

# The integration process of the evaluation classeme in a dictionary

Ángel Miguel Felices Lago

## 1. Introduction

Over the years, in Europe as well as in America, philosophers and psychologists have been seriously concerned about the questions of value and axiology. They proposed classifications of values for various purposes (Some examples will be offered in chapter two). However, for linguistics (especially lexical semantics), a systematic and consistent introduction of the axiological parameter in natural languages is missing (cf. Krzeszowski, 1985). There have been contributions, but scarce and based on extralinguistic principles, e.g. onomasiological dictionaries (Roget, 1852; McArthur, 1981; for the English language). The most coherent classification, as far as we know, has been provided by S. Stati (1979): he provided the most complete intuitive classification of the axiological component in linguistics (using French adjectives), but he lacks an intensive inductive study of the vocabulary, according to its hierarchical arrangement, and the application of a model for syntactic and pragmatic analysis.

The aim of this paper is to provide a coherent and systematic classification of the axiological parameter by means of adjectival affected terms in the English language, in order to improve the description of lexical units in onomasiological, or even semasiological dictionaries, although it is taken for granted that such parameter is culturally dependent and need not be universal.

For a better understanding of how this classification will be finally made, we have to take several steps and introduce a relatively unexplored area of linguistics: classematics. This new branch, although basically sketched by E. Coseriu (1967), W. Busse (1974), García Hernández (1976), and especially Martin Mingorance (1987), have overtly brought to attention the importance of this area for a better understanding of the functioning of language; mostly the interaction between the pragmatic, the semantic, the syntactic, and the lexical component. This theory has been originally inspired by the term *classeme*, which in Coseriu's lexematics terminology could be defined as a specific kind of seme which is able to function also outside of lexical fields or throughout a series of lexical fields (Coseriu, 1967).

Our paper is a practical study of one of the most basic *classemes* affecting a large amount of the open lexical classes: evaluation. Coseriu (1968, Spanish ed. 1977: 176), again, intuited this as follows: «... For adjectives there may be classes like «positive», «negative», which justify copulative combinations as It. «bello e buono», «grande e grosso», «piccolo e brutto», etc., (adjectives which belong, in each case, to the same class), or adversative combinations as Sp. «pobre pero honrado», It. «povero ma onesto» (adjectives which belong to different classes)...». Later, T. P. Krzeszowski (1985) criticized the excessive importance attributed historically to the «true-false» polar axis to the detriment of the «good-bad» one, which, in his opinion, is the most important parameter in linguistics. He arrived at that conclusion when, analysing a large number of sentences and words, he found out that every lexical item is assessable on the g-b scale. Some lexical items are situated close to the «good» pole, e.g.

*love, care, grow, delight*, some are situated close to the «bad» pole, e.g. *hate, abhor, die, complain*, while others are situated at various distances from the two poles, with a considerable number of lexical items displaying no ostensible charge in plus or in minus, e.g. *appear, declare, compare*, etc.

Finally, Prof. Martin Mingorance (1987:380-81), after distinguishing different kinds of classemes according to the pragmatic, semantic, syntactic, syntactic-semantic components, concluded: «the number and type of pragmatic classemes will depend on further research, but stylistic labels (diatopic, diaphasic, diastratic features) and such elements as «norm», «focus», «speaker's evaluation», «aesthetic norm», etc. constitute a kind of features which will condition the choice of specific lexemes according to the type of communicative situation».

## **2. Steps to provide a coherent and systematic classification of the evaluation classeme**

In the belief that the existence of the axiological classeme has been sufficiently proved, we will next expound the steps we have taken to provide a coherent and systematic classification of this classeme by means of the exhaustive analysis of adjectival affected terms, taking into account their polar, gradual, qualitative and hierarchical characteristics:

**First Step:** Consultation of non-linguistic axiological classifications and the relevant set lists of English language onomasiological dictionaries to check the historical background and distribution of this parameter (Intuitive-deductive operation).

In this section, to be brief, we have excluded psychologists or lexicographers classifications, including only the extralinguistic axiological classifications made by some philosophers for the sake of getting a clear picture of how the problem was tackled in the past.

Firstly, let's have a look at some philosophers from different tendencies:

A. *NEOKANTIAN SCHOOL*: Hugo Münsterberg (1908: 80)

### **PURE VALUES**

**LOGICAL VALUES:** A. VALUES OF EXISTENCE (Things, Characters, Assessments). B. VALUES OF CONNECTION (Nature, History, Reason).

**AESTHETIC VALUES:** A. VALUES OF UNITY (Harmony, Love, Happiness). B. VALUES OF BEAUTY (Plastic arts, Poetry, Music).

**ETHICAL VALUES:** A. VALUES OF EVOLUTION (Growth, Progress, Self-growth). B. VALUES OF QUALIFIED PRODUCTION (Economy, Law, Ethics).

**METAPHYSICAL VALUES:** A. DIVINE VALUES (Creation, Revelation, Redemption, Salvation). B. FUNDAMENTAL VALUES (Universe, Mankind, Supra-ego).

**VALUES OF LIFE** (External world, Others world, Internal world).

**VALUES OF CULTURE** (External world, Others world, Internal world).

Inspired by Fichte, he tries to derive all reality and all value from an original primary action. In his opinion, we establish all values. Even from a philosophical point

of view, he mixes values, assessments, goods, and beings, requiring a more strict methodological accuracy.

## B. *PHENOMENOLOGICAL AXIOLOGY*: Max Scheler (1913-1916)

He introduced the idea of hierarchy, intuitively ordered, *within* the classification of values. His main endeavour was to justify that hierarchy of values, which depended on the degree of deep, radical long-lasting human satisfaction produced.

First step (lowest): **Pleasantness/Unpleasantness**.

Second step: **Vital values** (e.g. physical strength, death, old age).

Third step: **Spiritual values**: a. Aesthetic (Ugly, Beautiful, Sublime, Ridiculous). b. Just/Unjust. c. Pure knowledge of truth (Philosophy, better than natural sciences).

Fourth step (highest): **Divine versus Profane** (happiness, despair). They possess an absolute value.

This hierarchical order is a moral imperative for Scheler. The Ethical Value is not included because this is the value that builds up the hierarchy chosen.

In Spain, influenced by Max Scheler, Ortega y Gasset (1923) disseminates the German thinker's classification, but making some additions and corrections. He comes closer to intuitive extralinguistic classifications and approaches the logical order of onomasiological dictionaries. The polar nature of the oppositions and the importance of axiology for various disciplines have been his outstanding contributions.

## POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE VALUES (cf. Ortega y Gasset 1923, ed. 1947: 334)

1. **USEFUL** (able/unable; cheap/expensive; abundant/scarcie).

2. **VITAL** (healthy/ill; select/vulgar; energetic/idle; strong/weak).

3. **SPIRITUAL**: a. Intellectual (knowledge/mistake; exact/approximate; evident/probable; etc.) b. Moral (good/bad; benevolent/cruel; just/unjust; scrupulous/indolent; loyal/disloyal). c. Aesthetic (beautiful/ugly; graceful/coarse; elegant/inlegant; harmonious/unharmonious).

4. **RELIGIOUS** (holy/profane; divine/diabolic; supreme/derived; miraculous/mechanical).

There are other schools and philosophers who have provided interesting contributions to the theory of value, but they will not be treated here for reasons of time.

**Second Step**: First sight Collection of the lexical units included in the lexical or conceptual fields, dimensions, groups, etc., of onomasiological dictionaries and exclusion of the non-primary or irrelevant lexical units (Intuitive and inductive-deductive operation).

(Sample Subdimension: Experiencing fear; Sample group: Experiencing fear in general).

### EXPERIENCING FEAR.

*Longman Lexicon*: Afraid; Frightened; Scared; Scary; Fearful; Terrified; Alarmed; Panicky; Nervous; Apprehensive; Timid; Shy; Petrified. (F125 adjectives: afraid and apprehensive, p. 262).

*Roget's Thesaurus*: Afraid; Frightened; Funky; Panicky; Overawed; in fear; in

trepidation; in a flap; in a panic; Terror-crazed; Panic-stricken; Dismayed; Flabbergasted; Frozen; Petrified; Stunned; Appalled; Horrified; Aghast; Horror-struck; Awe-struck; Unmanned; Frightened to death; White as a sheet. (854. Fear - Adj., p. 339).

We also looked up other lexicographic works to support our selection.

As a brief sample, in our analysis we shall only include the «core» units and exclude the rest for the following reasons:

— Non-primary lexical units: in fear; in trepidation; in a flap; in a panic; Frozen (with) terror/fear; Terror-crazed; Panic-stricken; Horror-struck; Awe-struck; Unmanned; Frightened to death; White as a sheet.

— Obsolete or unusual: Funky; Unmanned.

— Belonging to other lexical fields or dimensions: Timid; Shy; Stunned; Flabbergasted.

— Belonging to the subdimension «Experiencing fear», but overlapped and combined with other dimensions or groups: Alarmed; Nervous; Apprehensive; Overawed; Dismayed; Appalled; Horrified; Aghast.

— Belonging to the dimension «Causing fear»: Scary.

Units finally selected: Afraid, Scared, Fearful, Frightened, Panicky, Terrified, Petrified.

**Third Step:** Use of alphabetically ordered monolingual semasiological dictionaries of the English language in order to obtain semantic definitions of the affected lexical units, including valencies and other syntactic or pragmatic information, if they can be found (Empirical evidence).

We obtained the definitions of the relevant units included later in the dimension «Experiencing Fear» from the *Collins COBUILD English Language Dictionary* and the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*. Even though not quoted above, valencies and complementation have been basically extracted from diverse sources, such as the *BBI Combinatory Dictionary of English*, the *Van Dale Groot Woordenboek Engels-Nederlands*, J.B. Heaton's *Prepositions and Adverbial Particles*, or T. Herbst's *Untersuchungen zur Valenz englischer Adjektive und ihre Nominalisierungen*.

**Fourth Step:** Exhaustive specification of the semes, classemes, sememes, virtumemes, arguments, satellites, subcategorization, etc., of each affected lexical item, followed by a contrastive analysis of the units belonging to the same lexical field or dimension in order to fix the archilexemes, archisememes, content-differentiating features and hierarchical relations among units. At this stage, dimensions, subdimensions, groups, subgroups, etc., could be roughly defined. The whole process implies both Coseriu's lexematics and S. Dik's functional grammar principles by means of structural lexical analyses (cf. Coseriu, 1977, 1978, and Geckeler, 1971) and «step-wise» lexical decomposition (cf. Dik, 1978a, 1978b), as proposed by Martin Mingorance (cf. Martin Mingorance, 1984). (Analytical-inductive operation).

(Sample Subdimension: Experiencing fear; Sample group: Experiencing fear in general).

**DIMENSION [FEAR]**

**SUBDIMENSION [EXPERIENCING FEAR]**

**GROUP [EXPERIENCING FEAR IN GENERAL]**

**SCALE: NEGATIVE**

## DEFINIENS OF THE DIMENSION:

CAUSE v (x1: <... > (x1)) Ergat. Stimulus  
 (x2: [EXPERIENCE v (x3: <+/- Hum.> (x3))  
 Experiencer (x4: <Phen: Fear> (x4)) Effectuated]  
 (x2)] Ines. State.

## DEFINIENS OF THE SUBDIMENSION AND GROUP:

EXPERIENCE v [(x1: <+/- Hum.> (x1)) Experiencer  
 (x2: + Sta., - Ph. <Fear> (x2)) Phenomenon  
 (x2)] Inesive State.

## ARCHILEXEME OF THE SUBDIMENSION AND GROUP:

**AFRAID (A)** PR2 [ (x1: <+/- Hum.> (x1)) Experiencer  
 (x2: pp (of) <... > (x2)) Pot. influencer.  
 (x2: pp (for) <... > (x2)) Object  
 (x2: TO-Inf. Clause <... > (x2)) Source  
 (x2: THAT-Clause <... > (x2)) Source ]  
 def = EXPERIENCE v [ (x1: <+/- Hum.> (x1)) Exp.  
 (x2: <Fear> (x2)) Phenomenon (x2) ] Ines. State.  
 [ (y1: <Degree n: Medium a> (y2)) Manner (y2: <Reason n: Danger  
 n> (y2)) Manner Cy2: <Reason n: Danger n> Cy2)) Reason ]  
 Pos.: Predicative. Freq.: 4.

## SCALE: NEGATIVE (-)

## LEXEMES:

**FEARFUL 2 (A)** PR2 [ (x1: <+/- Hum.> (x1)) Experiencer  
 (x2: pp (of) <... > (x2)) Pot. influencer.  
 (x2: THAT-Clause <... > (x2)) Source ]  
 def = AFRAID (A) ...  
 [ (y1: <Degree n: Medium a> (y2)) Manner ]  
 [ FORMAL ] Stratic Register.  
 Pos.: Pred./Attributive. Freq.: 2.

**FRIGHTENED (A)** PR2 [ (x1: <+/- Hum.> (x1)) Experiencer  
 (x2: pp (of) <... > (x2)) Pot. influencer.  
 (x2: pp (at) <... > (x2)) Causer  
 (x2: TO-Inf. Clause <... > (x2)) Source  
 (x2: THAT-Clause <... > (x2)) Source ]  
 def = AFRAID (A) ...  
 [ (y1: <Degree n: Medium a> (y2)) Manner ]  
 Pos.: Pred./Attrib. Freq.: 3.

**SCARED (A)** PR2 [ (x1: <+/- Hum.> (x1)) Experiencer  
 (x2: pp (of) <... > (x2)) Pot. influencer.  
 (x2: pp (at) <... > (x2)) Causer  
 (x2: TO-Inf. Clause <... > (x2)) Source  
 (x2: THAT-Clause <... > (x2)) Source ]  
 def = AFRAID (A) ...  
 [ (y1: <Degree n: Medium a> (y2)) Manner ]  
 Pos.: Usu. Pred. Freq.: 3.

**PANICKY (A)** PR2 [ (x1: <+/- Hum.> (x1)) Experiencer  
 (x2: pp (over) <... > (x2)) Pot. influencer.]  
 def = AFRAID (A) ...

[ (y1: <Degree n: High a> (y2)) Manner  
 (y2: <suddenly a> (y2)) Manner ]  
 [ INFORMAL ] Stratic Register.  
 Pos.: Pred./Attrib. Freq.: 1.

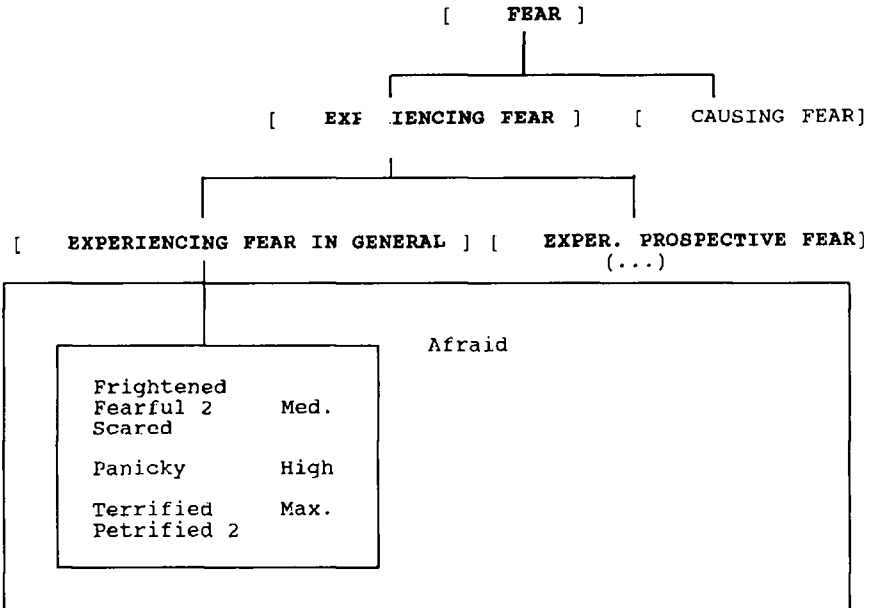
SCALE: NEGATIVE (- -)

LEXEMES:

**TERRIFIED (A)** PR2 [ (x1: <+/- Hum.> (x1)) Experiencer  
 (x2: pp (of) < ... > (x2)) Pot. influencer  
 (x2: pp (at) < ... > (x2)) Causer  
 (x2: pp (by) < ... > (x2)) Pot. Agent  
 (x2: TO-Inf. Clause < ... > (x2)) Source  
 (x2: THAT-Clause < ... > (x2)) Source ]  
 def = AFRAID (A) ...  
 [ (y1: <Degree n: Maximum a> (y2)) Manner ]  
 Pos.: Pred./Attrib. Freq.: 2.

**PETRIFIED 2 (A)** PR2 [ (x1: <+/- Hum.> (x1)) Experiencer  
 (x2: pp (with) + Sta, -Ph <Terror> (x2))  
 Causer  
 (x2: pp (at) < ... > (x2)) Causer  
 (x2: pp (by) + Sta, -Ph <Terror> (x2))  
 Pot. Agent ]  
 def = AFRAID (A) ...  
 [ (y1: <Degree n: Maximum a> (y2)) Manner  
 (y2: <paralysis> (y2)) Result ]  
 Pos.: Predicative. Freq.: 2.

FIGURE:



**Fifth Step:** Having specified the units both quantitatively and qualitatively, we would propose the inclusion of an axiological formula —as will be explained below— within the lexicographical definition of each lexical item. This would represent the explicit recovery of the pragmatic classeme of inherent evaluation that we had always intuited, but did not specify clearly in unit definitions; even though we admit that, in current dictionaries, there are stylistic labels showing attitude such as appreciative, derogatory, euphemistic, humorous, etc.

(The group chosen in this paper will be used as sample).

We have created a new set of terms to describe and dissect the main components of the so called axiological classeme. A profound study of how axiology and lexical units have been investigated in various disciplines, the careful study of the relevant features of the affected units and a considerable amount of critical intuition have furnished us with the necessary instruments to bring about the innovations propounded.

#### COMPONENTS OF THE AXIOLOGICAL CLASSEME:

CONSTANT ARCHIAXIOEMES: (They are always present) Positive (+), Negative (-), Neuter (0), Others (+ +), (- -), (- +), (+ -).

VARIABLE OR CANONICAL ARCHIAXIOEMES (They appear according to the canon affected (Cf. Martin Mingorance, 1985: 334-36, 1987: 381). Further explanations will be provided below.) Good 1 - Bad 1 = Descriptive/Generic evaluation. Good 2 - Bad 2 = General behavioural evaluation. Good 3 - Bad 3 = Ethical behavioural evaluation. Good 4 - Bad 4 = Pragmatic/functional/adequative evaluation. Pleasant 1 - Unpleasant 1 = Hedonic/emotive evaluation. Pleasant 2 - Unpleasant 2 = Aesthetic evaluation, etc.

AXIOEMES OF GRADE: (They only appear if they are relevant.) Maximum - High - Medium - Low.

AXIOEMES OF STYLE: (They only appear if they are relevant.) Phasic or Stratic.

#### CANONS AFFECTED:

HYPERCANONS: *Sociocultural* (It encompasses most of the other canons). *Sensitive* (It exerts a considerable influence on most emotive lexical fields and dimensions).

#### HYPOCANONS:

1. Affecting the lexical fields related to psychophysical phenomena (emotions-feelings-aesthetics): *Bio-sensitive*, *Senso-emotive*, *Aesthetic*, *Bio-aesthetic*.
2. Affecting the attitudinal/behavioural lexical fields: Apart from the *sociocultural* hypercanon, we have some specialised hypocanons, such as *Ethical*, *Social*, *Normal*, *Noetic* (in part), *Adequative* (in part), etc.
3. Affecting the intellectual evaluation lexical field: *Noetic*.
4. Affecting the truth value lexical field: *Veritative*.
5. Affecting the significance lexical field: *Prominent*.
6. Affecting the «practical» lexical fields: *Pragmatic-functional*, *Material*, *Adequative*.

Once the main components of the axiological classeme have been described, we

shall now proceed with the insertion of the axiological formula in each lexical unit of the group selected.

DIMENSION [ FEAR ] C [ **EMOTION** ]  
 SUBDIMENSION [ EXPERIENCING FEAR ]  
 GROUP: [ EXPERIENCING FEAR IN GENERAL ]  
 AFRAID (A) Ev = Negative (-) [ Unpleasant 1 ∈ Senso-emotive + Degree (Medium) ]  
 SCARED (A) Ev = Negative (-) [ Unpleasant 1 ∈ Senso-emotive + Degree (Medium) ]  
 FEARFUL 2 (A) Ev = Negative (-) [ Unpleasant 1 ∈ Senso-emotive + Degree (Medium) ]  
 FRIGHTENED (A) Ev = Negative (-) [ Unpleasant 1 ∈ Senso-emotive + Degree (Medium) ]  
 PANICKY (A) Ev = Negative (-) [ Unpleasant 1 ∈ Senso-emotive + Degree (High) + Stratic Reg.: Informal ]  
 TERRIFIED (A) Ev = Negative (-) [ Unpleasant 1 ∈ Senso-emotive + Degree (Maximum) ]  
 PETRIFIED 2 (A) Ev = Negative (-) [ Unpleasant 1 ∈ Senso-emotive + Degree (Maximum) ]

**Sixth Step:** Proposal to reorganize the traditional classifications of the axiological parameter and the synoptical or ideological sections of the onomasiological dictionaries, once that lexical units and lexical fields have been redefined on an empirical basis by means of inductive analyses instead of general or impressionistic intuitions.

### 3. Concluding remarks:

In the course of the present paper we have endeavoured to convey two basic but crucial ideas: On the one hand, the development of a neglected but essential area of linguistics classematics, by means of the careful analysis of a pragmatic classeme: evaluation... On the other hand, the creation, decomposition, description, and inclusion of an axiological formula within the lexicographical definitions of each lexical unit in onomasiological or semasiological dictionaries, providing valuable cultural and pragmatic information for a better description of lexical items.

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