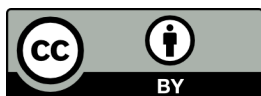


DOI <https://doi.org/10.28925/2412-2491.2025.2511>
UDC 821.111-03.09 : 81'373.45

CONCEPTUALIZATION OF POSITIVE EVALUATION IN THE OLD ENGLISH POETRY

Soloviova O.V.

Yurii Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University
ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3758-5925>
o.solovyova@chnu.edu.ua



This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/> or send a letter to Creative Commons, PO Box 1866, Mountain View, CA 94042, USA.

The study of axiological semantics in linguistics has traditionally focused on synchronic analysis, which has limited the understanding of the dynamics in the development of evaluative concepts. Previous works have largely concentrated on modern languages and their functional styles, failing to provide a comprehensive picture of how evaluativity was formed from a historical perspective. This article is based on the conclusion that diachronic analysis is critically important for understanding the evolution of evaluative categories, and it aims to model the conceptual structure of positive evaluation in Old English poetry.

The research objective is to construct a diachronic-conceptual model of positive evaluation using Old English poetry, which will allow for the identification of key semantic components and their evolution. To achieve this, a list of 26 adjectives that verbalize positive evaluation was compiled.

The main results of the study include the modeling of a frame-and-slot structure for the concept of GOOD, which consists of five key semantic slots: INTERNAL QUALITY, SOCIAL STATUS, FUNCTIONAL COMPETENCE, EXCEPTIONALITY, and UTALITARITY. The analysis confirmed that the concept of positive evaluation in Old English is anthropocentric, multifaceted, and based on moral, social, physical, and functional qualities. It was established that dictionary definitions mostly correspond to contextual usage, though some lexemes exhibit pragmatic variability, which points to the dynamic nature of evaluation.

The conclusions confirm that the conceptual model of positive evaluation in Old English poetry is formed on the basis of etymological roots that originally denoted specific physical actions and phenomena and later acquired a more abstract meaning. This demonstrates that evaluative concepts are not static but are the result of gradual evolution, reflecting changes in the social system of values.

Keywords: *diachronic analysis, conceptual model, positive evaluation, Old English poetry, frame-and-slot structure, anthropocentrism, etymological analysis*

Соловйова О.В. Концептуалізація позитивної оцінки в давньоанглійській поезії. Дослідження аксіологічної семантики в мовознавстві традиційно зосереджувалося на синхронному аналізі, що обмежувало розуміння динаміки розвитку оцінних понять. Попередні роботи здебільшого концентрувалися на сучасній мові та її функціональних стилях, не надаючи цілісної картини формування оцінності в історичній перспективі. Ця стаття ґрунтується на висновках, що діахронічний аналіз є критично важливим для розуміння еволюції оцінних категорій, та ставить за мету моделювання концептуальної структури позитивної оцінки в давньоанглійській поезії.

Метою дослідження є побудова діахронічно-концептуальної моделі позитивної оцінки на матеріалі давньоанглійської поезії, що дозволить визначити ключові семантичні компоненти та їх еволюцію. Для досягнення цієї мети було сформовано список з 26 прикметників, що вербалізують позитивну оцінку.

Основними результатами дослідження є моделювання фреймово-слотової структури концепту GOOD, яка складається з п'яти ключових семантичних слотів: ВНУТРІШНЯ ЯКІСТЬ, СОЦІАЛЬНИЙ СТАТУС, ФУНКЦІОНАЛЬНА КОМПЕТЕНТНІСТЬ, ВИНЯТКОВІСТЬ та УТИЛІТАРНІСТЬ. Аналіз підтвердив, що концепція позитивної оцінки в давньоанглійській мові є антропоцентричною, багатоаспектною і базується на моральних, соціальних, фізичних і функціональних якостях. Встановлено, що словникові визначення здебільшого відповідають контекстуальному вживанню, однак деякі лексеми виявляють прагматичну варіативність, що свідчить про динамічну природу оцінки.

Висновки підтверджують, що концептуальна модель позитивної оцінки в давньоанглійській поезії формується на основі етимологічних коренів, які позначали конкретні фізичні дії та явища, і згодом набували більш абстрактного значення. Це доводить, що оцінні поняття не є статичними, а є результатом поступової еволюції, що відображає зміни в суспільній системі цінностей.

Ключові слова: діахронічний аналіз, концептуальна модель, позитивна оцінка, давньоанглійська поезія, фреймово-слотова структура, антропоцентризм, етимологічний аналіз

Introduction.

The problem of studying evaluation and evaluativity, which lies at the intersection of semantics, pragmatics, cognitivism, and linguoculturology, belongs to the key issues of modern linguistics. The relevance of the study is determined by the focus of modern linguistics on studying language as a means of categorization and conceptualization of the world by humans, while the category of evaluation holds a central place in the system of linguistic means for expressing human attitude towards reality. Evaluativity as a linguistic category reflects the axiological aspects of the linguistic worldview and serves as an important mechanism for transmitting culturally specific values. Or, as T. Kots notes, 'evaluativity as a linguistic term encompasses multi-level linguistic units with evaluative semantics and conveys a positive or negative attitude of the speaker towards the named object, phenomenon, or concept' (Kots, 2021, p. 18).

Modern approaches to the study are characterized by methodological diversity and the integration of various linguistic paradigms. Researchers consider evaluativity through the lens of structural-semantic, functional-pragmatic, and cognitive-discursive approaches. In this work, we will attempt to formulate the basic conceptualization of positive evaluation in Old English poetry through semantic-cognitive and diachronic approaches.

Theoretical Background.

In a simplified version, evaluation is understood as an inter-level linguistic category that expresses a positive or negative attitude of the subject toward objects of reality. Among different approaches to the definition, it is important to emphasize the common semantic component of evaluation. The ‘element of classification or categorization’ allows for the possibility of transferring the evaluation from one class of objects or concepts to adjacent ones and emphasizes the cognitive nature of evaluation as a mental process. (See the definition by N. Bigunova, where evaluation is ‘a cognitive category, since its structure involves various mental operations: isolation of the evaluative feature (the basis of evaluation), comparison with the ideal worldview and one’s own scale of values, identification (with a class of positive and negative values), as well as association, differentiation, coordination, classification, comparison, and synthesis’ (Bigunova, 2017, p. 53). And O. Biessonova, who treats evaluation as a cognitive category that ‘reflects the results of human interpretive activity and is a means of categorizing reality using evaluative vocabulary’ (Biessonova, 2003, p. 2).

The culturological aspect of evaluation is highlighted in the definition of Zh. Krasnobayeva-Chorna, who views it in the context of the linguocultural paradigm, noting that evaluations are ‘prepared by the sociolinguistic background of the utterance (the difference between positive and negative, relevant for speakers of a particular culture)’ (Krasnobayeva-Chorna, 2016, p. 99). The pragmatic dimension of evaluation is separately emphasized by T. Kosmeda, who defines evaluativity as a semantic-pragmatic category that reflects the axiological parameters of communication and serves as a means of expressing the speaker’s subjective attitude towards the message (Kosmeda, 2000, pp. 268-271), and D. Kryvenchenko, who understands ‘evaluation as the result of the speaker’s activity regarding the subject of speech, verbally fixed in the meaning of heterogeneous linguistic units united by evaluative semantics, expressing a positive or negative attitude towards it in accordance with the existing ideal model of the world and

aiming to evoke a reaction in the addressee that is predictable by the speaker' (Kryvenchenko, 2024, p. 277).

Diachronic study of evaluativity allows tracing the formation of axiological categories based on the linguocultural paradigm. Through the processes of semantic evolution and conceptual categorization, culturally specific systems of values are formed, which are objectified in language.

We chose adjectives as the main means of expressing evaluation in the Old English period because they constitute the core of evaluative vocabulary and most directly represent axiological concepts. 'Proper evaluative adjectives do not name the qualities of the object being evaluated but reflect the motive for the evaluation in their meaning, i.e., what the indicated object is evaluated with regard to' (Kosmeda, 2000, p. 269).

Methodological notes.

Our research methodology consists of a comprehensive analysis of Old English vocabulary with positive evaluative semantics. To investigate the conceptualization of basic positive evaluation in Old English poetry, we combined dictionary data with etymological analysis of poetic works to gain a complete understanding of the meaning and usage of these words.

In the preparatory stage, a corpus of words that became the object of study was formed. Referring to the opinion of I. Onyshchenko, that 'the heterogeneity of the evaluative component determines its different interaction with other components in the semantic structure of the linguistic sign. The evaluative component can be isolated both in the denotative and connotative part of the semantics. This is due to the existence of intellectual-logical (rational) and emotional evaluations. Intellectual-logical evaluation is associated with the conceptual core, with the subject-logical part of the lexical semantics of the word and thus enters the denotative aspect of the meaning' (Onyshchenko, 2004), we used the Old English dictionary (An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online, 2014), which allowed us to compile a list of Old English words in whose meanings the same good appeared. This provided the basis for our corpus of evaluative vocabulary, including *ærgōd*, *gōd*, *efengōd*, *til*, *betlic*, *dugeþ*, *gleāw*, and others. We systematized this material, grouping the words by their meanings and etymological origins (*Table 1*).

Table 1. Old English words marked by the semantic feature "good"

Word	Meaning	Etymology
<i>ærgód</i>	<i>good before others</i>	From Proto-Germanic <i>*airi-</i> ('before') Inherited from Proto-West Germanic <i>*gōd</i> , from Proto-Germanic <i>*gōdaz</i> from Proto-Indo-European <i>*g^hed^h-</i> ('to unite, be associated, suit').
<i>gód</i>	<i>good; bonus</i>	Inherited from Proto-West Germanic <i>*gōd</i> , from Proto-Germanic <i>*gōdaz</i> from Proto-Indo-European <i>*g^hed^h-</i> ('to unite, be associated, suit').
<i>efengod, emngod</i>	Equally good	emn – efn - From the adjective efn, descended from Proto-Germanic <i>*ebnaz</i> . (equally)
<i>til/til-lic</i>	good at anything, apt, capable, competent	from Proto-Indo-European <i>*deh₂y-</i> ('to divide, part'), Proto-Germanic <i>*tilą</i> (fitting' or 'suitable')
<i>tilmódig</i>	well-disposed kind good	from Proto-Indo-European <i>*deh₂y-</i> ('to divide, part'), Proto-Germanic <i>*tilą</i> (fitting' or 'suitable')
<i>betlic</i>	good-like, excellent	The Proto-Germanic root <i>*bat-</i> is believed to mean 'good' or 'better'
<i>tæslic</i>	advantageous, good, convenient	from PIE root <i>*der-</i> ('to split, flay, peel')
<i>dugeþ (dugup)</i>	good, honourable; bonus, probus	from the Proto-Indo-European root <i>*dheughe-</i> ('to be ready, be sufficient')
<i>ærfæst/árfæst /áfæst</i>	honourable, honest, upright, virtuous, good, pious, dutiful, gracious, kind, merciful	Proto-Germanic <i>*airi-</i> ('before') from Proto-Indo-European solid, stable
<i>fæle</i>	faithful, true, dear, good	From Proto-Germanic <i>*failijaz</i> ('true, friendly, familiar, good'), has been linked with Proto-Indo-European <i>*peh₂-</i> ('to protect')
<i>un-forcúp</i>	not despicable, not ignoble, not wicked, honourable, noble, good	Proto-Germanic <i>*frakunþaz</i> , past participle of <i>*frakunnanaþ</i> ('to despise') ; From Proto-Indo-European <i>*ǵnneh₃ti</i> , from <i>*ǵneh₃-</i> ('to know')
<i>cystig</i>	munificent, benevolent, bountiful, liberal, generous, good	From Proto-Germanic <i>*kustiz</i> , <i>*kustuz</i> ('choice, trial'), from Proto-Indo-European <i>*ǵéwstus</i> .
<i>freme</i>	good, strenuous, bold	From Proto-Germanic <i>*frami-</i> ('going forth').
<i>æl-tæw/ ealltæw</i>	all good, excellent, entire, sound, healthful, perfect, honest	from a Proto-Germanic root <i>*taw-</i> ('to make, manufacture')
<i>gleáw</i>	clear-sighted, wise, skilful, sagacious, prudent, good	From Proto-West Germanic <i>*glauw</i> , (clear, sharp)

welpungen	well-thriven, able, good, proficient, excellent	form *pīhan, from Proto-Germanic *pīnhaną, from Proto-Indo-European *tenk- (to join)
ge-þyht	good, adventurous	Old English (to seem fit)
lofsum	excellent, noble	PIE *lew ^b - (to desire, to love)
æ-mirce	excellent, distinguished; egregious	derivation From Proto-Germanic *merkwa, *mirkwiz (‘darkness’), Proto-Indo-European *merg ^w - (‘to flicker; to darken; to be dark’)
weorþful- lic/fórweorþfullíc	very worthy, very excellent	from Old English weorþ, from Proto-Germanic *werþaz (‘worthy, valuable’); from Proto-Indo-European *wert-. (turn, rotate)
wundor-full	wonderful, glorious, good	From Proto-Indo-European *wŋh ₁ -tro-m, from *wenh ₁ - (‘to desire, wish for, strive after, win, love’).
wel-weorþ	of high esteem, of great account	From Proto-Germanic *werþaz (‘towards, opposite’), Matasovic derives the word from Proto-Indo-European *wert- (‘to turn’)
wræc-lic	wonderful, strange, miserable	From Proto-Indo-European *wreg- (‘track, hunt, follow’)
egesful	fearful, terrible, wonderful, good	fear From Proto-West Germanic *agi, from Proto-Germanic *agaz, from Proto-Indo-European *h ₂ ég ^h os (to be upset, afraid)
seldcūþ	unusual rare little known unfamiliar strange novel wonderful	*kunnana (‘to know’) + *-þaz (past participle suffix) (know)
unáreccendlic	unexplainable, wonderful, good	Proto-Indo-European *h ₂ eHs-eh ₁ yeti, stative verb from the root *h ₂ eHs- (‘to be dry; to burn’)

In the procedural-methodical stage, we conducted an analysis of the formed corpus to determine the peculiarities of each word’s meanings and their connection to etymology. Component analysis of the dictionary definitions of each word was performed to isolate the archiseme ‘positive evaluation’ for all words. Then, the differential semes that distinguished one word from another were identified. For instance, for *ærgōd*, the differential seme was ‘superiority over others’, for *til* – ‘suitability’ or ‘competence’, and for *gleāw* – ‘wisdom’. We grouped the words according to their meanings to establish which aspect of positive evaluation was primary for them: ‘internal quality’, ‘ability’, ‘social evaluation’, and ‘unusualness’.

Additionally, we analyzed the etymology of the studied words using the Handbook of Germanic Etymology (Orel, 2003) to trace their acquisition of

evaluative potential through the transformation of initial physical or concrete meanings into abstract concepts and to reveal their implicit meanings. For example, the etymology of *dugeþ* ('to be ready', 'to be sufficient') implicitly points to strength and courage, and the etymology of *fæle* ('to protect') – to faithfulness.

We presented the model of the positive evaluation concept in the form of frame slots following O. Koliadenko, who notes that 'a frame is a representation of knowledge about a typical situation, which can be formally represented through a fixed set of content components (nodes, or slots) conditioned by it, and the relationships between them, with the upper levels of the frame always corresponding to the situation fixed in consciousness, and the lower ones containing terminals that can be filled by deepening information about the situation, or its figurative representation' (Koliadenko, 2013, p. 141).

Results and Discussion.

The possibility of isolating and analyzing the types of positive evaluation in the Old English period provides important linguocultural information, as 'evaluation is characterized by selectivity: it isolates and fixes what is important from the point of view of a particular subject of evaluation' (Bigunova, 2017, p. 58). The words denoting positive evaluation can be grouped by the following semantic components of meaning:

1. 'Internal quality (moral or characteristic)':

gōd – general, universal goodness

cystig – generosity, benevolence

tilmōdig – benevolence, internal disposition

fæle – faithfulness, truthfulness

dugeþ – valor, honor

ge-þyht – adventurousness, suitability

ærfæst – honourableness, stability.

2. 'Ability, competence or effectiveness':

til/til-līc – capability, suitability

efengōd – equal quality

gleāw – wisdom, skill

welþungen – thriving, ability

freme – strenuousness, boldness

æl-tæw – perfection, integrity.

3. ‘Social evaluation or status’:

weorþful-līc, wel-weorþ – worthiness, value, high esteem

un-forcūþ – honourableness, nobility (through negation)

ǣrgōd – superiority over others.

4. ‘Unusualness, wonder (positive surprise)’:

wundor-full – wondrousness

wræc-līc – strangeness, unusualness

egesful – awesome wonder, fear-inducing

betlīc – excellence

seldcūþ – rarity, uniqueness

unāreccendlic – unexplainability, incomprehensibility

ǣ-mirce – distinction.

5. ‘Functional Utility’:

tǣslīc – convenience, advantage.

The analyzed Old English words show that positive evaluation was not homogeneous; instead, it was expressed through various aspects, reflecting the values and worldview of Old English society. The main categories that were formed indicate that it could be:

1. **Internal Quality**, associated with honor, faithfulness, and character (e.g., *dugeþ, fǣle, cystig*).

2. **Functional Competence**, which evaluated a person based on their ability and effectiveness (e.g., *til, gleāw, æl-tæw*).

3. **Social Status**, which emphasized the dignity and respect a person deserved in society (e.g., *weorþful-līc, Ǧergōd*).

4. **Unusual Phenomenon**, which evoked surprise and admiration, emphasizing exceptionality (e.g., *wundor-full, Seldcūþ*).

5. **Functional Utility**, which made life easier.

The analysis of etymological features is necessary for a complete understanding of the multifaceted nature of lexemes denoting basic positive evaluation in the Old English period. It shows that Old English words with the same ‘good’ developed from various Proto-Indo-European (hereafter PIE) roots that initially did not have a direct meaning of evaluation:

1. PIE roots related to physical actions or state:

‘To be fit/suitable’: the words *gōd* (cognates *ǣrgōd, efengōd*) and *til/til-līc/tilmōdig* derive from PIE roots meaning ‘to be fit’ or ‘to divide’. Thus, the

concept of positive evaluation developed from **functional suitability** or **appropriateness**. More specialized physical actions: *unáreccendlic* (to dry up).

‘**To make/manufacture**’: the word *æl-tæw* derives from **taw-*, which meant ‘to make’. Here, positive evaluation is associated with the **perfection of the product** or result.

‘**To be ready/sufficient/strong**’: *dugeþ* derives from **dheughe-*, which meant ‘to be ready’; *ærfæst* (solid). This indicates a transformation from the original meaning of **readiness for action** or **sufficient strength**.

‘**To hunt**’: *wræc-líc*.

2. PIE roots related to intellect and cognition:

‘**To know**’: *un-forcūþ* and *seldcūþ* derive from **ǵneh₃-* and **kunnanq*. This is a transfer of positive perception to what is considered **known, cognized, or recognized**.

‘**To be clear/sharp**’: *gleáw* derives from **ǵ^hlewH-*. This directly links evaluation to sharpness through **mental clarity** and **wisdom**.

3. PIE roots related to emotions and social relations:

‘**To desire/love**’: *lofsum* and *wundor-full* derive from **lewb^h-* and **wenh₁-*. This indicates that positive evaluation is closely related to what **evokes love and admiration**.

‘**To be afraid**’: *egesful* (from ‘to be upset, afraid’).

‘**To protect**’: *fāle* derives from **peh₂-*. Here, the evaluation is provided by a sense of **security and a source of protection**.

‘**Choice**’: *cystig* derives from **ǵéwstus*, which meant ‘choice’. This emphasizes the **moral aspect** of goodness as a conscious choice.

4. PIE roots related to movement, change, and motion:

‘**To turn/rotate/join**’: *welþungen* (**tenk-* (to join)); *weorþful-líc* and *wel-weorþ* derive from **wert-* (to turn, to exchange).

‘**To move forward**’: *freme* derives from the Proto-Germanic root **frami-*, which meant ‘to go forth’. Here, positive evaluation is **activity** and **vigor**.

‘**To darken**’: *de-mirce* derives from **merg^w* (to darken).

The following semantic development of evaluative meaning are traced: physical action → physical suitability → physical or moral quality; physical sharpness → mental clarity → moral quality; physical strength → social significance → moral quality; emotional desire → aesthetic admiration → approval.

The analysis of etymological roots shows that the concept of positive evaluation in Old English did not arise from a single primary source but was

formed from various PIE roots that initially did not have a direct moral or abstract meaning of evaluation. In Old English, the concept of ‘good’ was multifaceted, encompassing physical effectiveness, intellectual clarity, social recognition, and emotional response.

The conclusions about the meaning of Old English adjectives expressing positive evaluation, obtained from the dictionary data, are confirmed in real examples of their usage in poetry. We selected 20 texts of Old English poetry of various genres: elegies (‘Deor’, ‘The Ruin’, ‘The Seafarer’, and others), poems (‘Beowulf’, ‘Widsith’, and others), religious poems (‘Julian’, ‘Judith’, and others), etc.. It is worth noting that not all of the adjectives included in the corpus were found in the analyzed texts (no cases of usage were recorded for 6 adjectives out of the 27 listed in *Table 1*).

Below we provide descriptions and examples of some of the adjectives that represented evaluation in Old English poetry:

The adjective *ǣrgōd* denotes **superiority and priority in positive quality**, both for people and for things, and is applied to people such as ‘lord’ and ‘warrior’, emphasizing their greatness and distinction: ‘*Swylc scolde eorl wesan, æpeling ǣrgōd, swylc æschere wæs!*’ (*Beowulf*). It is also used for objects, such as ‘iron (sword)’, which indicates the high quality and perfection of the weapon.

Egesful is used to describe individuals who have **power and evoke respect or even fear**. Examples include ‘lord’, ‘warrior’, and ‘father’. This confirms that *egesful* is not simply a synonym for ‘good’, but rather indicates **greatness, power, and respect** that may have a nuance of awe: ‘*egesful eorla dryhten*’ (*Judith*). Furthermore, it is used when describing monsters and natural disasters.

The meaning of the adjective *til* is also confirmed by the semantics of the units for whose evaluation the adjective was used in poetry. If the adjective described people, the evaluation concerned the person’s role and their **suitability for performing their role**: ‘builder’, ‘lord’, ‘warrior’, and ‘queen’: ‘*Sum bið bylda til ham to hebbanne*’ (*The Gifts of Men*). The same approach of evaluating **effectiveness and usefulness** is seen in the case of collocation with objects or concepts: ‘*Ne wæs þæt gewrixle til*’ (*Beowulf*). *Tilmōdig*, although semantically meaning ‘well-disposed’, contextually differs slightly from the expected, evaluating the apostles as **“great, worthy”**: ‘*ðus ða æðelingas ende gesealdon, XII tilmōdige*’ (*The Fates of the Apostles*).

The lexeme *betlic* is used to describe what is **excellent and of high quality**. Examples include ‘king’, ‘weapon’, and ‘man’, and it denotes a high degree of

quality and is close to the meaning ‘wonderful’ or ‘perfect’: *‘bold wæs betlic bregorof cyning’* (*Beowulf*).

Arfæst has a certain **moral and religious undertone**. This word continues to carry differential semes conditioned by its etymology of meaning, associated with **honor and benevolence**, and is used to describe ‘God’, ‘warrior’, and ‘person merciful to poor’.

Gōd is the most **universal adjective**, which is confirmed by its broad collocation in the Old English period. It is used to describe: people (‘king’, ‘warrior’, ‘people lords’, ‘man’) and abstract concepts (‘sorrows’, ‘deeds’, ‘thoughts’, ‘virtues’): *‘he sibpan sceal gōdra gumcysta geasne hweorfan’* (*Juliana*).

Overall, as we can see, the examples of the usage of Old English adjectives in poetry mostly confirm the conclusions drawn from the dictionary definitions. However, some cases demonstrate that the meaning of words was more **flexible and contextual** than might seem, and does not always fit perfectly into the defined categories. **Actualization** (‘the use of a certain linguistic unit for the purpose of transmitting information in the conditions of a specific communicative situation, when the actualized concept, represented by information, is identified with its real representation in the speaker-subject’ (Prykhodko, 2016, p. 72)) highlights a contextually important segment of the linguistic unit’s meaning.

For example, the word *egesful* (‘wonderful’, ‘awe-inspiring’) is used to describe a **lord, warrior, and father**, emphasizing their power and greatness, which fully aligns with the conclusion. But it can also mean ‘**terrible**’ or ‘**horrible**’, as in the following case, where it describes not a positive quality but the threatening essence of a father who destroys and annihilates: *‘Sona him se froda fæder Ohtheres, eald ond egesfull, ondslyht ageaf, abreot brimwisan, bryd ahredde’* (*Beowulf*). This shows that ‘wonderful’ and ‘terrible’ could coexist, as both concepts evoked strong emotions and surprise.

Based on the analysis, we modeled a frame-and-slot structure that reflects the main components of the positive evaluation concept. The frame in our study acts as a mental template that organizes the knowledge of Old English speakers about positive evaluation. This frame is not homogeneous but consists of five key slots—semantic nodes, each representing a separate aspect of what was considered valuable.

The identification of these slots occurred by grouping adjectives that share common differential semes. For example, words denoting strength, wisdom, and

courage were combined into the ‘INTERNAL QUALITY’ slot. At the same time, lexemes indicating material value or usefulness formed the ‘UTALITARITY’ slot. This approach allowed us to reconstruct how the concept of positive evaluation was structured in the Old English linguistic mind, reflecting the moral, practical, and social concepts that were important to this society.

Table 2 below provides a list of the identified slots with examples of adjectives belonging to them and their main differential semes.

Table 2. Slot Organization of the Concept GOOD

Slot	Semantic Component	Lexemes	Differential Semes
Slot 1: INTERNAL QUALITY	Moral virtues and character	<i>gōd, cystig, tilmōdig, f āle, dugeþ, geþyht, ærfæst</i>	‘universal goodness’, ‘generosity’, ‘benevolence’, ‘faithfulness’, ‘valor’, ‘honourableness’
Slot 2: FUNCTIONAL COMPETENCE	Ability and effectiveness	<i>til/tillīc, gleāw, welþungen, freme</i>	suitability’, ‘wisdom’, ‘capability’, ‘strenuousness’, ‘perfection’
Slot 3: SOCIAL STATUS	Recognition and esteem	<i>weorþful-līc, wel- weorþ, un- forcūþ, āergōd</i>	‘worthiness’, ‘value’, ‘nobility’, ‘superiority’
Slot 4: EXCEPTIONALITY	Unusualness and wonderfulness	<i>wundor-full, wræc- līc, egesful, seldcūþ, betlīc</i>	‘wondrousness’, ‘unusualness’, ‘awesomeness’, ‘rarity’, ‘incomprehensibility’, ‘distinction’, ‘excellence’
Slot 5: UTALITARITY	Functional utility	<i>tæslīc</i>	‘convenience’

Thus, positive evaluation in Old English was given for certain moral, practical, and social concepts and reflected a combination of positive qualities—from internal virtue to external perfection and recognition.

Conclusions and perspectives.

The obtained results testify to the productivity of integrating cognitive-semantic and diachronic approaches in the study of evaluativity as a linguocultural universal with ethno-specific features of realization.

Thus, the conducted study of the conceptual model of positive evaluation in Old English through the frame-and-slot methodology and etymological profiling allowed establishing the following:

1. The structural organization of the concept GOOD in Old English is characterized by a five-slot architecture, where the INTERNAL QUALITY and EXCEPTIONALITY slots dominate, reflecting the axiological priorities of Old English society.

2. Etymological analysis revealed four main conceptual trajectories of semantic development : from functional suitability, intellectual qualities, social value, and emotional attitude to evaluative categories. This supports the theory of the semantic evolution of evaluative concepts from concrete physical characteristics to abstract axiological categories through conceptual metaphorization.

3. The analysis of Old English poetic texts showed that dictionary definitions mostly adequately reflect the meaning of positive evaluation adjectives. However, contextual usage revealed pragmatic variability of some lexemes, indicating their greater flexibility in language than fixed in dictionaries.

4. The conceptual model of positive evaluation in Old English reflects the anthropocentric nature of axiological categorization , where evaluativity appears as a multifaceted phenomenon encompassing moral, intellectual, social, and aesthetic dimensions of human experience.

Further research requires expanding the consideration of the concept GOOD within the prose works of the period.

REFERENCES

1. Bigunova, N. O. (2017). *Pozytyvna ocinka: vid kognityvnoho sudzhennya do komunikatyvnoho vyslovlyuvannya* [Positive evaluation: From cognitive judgment to communicative expression]. Odesa: KP OMD.
2. Bosworth, J. (2014). *An Anglo-Saxon dictionary online* (T. Northcote Toller, C. Sean, & O. Tichy, Eds.). Faculty of Arts, Charles University. <https://bosworthtoller.com>
3. Byessonova, O. L. (2003). *Ocinnyj tezaurus anglijs'koyi movy: kognityvnyj i gendernyj aspekty* [Evaluative thesaurus of the English language: Cognitive and gender aspects] (Doctoral dissertation abstract). Kyiv.
4. Koch, T. A. (2021). Ocinnist' yak linhvistyčna kategoriya: verbal'na realizaciya i stylistyčna dyferenciaciya [Evaluativity as a linguistic category: Verbal realization and stylistic differentiation]. *Visnyk Kyivs'koho natsional'noho universytetu imeni Tarasa Shevchenka*, 1(29), 18–20.
5. Kolyadenko, O. O. (2013). Termin freym u linhvistytsi [The term "frame" in linguistics]. *Terminolohichnyy visnyk*, 2(1), 139–144.
6. Kosmeda, T. (2000). *Aksiolohichni aspekty prahmalingvistyky: formuvannya i rozvytok katehoriyi ocinky* [Axiological aspects of pragmalinguistics: Formation and development of the category of evaluation]. Lviv: LNU im. I. Franka.
7. Krasnobayeva-Chorna, Zh. V. (2016). *Lingvofrazemna aksiolohiya: paradyhmal'no-katehoriynyy vymir* [Linguo-phraseological axiology: Paradigmatic and categorical dimension] (2nd ed., rev. and enl.). Vinnytsya: Nilan.

8. Kryvenchenko, D. (2024). *Movna kategoriya ocinky ta yiyi xarakterystyka v ukrayins'kyx ZMI* [The language category of evaluation and its characteristics in Ukrainian media]. *Zapysky z ukrayins'koho movoznavstva – Opera in linguistica ukrainiana*, 31, 277–287. Odesa: Odesa National University named after I. I. Mechnikov.
9. Onyshchenko, I. V. (2004). *Kategoriya ocinky ta zasoby yiyi vyrazhennya v publicystychnyx ta informacijnyx tekstax* [The category of evaluation and the means of its expression in journalistic and informational texts] (Candidate's thesis abstract). Dnipropetrovsk.
10. Orel, V. (2003). *A handbook of Germanic etymology*. Boston: Brill. <https://dn721809.ca.archive.org/0/items/Orel-AHandbookOfGermanicEtymology/2003OrelV.-AHandbookOfGermanicEtymology.pdf>
11. Prykhodko, H. I. (2016). *Kategoriya ocinky v konteksti zminy lingvistychnyx paradyhm* [The category of evaluation in the context of changing linguistic paradigms]. Zaporizhzhya: Zaporizhzhya National University.

Дата надходження статті до редакції: 27.02.2025

Прийнято до друку: 30.03.2025