

Javier Pérez-Guerra, Dolores González-Álvarez,  
Jorge L. Bueno-Alonso & Esperanza Rama-Martínez  
(eds)

## 'Of Varying Language and Opposing Creed'

New Insights into Late Modern English

*Offprint*



**PETER LANG**

Bern · Berlin · Bruxelles · Frankfurt am Main · New York · Oxford · Wien

ISBN 978-3-03910-7BB-9

© Peter Lang AG, International Academic Publishers, Bern 2007  
Hochfeldstrasse 32, Postfach 746, CH-3000 Bern 9, Switzerland  
[info@peterlang.com](http://info@peterlang.com), [www.peterlang.com](http://www.peterlang.com), [www.peterlang.net](http://www.peterlang.net)

**Bibliographic information published by Die Deutsche Bibliothek**

Die Deutsche Bibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data is available on the Internet at (<http://dnb.ddb.de>).

British Library and Library of Congress Cataloguing-in-Publication Data:  
A catalogue record for this book is available from *The British Library*, Great Britain, and from *The Library of Congress*, USA

ISSN 1424-8689

ISBN 978-3-03910-788-9

© Peter Lang AG, International Academic Publishers, Bern 2007  
Hochfeldstrasse 32, Postfach 746, CH-3000 Bern 9, Switzerland  
[info@peterlang.com](mailto:info@peterlang.com), [www.peterlang.com](http://www.peterlang.com), [www.peterlang.net](http://www.peterlang.net)

All rights reserved.

All parts of this publication are protected by copyright.

Any utilisation outside the strict limits of the copyright law, without the permission of the publisher, is forbidden and liable to prosecution. This applies in particular to reproductions, translations, microfilming, and storage and processing in electronic retrieval systems.

Printed in Germany

ELENA ORDUNA NOCITO

## The semantic field of 'manners' in the eighteenth century: a cognitive approach

### 1. Introduction

The main purpose of this paper is to carry out a detailed analysis of the semantic field of *manners* in England during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Throughout this period, people's behaviour and manners gained great social importance due to the profound social, economic and cultural changes (see Briggs 1999: 144-145) that took place then and of which newspapers and pamphlets tried to make echo. The emphasis on manners and courtesy that sprang up in the era of Late Modern English (LModE) had its repercussion on the press, which devoted long prescriptive articles to the description of what was correct and what was not with regard to manners. But this emphasis on manners was also reflected in language, as it led to major developments in the ways of addressing people, in order to adapt to the new socio-cultural situation. In fact, there were many changes affecting this semantic field such as the extension in meaning of already existing words and the adoption of new terms from other languages, especially French and Latin, which were still a referent of refinement and culture in the England of the LModE period.

In order to elaborate our analysis of terms, I have adopted a semantic-cognitive approach which has enabled me to offer a clear and coherent explanation of the way this semantic field is organised at a conceptual level. I have established the relevant categorisations required to understand how the semantic field of 'manners' works at a cognitive level and how I could organise the 131 terms included in my study.

To verify my theoretical categorisation schema and check the real use and meaning of the words, I have used the eighteenth-century newspaper *The Spectator* (1711-12) as my corpus. This newspaper was considered an ideal collection of data due to the fact that its contents were very representative of the habits, ideas and moral principles existing at the time, with a wide variety of articles devoted to issues such as courtesy, manners and terms of address.

## 2. Hypothesis

The hypotheses that I established at the beginning of the project were the following:

Firstly, I would try to verify if the semantic field of *manners* in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries gained more importance and if the number of terms related to this semantic field increased due to the relevance that good manners acquired over this period.

Secondly, I would try to verify if terms of French and Latin origin relating to manners reflected the importance and prestige of languages and whether they continued to be a referent and symbol of refinement in the periods under analysis.

Thirdly, I would try to verify that the semantic field of manners is not a chaotic net of terms, but rather an organised system that allows a clear categorisation of words.

## 3. Methodology

In order to carry out this research on the semantic field of manners for the LModE period in England, I have adopted a methodology structured into different stages:

The first step was to research the social, economic, political and cultural circumstances of the period in question (seventeenth and eighteenth centuries). This raised my awareness of the main ideas and sociolinguistic phenomena that influenced the development and configuration of the English language,<sup>1</sup> and of the relevance of editors such as J. Addison and R. Steele together with their newspapers *The Spectator*<sup>2</sup> and *The Tatler* at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The contents of these newspapers were very representative of the life, habits, ideas and moral principles existing at the time and thus constituted a good source of data to verify my hypothesis on the uses of language in this period. After reading a wide variety of texts devoted to courtesy and social deportment, I became aware of the importance of the semantic field of manners and of social behaviour in this society, and for this reason decided to use texts from *The Spectator* as a corpus for my study of this semantic field.

The second stage consisted in selecting an approach for my study. I chose a semantic-cognitive approach that would enable me to establish the relevant categorisations for the organisation of the terms and, finally, come to the appropriate conclusions. Some ideas that

---

1 Baugh/Cable (1994: 251) deal with the growing prestige of the English language in the sixteenth century and the attempts to regularise its orthography and grammar in the following centuries when the Royal Society was founded:

The beginnings of this public discussion are evident in the 16th c. defence of English and debates about orthography and the enrichment of the vocabulary [...] Anxiety about language policy reached a new urgency in the second half of the 17th c. For that time, through 18th c. proposals for an academy to 20th c. efforts at language planning in former colonies of European powers, a self-consciousness about the shape that English ought to take has been an endless source of concern.

2 The *Spectator* was an eighteenth-century newspaper that was published during the years 1711 and 1712 by Addison and Steele.

have been introduced by cognitive linguistics<sup>3</sup> and which have been essential for my study are discussed in what follows.

I have approached language from a cognitive point of view, i.e. I have not considered language an autonomous capacity, independent of the rest of the cognitive system of humans. Humans use language to communicate meaning and ideas that make reference to external elements. Therefore, language must be considered together with other processes in human cognition that enable us to understand the world and allow us to conceptualise and categorise elements.<sup>4</sup>

In this study I have used the term 'category' in the way cognitive linguistics uses it. The term category is no longer understood in the aristotelian sense,<sup>5</sup> i.e. as a group of terms with clear-cut boundaries composed of elements with necessary and sufficient conditions, but rather, in a cognitive sense, the term category is used

3 Taylor (1989: viii-ix) points out:

The theoretical background to the study is a set of principles and assumptions that have recently come to be known as 'cognitive linguistics'. Cognitive linguistics does not (yet) constitute a theoretical paradigm which is able to rival, even less to displace, the (still) dominant generative-transformational approach. The main points of divergence are, however, clear. Whereas generativists regard knowledge of language as an autonomous component of the mind, independent, in principle, from other kinds of knowledge and from other cognitive skills, cognitivists posit an intimate, dialectic relationship between the structure and function of language on the one hand, and non-linguistic skills and knowledge on the other. Language being at once both the creation of human cognition and an instrument in its service, is thus more likely than not to reflect, in its structure and functioning, more general cognitive abilities.

4 Cuenca/Hilferty (1999: 17) pose the following questions about language: "Is language an independent and autonomous capacity from the rest of human processes or does it work together with other cognitive processes and cannot be understood alone?" The authors conclude:

meaning is not independent from the rest of processes involved in human cognition but an integral part of them. Language symbolises the conceptualisations of the external world and helps us to identify meaning with a specific linguistic structure that is determined by the way we categorise reality.

5 Taylor (1989: 21-37) describes and differentiates the two approaches to categories, the Aristotelian tradition and the cognitive one.

to refer to a group of words that are similar in some way. Within this group I can find an element or term which is more representative or prototypical<sup>6</sup> of the category, and others which are more peripheral but that have certain resemblance with the prototype of the group.<sup>7</sup>

The 'categorising process' mentioned by cognitivists allows us, through a series of mechanisms, to organise and understand reality according to certain conceptual schemas that one has and activates at specific moments.

By 'conceptual domain'<sup>8</sup> I understand a mental frame or schema that we use to understand the reality we perceive. Our mind learns these conceptual domains through experience and stores them as part of our encyclopaedic knowledge. These domains, enable us to contextualise the reality we perceive and it helps to organise our conceptualisations of reality. Cognitive linguistics supports the idea that both linguistic and extralinguistic factors determine the meaning of a word. Meaning is therefore composed of the conceptual meaning of the word and the way in which this meaning is expressed, together with other extralinguistic factors that interfere in the communicative process such as context, participants, etc.

The adoption of all these cognitive concepts for this study on the semantic field of manners has enabled us, firstly, to offer a clear and coherent explanation for the organisation of terms referring to

---

6 Within a category, we can find different levels of organisation, the superordinate element, the basic level and the subordinate level. Of these three levels, the basic is fundamental to the categorising process due to the fact that it is the level where the cognitive processes interfere (Lakoff 1986: 133).

7 The peripheral elements of categories on occasions overlap with other categories due to the fact that the boundaries for each category are not clearly defined. Taylor (1989: 38-40) gives a very good example for the word *games* mentioned by the philosopher L. Wittgenstein.

8 With regard to cognitivism Taylor (1989: 247-248) explains:

Cognitive linguistics takes a broad, encyclopaedic view of meaning. Axiomatic for the cognitive paradigm is the thesis that the meaning of any linguistic form can only be characterised relative to an appropriate domain or set of domains. Domains are encapsulated knowledge and beliefs about the world, and may vary in complexity from a basic apperception of time and oriented space, through to highly sophisticated scientific theories about the nature of matter.

manners at a cognitive level and, secondly, to attempt a definition for the term 'manners' for the eighteenth century in a more accurate and precise way.

Thirdly, I carried out a wide search on dictionaries and thesauri for words related to the semantic field of manners. I looked under headings such as *behaviour, manners, conduct, attitude, breeding, courtesy, education, taste, etc.*, and ended up with a very large number of terms that led to a first analysis of the meanings of these words and an elimination of those whose meanings were not related to manners in the eighteenth century. Then, I grouped those lexical items with the same lexical root, choosing as the representative word of the group the one I considered most commonly in use. This whole procedure significantly reduced the number of terms to 111. A new search of these words was done in the OED in order to learn about the etymological meaning of the terms and, also, to find out the date when they started to be used with a sense related to manners.

Fourthly, I tried to find a coherent semantic structure and elaborated a semantic-cognitive schema with two main concepts: 'breeding' and 'behaviour'. These two terms were thought to be valid criteria to predefine the most relevant meanings of each term. Some terms were related to the idea of 'development or process that ends in a final result', represented by the heading 'breeding'. Others referred to 'a consolidated conduct', represented by the heading of 'behaviour'. Once I had established these two basic concepts, I analysed the meaning of all the other terms and decided whether they had to be categorised under 'breeding' or under 'behaviour' within my schema.

The next step was to find examples from *The Spectator* (1711-12) in order to compare and verify my theoretical categorisation schema with the real meaning and use of the words belonging to the semantic field of manners in the eighteenth century.

Finally, from the study and contrast of real uses, I reached the appropriate conclusions that corroborated my initial hypothesis. I also thought there was a need to give a new and more precise definition for the eighteenth-century use of the term 'manners' and accordingly offer my own definition.

## 4. Study and results

### 4.1. First hypothesis

'The semantic field of manners in the eighteenth century gained more importance and the number of terms related to this semantic field increased due to the relevance that good manners acquired in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries'. I verified my first and basic hypothesis as my findings showed that in the LModE period the number of lexical items relating to manners had notoriously increased and consolidated their meaning. This was a clear consequence of the importance social deportment and courtesy acquired in the eighteenth century and, from the following quotes found in the newspaper *The Spectator*, I can deduce the importance writers of the time gave to the idea of manners and proper and improper behaviour in particular social situations. Addison (1711) in *The Spectator* gives the following definition for manners.

By Manners I do not mean Morals but Behaviour and Good-breeding, as they show themselves in the Town and in the Country [...] At present therefore an unconstrained Carriage, and a certain Openness of Behaviour are at the height of Good-breeding.

Another interesting quote on courtesy and social carriage appeared in Woodward (1998: 115), where the author talks about *manners* in the following terms:

great Advances have been made towards a Reformation of Manners, which is every Day getting ground, Persons of various Ranks, of considerable fortunes, and of the clearest Character, offering Assistance to it, not only in and out the City of London, but from several Parts of the Kingdom.

In the LModE period, the English language was trying to adapt itself to the needs of the new socio-historical context. Consequently, the English language adopted new words and extended the meaning of already existing words by giving more importance to a peripheral meaning of the word and making it become prototypical. In fact, in the

eighteenth century terms such as *polish*, *refinement*, *politeness*, *elegance*, *bland*, *uncouth* and *etiquette* adopted a new meaning related to manners.

During the LModE period, semantic changes also led to the development in meaning of already existing words. Some of these meanings were acquired through the process of metaphor or through an association of concepts which activated different conceptual domains that became more relevant in the meaning of the lexical term (Tejada 1999: 162-163). For example, the term *bear*<sup>9</sup> originally (10th century) referred to 'a specific kind of animal' and, in the sixteenth century, through a process of metaphor and metonymy, this word began to make reference 'to a person with rude manners or with a behaviour similar to that of the animal'. In the development of the meaning of *bear*, we can appreciate, firstly, a clear simile between the conduct of the animal and that of humans, and secondly, a process of metonymy through which we designate one aspect of the animal (conduct) with the term assigned initially for the whole element (animal).

---

9 The word *bearing*, Germanic in origin, was already present in Old English. In the eleventh century we find the verb *to bear* and until 1250 we do not have the word with the suffix *-ing* functioning as a noun. If you look up the word *bear* in the OED, you find two entries. The first refers to the noun used to designate a specific kind of animal (970), and not until the end of the sixteenth century is *bear* used to describe people who have a similar attitude to that of the animal, i.e. a 'rude and unmannered person'. The second entry for *bear* refers to a verbal form with four main meanings and a clear interrelation between them: 'to carry something' (1000), 'to carry a load' (material or immaterial), 'to give birth' (971) and, finally, 'to push something by exercising pressure on it'. Each of these meanings suffered a different evolution which for constraints of space will not be explained here. What I would like to highlight about the term *bear* is the idea of 'movement in a specific direction' that each of the meanings referred to, but this movement was not easy as it implied an effort or a load. This load was first a material element but in 1230 *bear* appears in the OED as 'carry one's self', which can be read as the way you carry your body and you behave yourself.

Another example of a term that acquired a new meaning through the process of metaphor is *cultured*.<sup>10</sup> This word was initially applied to 'the cultivation of land', and through a process of metaphor it began to make reference to 'the cultivation of intellectual faculties and the improvement of people's behaviour'.

The meaning for *polish*<sup>11</sup> suffered a similar development. Originally the word referred to 'the act of polishing of an object'. By the eighteenth century the term had spread its meaning to 'the act of polishing the mind or the behaviour'. An illustration of the use of polished can be found in the following text:

1711. Addison. *The spectator* 119. So that at present several of our Men of the Town, and particularly those who have been polished in France

The extension of meaning of words belonging to the semantic field of manners was also achieved through a process of generalisation or restriction of meaning,<sup>12</sup> as in the case of words such as *gentleman* and *habit*. The term *gentleman* was used to allude to 'the correct way a member of the court or nobility behaved'. However, in the eighteenth century the meaning was generalised and made reference to 'any good

---

10 The term *cultured* comes from the French word *culture* and was introduced in the fifteenth century. Initially, the word emerged with the meaning 'cultivate' and, in particular, the land (c1420). In 1626 it also alluded to 'cultivate a specific kind of plant'. In 1796 it referred to 'the breeding of a human creature'. In all three cases, the term referred to a development involved in the cultivation of land or humans. Throughout the seventeenth century this term was applied in a metaphoric sense to the cultivation of the intellect or social behaviour.

11 The word *polished* comes from the Latin *polio* and was introduced in Middle English. By the mid fourteenth century the word had acquired the meaning 'free of rudeness' and in 1712 it began to refer to any element that arrived at a specific state after undergoing a polishing process. By applying this meaning to people in a metaphoric sense, in 1727 we reach the meaning of 'becoming refined'.

12 Tejada (1999: 145-167) explains that lexical items have an open nature as they adapt to the communicative context of each specific period and to the specific need of the time.

behaviour of a member of the society, no matter his social position', and as such was used in the following quotation:

1711. Steele. *The Spectator* 2. He is a Gentleman that is very singular in his behaviour [...] and are Contradictions to the Manners of the World, only as he thinks the World is wrong

The term *habit*<sup>13</sup> suffered a similar generalisation of meaning. In the mid thirteenth century, this word alluded to clothes and, more specifically, to the manner of dressing. In the seventeenth century it referred to the external appearance of people, including their social deportment and the way of behaving towards other members of society.

Semantic changes based on moralisation or improvement of meaning also took place in LModE. One of the most relevant terms within this group is *courteous*. *Courteous* in the thirteenth century made reference to 'the qualities of a specific social class that lived in the court'. Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the term began to allude to 'the positive social qualities of any man or woman, specifically those qualities that were similar to the ones associated with the people in the court'.

The term *urbane*<sup>14</sup> also suffered a process of improvement of meaning. In the eighteenth century there was a significant difference

---

13 The term *habit* comes from Latin but was introduced into the English language through Old French. In the thirteenth century it had the meaning of 'way of dressing', especially that characteristic of a specific profession, social rank or monastic order. In the sixteenth century this word referred to the 'external appearance and the way a person dressed'. It is not until 1581 that *habit* was used to refer to a 'natural tendency to act in a specific way, generally marked by custom or habit'. In 1413 the word transmits the idea of 'behaviour'; however, this meaning became obsolete around 1687. The importance of the meaning of the word is that it made reference to a moral quality that was established by custom, and in 1413, it began to be used with reference to behaviour that was probably judged according to moral rules. Nevertheless, this use of the word would be obsolete by 1687 and the word *habit* was restricted to external appearance of the body or to a custom.

14 The term *urbane* comes from the Latin *urbanus* but was introduced from Old French. Originally, it meant 'item characteristic of the city' such as ideas,

between the manners of the country, considered rude or vulgar, and the manners of the city, seen as positive or adequate. Intellectual activity took place in urban centres and citizens in these areas enjoyed a higher standard of living compared to the people in the country. With regard to the manners of the city and the country, Addison states:

1711. Addison. *The Spectator* 119. If after this we look on the People of Mode in the Country, we find them in the Manners of the last Age [...] This Rural Politeness is very troublesome to a Man of my Temper [...] I believed they had no Manners in the Country.

The term *behaviour*<sup>15</sup> deserves especial attention as it is one of the most frequently used within the semantic field of manners. In the fifteenth century it referred to 'a general way of acting in society', but it is not until the seventeenth century that it alludes to 'a specific kind of behaviour characterised by good manners and elegance'. Therefore, it is in the seventeenth century that this term began to transmit good qualities, i.e. 'a correct conduct seen as such by society'. And from

---

feelings, people, etc. However, this meaning was lost by 1809. In the second half of the sixteenth century, *urbane* was used to designate 'courtesy, refinement and elegance characteristic of the city'. Another attested meaning in 1566 is 'to describe a pleasant conversation of well-bred people' but it becomes obsolete in 1693. By 1623, *urbane* made reference to 'refined and polished manners of the city'. Text number 119 in *The Spectator* is devoted to the good qualities associated with the city.

- 15 The OED established a direct relation between the word *behaviour* and the Old English word (*had*) *behabban*. The dictionary clarifies that the current meaning of *behave* did not appear until the sixteenth century, first in the form of a verb and then as a noun. By the mid fifteenth century this word began to be used in the current sense and usually appeared with a reflexive pronoun. At the beginning of the eighteenth century *behave* became an intransitive verb appearing without a reflexive pronoun. The verb *behave* referred to the 'way of acting in external relations with people or things' (1541). The expression *well-behaved* appeared in 1598 to describe 'people who had an appropriate conduct and manners'. It can be said that it is at the beginning of the seventeenth century when the term acquired a positive value and it appeared with the meaning of 'good behaviour', i.e. characterised by elegance and good manners.

this meaning we obtain the current expression *Behave yourself!* Some interesting examples of the term *behave* can be found in:

1711. Steele. *The Spectator* 2. He was some Years a Captain and behaved himself with great Gallantry and several Engagements

1711. Addison. *The Spectator* 119. By manners I do not mean Morals but Behaviour and Good-breeding

#### 4.2. *Second hypothesis*

‘I will try to verify if the terms related to manners were of French and Latin origin due to the importance and prestige that both French and Latin had had over the years. And whether French and Latin language and culture continued to be a referent in England and a symbol of refinement and education in the following decades’. According to my study, 77% of the terms analysed referring to manners are of French or Latin origin, and some of the Latin words were introduced through French, with a small group of relevant Germanic words such as *breeding, behaviour, bearing, harsh, roughness, uncouth*.

Since the battle of Hastings (1066), French and Latin together with their social habits and culture have been a referent for refinement in English society. From the twelfth to the fourteenth century, both languages enjoyed great prestige in England and were considered a sign of superiority and power. In the fifteenth century there was an important shift towards the English language. Chaucer, Gower, and Lydgate all wrote in English and, in 1392, Parliament started to use English in their meetings. However, French and Latin cultures continued to be a symbol of refinement and good manners in England until the eighteenth century.

## 4.3. Third hypothesis

'I will try to verify that the semantic field of manners is not a chaotic net of terms, but rather an organised system that allows a clear categorisation of words'. In the categorisation schema proposed for the semantic field of manners in the eighteenth century, I have established two prototypical elements or basic categories that refer to the concept 'manners' (Figure 1). The first basic category is *breeding*, which expresses 'a dynamic process'. This category transmitted the idea of movement, i.e. a process in progress that leads to a final result or product, which consolidates conduct. The following quote is an example where *breeding* alludes to the acquisition of manners and self-deportment:

1711. Steele. *The Spectator*. No. 66. They tell me you are a Person who have seen the World, and are a Judge of fine Breeding; which makes me ambitious of some Instructions from you for her Improvements.

My second basic category is the term *behaviour*, which refers to a consolidated conduct. Therefore, under the term *behaviour* I have grouped different terms referring to 'finished or established conduct'. The category of *behaviour* differs from that of *breeding* in that the former does not imply the idea of movement that breeding does.

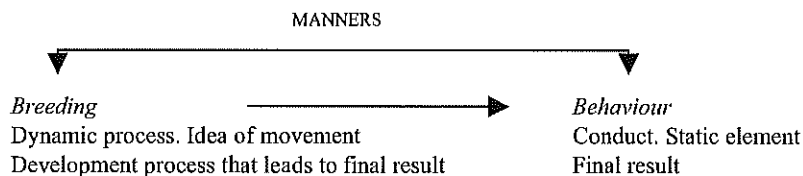


Figure 1. The two basic categories for the semantic field of manners.

In its origin, the term *breeding*<sup>16</sup> referred to the breeding of a child in the womb. However, in the sixteenth century it acquired a new

16 The term *breeding* was used in Old English as a verb, and in the fourteenth century as a noun. By the end of the sixteenth century *breed* was also used as a nominal form. The main idea expressed by this word is that of 'a process in

meaning alluding to the development of any kind of physical or mental capacity. Finally, in the seventeenth century its meaning was generalised and it acquired a connotation related to the semantic field of manners: 'the acquisition of any capacity including that of behaving correctly and having manners'. The following organisation (Figure 2) was given to the lexical terms grouped under the category *breeding* according to their meaning:

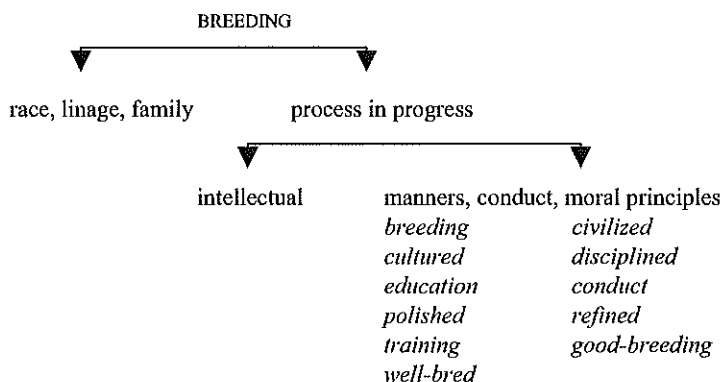


Figure 2. Idea of process in progress that consolidates in a final result (conduct).

The term *breeding* had two main connotations, the first being race, family lineage<sup>17</sup> and the second an idea of process. Within the idea of process one can distinguish between two different kinds of development: intellectual progress and the development of manners, behaviour and morals.

The terms classified under *breeding* transmit the idea of 'a process that leads to a final behaviour that might have specific

---

progress'. Originally, the term was applied to 'pregnant women', and by 1599 there were different figurative uses of the word, which started to be used for animals and nations. At the end of the sixteenth century *breeding* alluded to a 'development of physical and mental characteristics of a person', especially if he or she was young, as well as 'the formation of manners and religious beliefs', meaning that still exists today.

17 Due to the fact that this idea goes beyond the scope of our study, I will not deal with these meanings of the word.

characteristics' and, therefore, could be classified according to the kind of qualities they make reference to. However, the meaning of process is considered more relevant than the final qualities and consolidation of conduct they express. In the year 1665 I find the expression *good-breeding* referring to 'a person who has received a good education in social behaviour and manners'. By the end of the sixteenth century, the term *well-bred* appeared to refer to 'a person born and grown in a well considered family and who has acquired manners'. With this sense it is used in the following quote:

1711. Steele. *The Spectator*. No. 66. They tell me you are a Person who have seen the World, and are a Judge of fine Breeding; which makes me ambitious of some Instructions from you for her Improvements.

As explained before, the term *behaviour* implied a consolidated conduct. I chose the term *behaviour* as a label for the second group of terms for two reasons: firstly, it is a Germanic term – like *breeding* – and, secondly, because I considered this word to be the most representative and frequently used within this group of lexical items. Under the heading *behaviour*, I have grouped all the terms which refer to a consolidated conduct, such as *conduct*<sup>18</sup> (1673), *carriage*, *bearing* (sixteenth century), *demeanour*, *comportment*, *habit*, *deportment*, *airs* (seventeenth century) and *fashion*<sup>19</sup> (fifteenth century). In the following diagram (Figure 3) I show the structure of the category *behaviour*.

---

18 By 1673 *conduct* had the meaning of 'system of rules'.

19 This term comes from the French word *façon* and was introduced in the thirteenth century. During the fifteenth century this word was understood as 'a way of doing an activity'. In 1721 its meaning became specific for clothes.

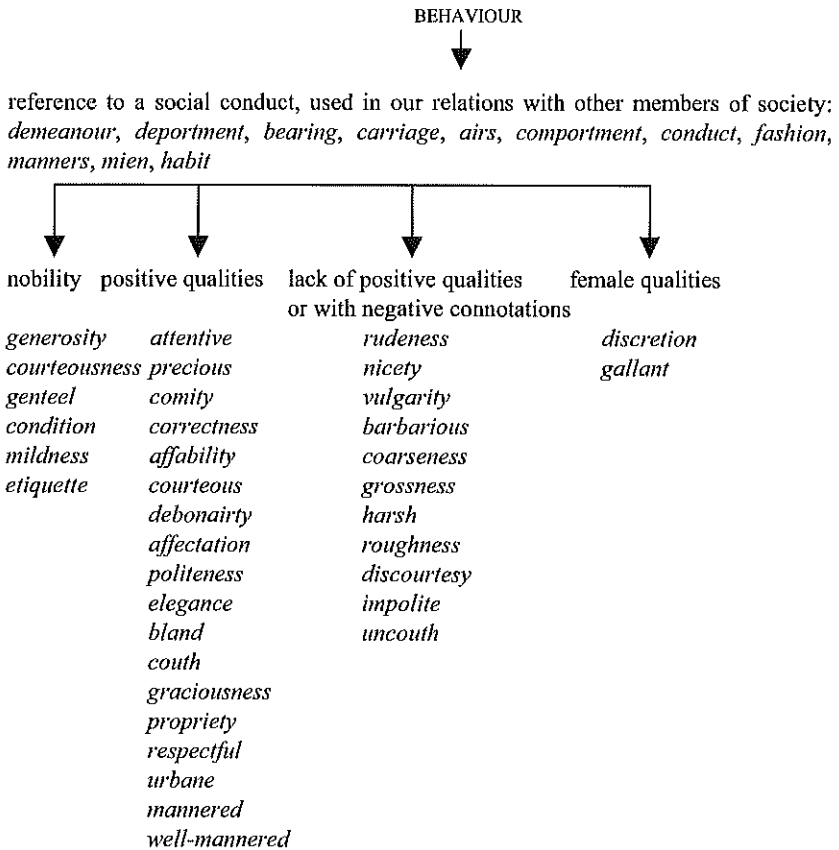


Figure 3. The category behaviour: Reference to a final result (consolidated conduct).

As subcategories of the concept of *behaviour*, I have grouped and classified all terms according to the type of conducts they allude to: those with a reference to nobility, those with reference to positive qualities, those with reference to negative qualities or with a lack of good qualities and, finally, those which refer specifically to females.

However, these categories do not have clear-cut boundaries and overlap with each other. For example the word *conduct* implies two meanings. The first meaning alludes to *manners* and comes from the idea of 'guiding' or 'leadership' that the term expressed in the

thirteenth century. In 1673 the meaning adopted the idea of 'guiding yourself according to social and moral principles'. By the seventeenth century we perceive the idea of 'a process guided by certain principles and morals in order to consolidate a specific behaviour'. The second meaning for the term *conduct* also refers to manners, more precisely, to a 'consolidated behaviour', highlighting the final process.<sup>20</sup>

In conclusion, I corroborate the third hypothesis established and state that the semantic field of manners in the LModE period had a coherent structure. These structures were composed of two main categories and, in turn, these categories composed of subcategories. However, the two basic categories established in my research do not have clear-cut boundaries as they overlap.

## 5. Conclusion

The term *manners* used in the period of LModE has a clear structure that enables us to understand its meaning according to certain criteria and connotations. The definitions of *manners* which I have found for the LModE period do not reflect the two basic categories or ideas of *breeding* and *behaviour* discovered in this analysis.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, the term *manners*, for this specific period, needs to be defined in a more accurate and precise way. To that end, I have attempted my own definition, in which I include all the essential connotations mentioned in the article for the meaning of *manners* in the eighteenth century:

- 
- 20 The same happens with the term *gallant*, which in the eighteenth century referred to both 'an attitude of women' and, at the same time, it was applied to 'people with manners characteristic of high social class'.
- 21 Addison defines the term *manners* in 1711 in the following way: "By Manners I do not mean Morals but Behaviour and Good-breeding, as they show themselves in the Town and in the Country [...] At present therefore an unconstrained Carriage, and a certain Openness of Behaviour are at the height of Good-breeding" (*The Spectator*. No. 119).

Term used to refer to the behaviour or conduct used in interpersonal and social relations. This behaviour implies an artificial development guided and controlled by society, moral principles and finally by the person's own criteria in order to consolidate a social behaviour. This social behaviour categorises people according to what society, through customs and moral principles, considers the standard for positive or negative behaviour.

## References

- Baugh, Albert / Cable, Thomas <sup>4</sup>1994. *A History of the English Language*. London: Routledge.
- Briggs, Assa 1999. *A Social History of England*. London: Penguin.
- Cuenca, María / Hilferty, Joseph 1999. *Introducción a la lingüística cognitiva*. Barcelona: Ariel.
- Lakoff, George 1986. Cognitive Semantics. *Versus* 44, 119-154.
- Mackie, Erin 1998. *The Commerce of Everyday Life. Selections from the Tatler and the Spectator*. Boston: Macmillan.
- OED<sup>2</sup> = Simpson, John Andrew / Weiner, Edmund S.C. 1989. *The Oxford English Dictionary*. 20 vols. 2nd ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press. Also 1992 CR-ROM version.
- Taylor, John R. <sup>2</sup>1989. *Linguistic Categorization: Prototypes in Linguistic Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Tejada, Paloma 1999. *El cambio lingüístico. Claves para interpretar la lengua inglesa*. Madrid: Alianza.
- Woodward, Josiah 1998. An Account to the Societies for Reformation of Manners in England and Ireland. In Mackie, Erin (ed.) *The Commerce of Everyday Life. Selections from the Tattler and the Spectator*. Boston: Macmillan Press, 110-119.