійність виявляється майже цілком маргінальною (125 реалізацій), що відображає колективістський, ієрархічний характер культури. Негативний полюс демонструє домінування сфери Збереження через анти-цінності Безпека (27,5%), Традиція (23,5%), і Конформність (6,0%), що засвідчує трактування поганого як такого, що в першу чергу суперечить нормі. Аргументовано, що ціннісна картина давньоанглійської мови є цілісною структурою з доменно-модульованими пріоритетами, у якій той самий концепт по-різному реалізується у релігійному, героїчному, естетико-космологічному та інших доменах, а християнізація поступово переважає пріоритети на користь цінностей Збереження.

Ключові слова: давньоанглійська мова, ціннісний концепт, ціннісна модель Ш. Шварца, ціннісна картина світу, оцінність.

Introduction. Values are traditionally studied by psychology and sociology through questionnaires and scales outside the scope of language. However, values do not exist outside language, as they are embodied in the meanings of words, in collocations and idioms, generally in everything a culture and its individual members use to call something good or evil. For a dead culture with no surviving native speakers, linguistic records remain a principal source of information about its axiology. The research question, therefore, is whether the value picture of the world can be reconstructed from texts alone, without the methodology used by psychology and sociology, and which mechanisms researchers should apply when their aim is to explore value concepts of dead languages.

The Old English language of the 7th – 11th centuries is valid material for addressing this problem. Its evaluative lexicon is compact, and the surviving corpus has a distinct discursive structure (religious and secular texts, prose and poetry) in which two axiological systems coexist – a pagan-heroic one and a Christian one. Thus, it is possible to define the mechanisms by which value concepts are realised in the Old English language and, on this basis, to reconstruct the value picture of the world of Old English as a complicated structure.

Theoretical Background. The theoretical framework of our paper is provided by S. Schwartz's theory of basic values. S. Schwartz describes ten basic values organised in a circumplex model along two axes – Openness to Change versus Conservation and Self-Enhancement versus Self-Transcendence [9, p. 3–9]. This system is treated as universal for all cultures, while the differences between cultures lie rather in the prioritisation of ten values. Thus, it is possible to apply this model to historical cultures, examining not whether the same values existed but how they were structured and organised.

The correlation of values with linguistic concepts is substantiated by works in cognitive semantics. In the conceptual metaphor theory of G. Lakoff and M. Johnson, abstract concepts are structured through bodily grounded source domains, with axiological orientation (UP IS GOOD; DOWN IS BAD) built into conceptualization itself [3; 4]. R. Langacker treats meaning as conceptualisation, while D. Geeraerts describes the prototype structure of lexical categories, in which evaluation is an inherent parameter of meaning [5; 1]. A. Wierzbicka considers GOOD and BAD as semantic primes with different patterns of unfolding within the language system [11], and Z. Kövecses demonstrates the cultural variability of emotional-evaluative concepts [2]. Evaluative mean-

ing as such is described by the 'Appraisal model' of J. Martin and P. White, which distinguishes attitude, graduation, and engagement [7]. The diachronic dimension of the emergence of evaluative meaning from descriptive meaning through subjectification is elucidated by E. Traugott and R. Dasher [10, p. 27–29].

In Ukrainian linguistics, the linguoconceptological approach, in which the evaluative (axiological) dimension is treated as a component of the concept, is represented by A. Prykhodko, while the notion of the anti-concept as a linguistically objectified disvalue or anti-value is supported by O. Marina [8, p. 83; 7, p. 430]. Despite the depth to which each of these approaches has been developed, no comprehensive corpus-based account has yet been offered of how value concepts are realised in Old English texts and what value picture of the world emerges from this, which defines the novelty of the present study.

The Aim and Tasks. The aim of the paper is to reconstruct the value picture of the world of Old English as a complicated structure and to describe the mechanisms by which value concepts are realised in Old English texts of the 7th – 11th centuries. To attain the aim requires solving the following tasks: (1) identify the status of a value as an axiological part of a concept; (2) to establish how value concepts are realised in texts (the axiodeterminant – trajector – frame configuration) as a tool for their identification; (3) identify the quantitative hierarchy of value concepts in Old English; (4) explicate the value picture of the world – co-realization, the distinction between background and focal values, and the domain modulation of priorities.

Material and Method. The material for our research comprises 2,953 contexts of 76 evaluative adjectives (42 positive and 34 negative) from a corpus of 285 Old English religious and secular texts in prose and poetry. Every context is taken in a format L10 + lemma + R10. As in every context, an adjective can realise from 1 up to 4 values, the final source of value realisation is 9,266 realisation of values in 2,953 contexts (8,011 in a positive corpus and 1,255 in a negative one). Value concepts were attributed to each context on three independent grounds – the dictionary profile of the adjective, the etymology of its root, and the collocational frame; this threefold basis of attribution mitigates the risk of circularity

Results and discussion. Linguocultural concept in modern conceptology has three components – notional (its definitional aspect), figurative (its metaphorical and sensory representation), and evaluative (the evaluative stance of society). The evaluative one is culturally decisive, since it distinguishes a

concept from a neutral notion []. S. Schwartz's ten values may be treated as an explication of this evaluative component. Each of them – Tradition (TRAD), Power (POW), Benevolence (BEN), Achievement (ACH), Self-Direction (S-D), Universalism (UNIV), Hedonism (HED), Conformity (CONF), Security (SEC), and Stimulation (STIM) – is a generalised evaluative attitude that language verbalises through evaluative adjectives. We may infer the identification of a basic value with a concept and treat an evaluative adjective in a text as a manifestation of a deep-lying value concept taking into consideration the theories of A. Wierzbicka that GOOD and BAD belong to the semantic primes [11] and E. Traugott about the subjectification of descriptive meaning [10]. Since the evaluative component of a concept is bipolar, each value implies a corresponding anti-value or dis-value, which we treat as a linguistically objectified negative pole and our model therefore complements Schwartz's ten positive values with their negative counterparts (TRAD⁻, POW⁻, etc.).

A value concept is activated in a text by the cooperation of an evaluative adjective (which we define as an axiodeterminant), an evaluated referent (trajector), and a collocational frame. The axiodeterminant specifies the evaluative feature, the trajector determines the class of entities to which evaluation applies, and the frame of the nearest collocates specifies the par-

ticular value content. For example, the adjective *hālig* (holy), combined with a trajector 'God' and a religious frame, realises the value Tradition (TRAD), whereas an adjective *mære* (glorious), in combination with a trajector 'weard' (guard) and a heroic frame, realises Power (POW) and Achievement (ACH). In the same way, *milde* 'gentle, merciful' with a ruler or divine trajector in a religious frame realises Benevolence (BEN), whereas with a heroic trajector 'mandbora' realises the value Security (SEC). This explains why a single axiodeterminant realises different concepts in different frames, and a single usage may realise several values at once.

A quantitative analysis of 9,266 realizations yields the hierarchy of Old English value concepts presented in Table 1 (for the positive sub-corpus, 8,011 realizations and a negative one, 1255 realizations).

As Table 1 shows, the two poles are structured differently. On the positive pole the hierarchy is headed by Universalism (15.8%) and Benevolence (15.1%) (the values of Self-Transcendence sphere) followed closely by Tradition (12.6%) and Power (12.2%), so that the positive space rests on several centres rather than a single dominant one. The negative pole is distributed differently. It is dominated by Security⁻ (27.5%), Benevolence⁻ (24.4%), and Tradition⁻ (23.5%), which together account for three

Table 1

Hierarchy of Old English value concepts

Value Concept	Number of Realisation of Positive Values	Proportion of Positive Values	Focal (Primary) Positive Realisations	Number of Realisation of Negative Values	Proportion of Negative Values	Focal (Primary) Negative Realisations
Universalism (UNIV and UNIV ⁻)	1265	15.8%	29	0	0.0%	0
Benevolence (BEN and BEN ⁻)	1212	15.1%	495	306	24.4%	72
Tradition (TRAD and TRAD ⁻)	1009	12.6%	629	295	23.5%	263
Power (POW and POW ⁻)	976	12.2%	445	62	4.9%	31
Achievement (ACH and ACH ⁻)	848	10.6%	252	58	4.6%	27
Hedonism (HED and HED ⁻)	823	10.3%	255	42	3.3%	5
Stimulation (STIM and STIM ⁻)	663	8.3%	130	65	5.2%	40
Security (SEC and SEC ⁻)	659	8.2%	4	345	27.5%	25
Conformity (CONF and CONF ⁻)	416	5.2%	130	75	6.0%	1
Self-Direction (S-D and S-D ⁻)	125	1.6%	117	7	0.6%	0
Total	8011	100%	2486	1255	100%	464

quarters of all negative realizations, whereas Power⁻ and Achievement⁻, which are prominent among the positive values, shrink to negligible shares (4.9% and 4.6% respectively). We believe there are three findings following from this comparison. First, the negative pole is not a mirror image of the positive one: Universalism, the single largest positive concept (15.8%), has no negative counterpart (UNIV⁻ = 0.0%), which shows that concern for the common higher order is conceptualized only positively. Second, the ranking of a concept may differ sharply across the poles. Security is modest among the positive values (8.2%) yet becomes the largest anti-value (27.5%), being culturally salient chiefly as a threat, that is, in its negation, whereas Power and Achievement, prominent on the positive pole (12.2% and 10.6%), almost vanish on the negative one (4.9% and 4.6%), since these qualities are conceived as goods rather than as vices. Third, only Tradition and Benevolence are substantial on both poles, which indicates that the moral-religious discourse structures Old English evaluation on both of its poles.

A second, independent measure is the focal (primary) realisation – the case in which a concept is the semantic centre of the utterance rather than a co-realised background value (see the focal column in Table 1). On this measure the ranking changes: the positive pole is topped by Tradition (629 focal realisations), followed by Benevolence (495) and Power (445), whereas Universalism, so frequent overall, is focal only 29 times and Security only 4. This systematic gap between overall frequency and focal prominence distinguishes background values (Universalism, Security), which accompany other values in bundles, from focal ones (Tradition), which form the semantic centre – the first essential feature of Old English axiology. The same divergence recurs on the negative pole: although Security⁻ and Benevolence⁻ are the most frequent anti-values overall, as a focal value Tradition⁻ overwhelmingly dominates (263 of the 464 focal negative realisations, i.e. 57%), whereas Security⁻ is focal only 25 times. Thus, whenever evil is the semantic centre of an utterance, it is conceived first of all as a violation of the sacred norm.

Another peculiarity is the marginal position of Self-Direction in the structure of the value picture of the world (1.6% of positive realizations). Individual autonomy, self-determination, and independence of thought, values that occupy a central place in modern Western societies, are barely lexicalized in Old English. This is to be expected in a collectivist, strictly hierarchical society, in which the virtues are, first of all, loyalty (Benevolence), belonging to tradition (Tradition), and glory in the eyes of the com-

munity (Power) rather than independence. The value picture of the world thus re-arranges emphases in comparison with the modern one and also leaves certain spheres of the axiological space almost empty.

The fourth distinctive feature is the principle of co-realization itself. Since a single usage conceptualizes from one to four values, value concepts appear not as isolated units but as stable bundles. The most frequent bundles – TRAD + SEC + CONF, verbalized by the adjectives *hālig* ‘holy’, *clāne* ‘pure’, and *sōþ* ‘true’ (the sacral-protective bundle of religious discourse), and POW + ACH + STIM, verbalized by *māere* ‘excellent’, *ærgōd* ‘of prime goodness’, and *brymlīc* ‘magnificent’ (the prestige-heroic bundle of heroic discourse) – correspond to the two axiological nuclei of Old English culture. Universalism and Benevolence, by contrast, enter many bundles as background accompaniments, which explains their high overall frequency together with their low focal prominence.

We also may consider the hierarchy of axes in S. Schwartz circumplex for the positive and negative poles (Figures 1 and 2).

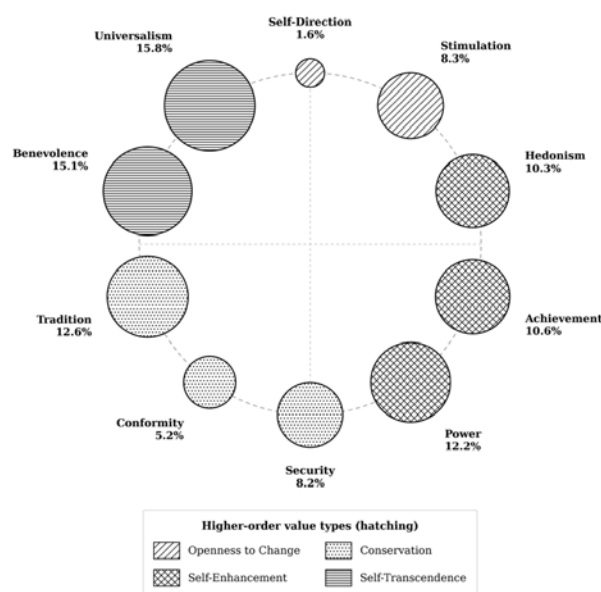


Fig. 1. Schwartz Values Circumplex in Old English texts

The circumplex of positive values (Fig. 1) is characterized by a balance of several centres. The diagram shows an almost evenly filled circle: Self-Enhancement (33.1%), Self-Transcendence (30.9%), and Conservation (26.0%) do not differ greatly, and although Universalism (15.8%) and Benevolence (15.1%) are the most frequent concepts, they are nearly matched by Tradition (12.6%) and Power

(12.2%) in the opposite sectors. Positive axiology in Old English is therefore polycentric: it rests on several comparable pillars – Christian (Tradition), heroic (Power, Achievement), and ethical (Benevolence, Universalism) – while only one sector, Openness to Change, remains weak (9.9%).

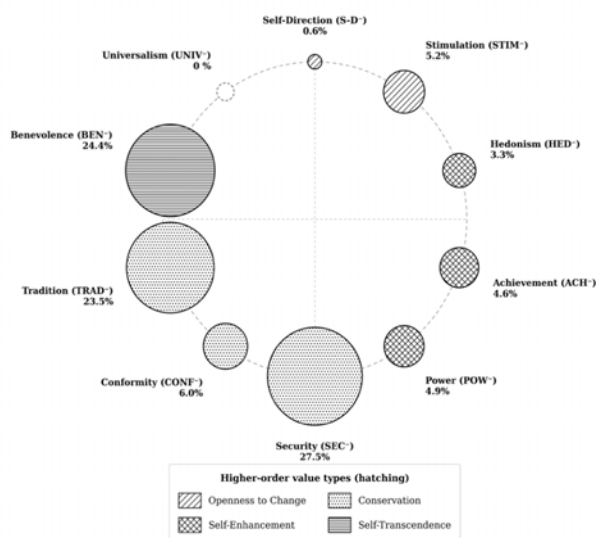


Fig. 2. Schwartz Anti-Values Circumplex in Old English texts

The circumplex of anti-values (Fig. 2) demonstrates the dominance of a single sector; it is asymmetric in nature. More than half of all negative realizations (57.0%) fall to Conservation: Security⁻ (27.5%), Tradition⁻ (23.5%), and Conformity⁻ (6.0%). Self-Transcendence is the next most frequent sector, represented above all by Benevolence⁻ (24.4%). Anti-values are thus conceptualized primarily as a threat to order, norm, and security.

The value picture of the world is not homogeneous as the same concept carries different weight in different discourse domains. In the religious domain the leading values are Tradition, Security, and Conformity; in the heroic domain, Power, Achievement, and Stimulation; in the aesthetic-cosmological domain, Universalism and Hedonism are activated. A single adjective, moving from one domain to another, changes its value profile. For example, adjective *egesful* ‘awesome, dread’ in religious prose and poetry realizes the value concept POW showing the majesty of God, or it realizes the negative values SEC and STIM describing the terror of punishment. Adjective *beorht* (radiant) conceptualizes different values in different domains: in the aesthetic-cosmological domain it realizes STIM (sensor pleasure), in the religious domain – TRAD/POW (sacral greatness of God). The same was

noted for the axiodeterminant *swēte* (sweet): in the aesthetic-cosmological – a value concept HED, in the religious domain we come across «divine love» realizing BEN. The value picture of Old English is therefore a complex structure with domain-modulated priorities. Typical axiodeterminants of the domains are for the religious domain – *hālig* ‘holy’ and *sōþ* ‘true’; for the heroic – *māere* ‘glorious’ and *ærgōd* ‘of prime goodness’; for the aesthetic-cosmological – *beorht* ‘radiant’ and *fæger* ‘beautiful’. A fourth domain, the gnomic, shows domination of the comparative adjectives *betera/betst* (better, best) and *sēl/sēlra* (better) (68 of 91 and 51 of 63 of their uses, respectively, occur in gnomic contexts), which realise Achievement (ACH), stating a general norm of what is ‘better’ in life as such.

The principal diachronic factor shaping this picture is Christianization, which over the 7th–11th centuries changed the axiological priorities in favour of Conservation. In the inherited heroic system the central values were Power and Achievement – fame (*māere*), noble lineage (*æpele*), and glory. Under Christianization these values were not banned or disgraced but sacrally reinterpreted: *māere* ‘glorious’, overwhelmingly heroic in reference (259 of its uses), is transferred in 60 cases to divine glory, so that earthly fame yields to heavenly glory. In parallel, the aesthetic-sensory epithets *beorht* ‘radiant’, *fæger* ‘beautiful’, and *swēte* ‘sweet’, originally describing physical brilliance and pleasure, acquired a religious meaning, denoting the light of the divine and the sweetness of God (*beorht* in 31 of 173 uses, *fæger* in 29 of 123, and *swēte* in 9 of 23 occur in religious contexts). At the same time earthly goods are devalued: earthly joys (*eorðlice drēamas*) are repeatedly qualified as *wāc* ‘weak’. The value picture reconstructed from the corpus therefore captures an intermediate, transitional state, which the coexistence of two axiological systems, the heroic and the Christian, within a single lexicon.

Conclusions. Our analysis of the realisation of value concepts in Old English texts of the 7th – 11th centuries allows us to formulate the following conclusions.

Firstly, ten basic values suggested in the works of S. Schwartz may be interpreted as axiological linguistic concepts, with evaluative adjectives (axiodeterminants) representing these concepts in the formula “axiodeterminant+trajector+collocation frame”.

Secondly, the value picture of the Old English language depends on the criteria we consider. Some values, which we may call background ones, are frequent in their realisation as they form bundles with other values (Universalism 15.8% and Benevolence

15.1%). Others, like Tradition (629) and Power (445), are considered focal because they occur frequently on their own.

Thirdly, the structure of the value picture prioritises the values in such a way that Conservation is dominant for both the positive and negative poles of values, and Self-Enhancement and Self-Transcendence are represented considerably on the positive pole. Such peculiarities highlight the collective, sacral and heroic orientation of the culture with considerable neglect of individual autonomy. The

positive evaluation pole seems to be more developed in the Old English period, with only one weak sphere being Openness to Change.

Fourthly, the value picture is a solid structure with certain domain-specific peculiarities. Certain adjectives and values are characteristic of certain domains. At the same time, the values realised by the same axiodeterminant may change depending on the domain in which they are used to evaluate: religious, heroic, aesthetic, gnomic.

Prospects for further research include the in-depth analysis of different domains' value profiles.

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