# Conceptualization of interaction styles in discourse: a diachronic analysis of MODESTY

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This presentation addresses cognitive-pragmatic issues of modest communicative behaviour and their historical change in the $14^{th} - 21^{st}$ centuries British discourse explicated in terms of a concept-property MODESTY. The heart of my method, a cognitive semantic and cognitive-pragmatic research, will be elaborated in its diachronic perspective.

This paper narrows in on the conceptualization of modest communicative behaviour lexicalized in the English language and discourse; in particular, it reconstructs its historical variation. Using online British databases I will first single out the lexical-semantic properties of the concept's name; then find out the concept's categorical characteristics; model its cognitive schemata; single out the concept's discourse realization, the range of cognitive metaphors, and finally trace their changes through history.

The paper shows that MODESTY is a concept-property, an instrument of social control of communicative behaviour, an ethical stereotype. In the concept frame of a speech event, MODESTY corresponds to slots of quality or manner. In discourse, MODESTY is implemented through negative politeness strategies. In cognitive metaphors, correlative domains and image-schemas cross-mapped on the a target domain MODESTY are both historically stable and variable.

On the whole the cognitive-pragmatic variation of MODESTY reveals the change of vectors from evolution (expansion) in the $14^{th}–19^{th}$ to involution (contraction) in the $20^{th}–21^{st}$ century discourse. Its peak in Victorian discourse corresponds to dominant ethic values in the British worldview.