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The goal of this monograph is a comprehensive analysis of understatements and other forms of non-direct speech (hedges) in modern English. It is based on a multi-level approach, including philosophical, cultural, and socio-psychological arguments. The main part consists of an investigation of the linguistic restrictions for understatements and hedges to be formed by means of the following grammatical categories: negation of predicates, gradation of predicates, modalization of affirmative sentences by means of parenthetical verbs, modal adverbs, modal verbs, and questions.

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