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The archaeology of Emotion Concepts: A Lexicographic Analysis of the Concepts *Shame* and *Vergüenza*

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Cross-cultural research on emotion concepts tends to rely on the one-to-one translation of emotion terms into other languages; however, translation has rarely been an object of study in itself within psychology. Despite increasing recognition of the flaws of one-to-one translations when comparing emotion concepts across cultures (e.g. Barger, Nabi, & Hong, 2010; Mauro, Sato, & Tucker, 1992; Parkinson, Fischer, & Manstead, 2005; Russell, 1991), translations are normally conducted in an unproblematic routine following Brislin (1970) back-translation technique. Although this technique provided more rigor and accuracy at a time when translation procedures were often not explicitly described (Brislin, 1970), the meaning equivalence of back-translated emotion terms cannot readily be assumed, as vast ethnographic evidence (see Russell, 1991) and a number of psychological studies (e.g. Barger et al., 2010; Hurtado de Mendoza, Fernández-Dols, Parrott, & Carrera, 2010) suggest. Barger et al (2010) research on disgust and its equivalent translations in Chinese showed that interviewing natives produced more accurate translations than back-translation techniques.

Researchers from diverse fields have made refinements and adaptations to Brislin's back-translation technique by adding bilingual discussion groups to evaluate translations or assuring translators' cultural competency (e.g. Jones & Boyle, 2011; Jones, Lee, Philips, Zhang, & Jaceldo, 2001). Others have developed alternative techniques to avoid relying on one-to-one translations, such as using semantic primitives, a limited number of universal or quasi-universal concepts to describe and compare more complex emotion concepts (Wierzbicka, 1997), or resourcing to vignettes that describe emotion episodes (e.g. Rodriguez Mosquera, Manstead, & Fischer, 2000). However, those techniques do not often tackle one of the reasons why translations tend to be inaccurate, namely, the prototypical nature of everyday emotion concepts discussed in this paper.

The Everyday Concepts *Shame* and *Vergüenza*

Research suggests that the category *shame* does not fully overlap with the constitutive features of those categories behind many of the usual translations of *shame*. The meanings of some translations are, for example, closer to *embarrassment*, *shyness*, *modesty* or *respect*, as in the terms *vergüenza* in Spain (Hurtado de Mendoza et al., 2010; Iglesias, 1996; Pascual, Etxebarria, & Pérez, 2007), *haji* in Japan (Benedict, 1946; De Rivera, 1989; Lebra, 1983), *malu* in Indonesia (Fessler, 2004;) *xiu* in China (Bedford, 2004; Ho, Fu, & Ng, 2004; Li, Wang, & Fischer, 2004), or *ladjya* in India (Menon & Shweder, 1994; Parish, 1991).

Ignoring such dissimilarity not only compromises the accuracy of translations, but also of the cross-cultural comparisons. Researchers have reported important cultural differences noting that, in individualistic cultures, shame is experienced as connected to self-esteem and morality (Scherer & Wallbott, 1994); it is less publicly shared

(Rodriguez-Mosquera et al., 2000); and it is experienced as more threatening and closer to anger (Kitayama, Markus, & Matsumoto, 1995) than in collectivistic cultures. Such reported differences in the experience of shame might be caused by inadequate translations of the term *shame* into other languages. To differentiate terms and the concepts they express from the experience itself, terms and concepts have been italicized throughout this paper.

Hurtado de Mendoza et al. (2010) analysis of the internal structure of *shame* in the US and that of *vergüenza* in Spain suggests that features such as moral transgression, humiliation, guilt, wrongdoing or regret are rated as most typical features within *shame*, but among the least typical within *vergüenza*. On the contrary, features such as blush, ridicule, shyness or reluctance, are very typical for *vergüenza*, while more peripheral for *shame*. In this case, asking about *shame* and *vergüenza* would mean not asking about the same emotional experience, and the presumable differences between the reports of Spanish-speaking and English-speaking informants would not necessarily mean differences in the experience of shame, but the researcher's failure to evoke such experience by an unqualified use of the term *vergüenza* as *shame* and/or other translation equivalents.

In this context, confirming the problematic correspondence between *shame* and its translation into Spanish becomes an urgent task. To this end, this paper presents a representative even if underexploited source of knowledge about everyday concepts: the lexicographic definitions of the terms in synchronic and diachronic dictionaries.

Lexicographic Analyses in the Study of Emotion Concepts

Lexicography, the art and craft of dictionary making, is a potentially powerful tool for psychologists. Dictionaries are a source of accumulated knowledge about the way in which everyday concepts, as apprehended by users, have been condensed throughout history (Molina 2005, 2008). The senses or readings listed within dictionary definitions include the consensual constituents of an emotion script (such as feelings, antecedents, expressions, action tendencies, etc.) and can therefore be analyzed as the features of an everyday emotion concept. For this reason, throughout this paper, what linguists refer to as 'senses', 'readings' or 'nuances' will be considered features of the categories under inspection. Lexicographic approaches (both synchronic and historical) have not been widely explored by psychologists, since, in spite of a number of exceptions (e.g. Elias, 2000; Demos, 1996; Konstan, 2003; Stearns & Stearns, 1988; Spackman & Parrott, 2001), the general tendency has been to represent everyday emotion concepts as bounded concepts composed of a closed set of features with scarce variations across cultures and/or historical periods (Danziger, 1997; Russell, 1992).

Up until recently, lexicography also tended to present dictionary definitions as a disconnected set of features. However, an emerging *encyclopaedic* approach based on probabilistic theories (Geeraerts, 1997) is nowadays analyzing dictionary definitions with a focus on the degree of salience of features and how they relate to one another. Encyclopaedic approaches highlight the complex relation between words and concepts, since a number of different terms can be associated to the same concept, or there may be concepts not designated by any term. Polysemy, for a long time thought to be an exception, is indeed the norm in language, as terms (as pictured in Figure 1) tend to

encompass several features with different degrees of salience. Features are acquired and related to one another within a chain of family resemblances, where a feature might well be peripheral in one concept while central in another (Murphy, 2004). Lexicographic analyses add a historical perspective and illustrate the crucial role of meaning complexity for the psychological research on emotion concepts, particularly from a cross-cultural viewpoint.

Figure 1 about here

Method

We analyzed English and Spanish synchronic and diachronic dictionaries. Synchronic dictionaries provide an up-to-date representation of everyday concepts, whereas diachronic dictionaries trace terms up to modern (but typically not contemporary) times. Our choice of dictionaries was the result of a careful selection which, in the end, rendered a holistic understanding of the category as it is used in different contexts today, and how it has come to be this way. Ascertaining why it did so remains beyond the scope of this paper, since the lengthy discussion it would entail could write yet another paper. A proposal for delving into the topic can be found in Molina and Romano (2012).

Although more sensitive outcomes might have been obtained by comparing a larger number of dictionaries, our sources are thought to be representative in that each and every one of the selected dictionaries were compiled out from scratch, rather than resourcing to the accretive pitfall of poorer dictionaries, which tend to draw heavily on previous pieces of outstanding work. Obviously, dictionaries (as any token of language) are not innocent: as Blecua (as cited in translation in Molina, 2005, p. 100) puts it, “when writing the articles of a dictionary, an unceasing clash arises, for lexicographers struggle to veil and hide all traces of subjectivism, though certain elements (deictic, evaluative and affective ones) do appear and reveal them to us as men of flesh and blood”. At the same time, “an area which depends a great deal upon the sensitivity and judgment of the individual lexicographer is sense-division – what definers term ‘lumping’ (broad, inclusive defining) and ‘splitting’ (fine sense-discrimination). Decisions on the distinction between full sense and sub-sense, on the role played by context in determining sense-division, and indeed on how far the fineness of sense-division should be taken, are open to dispute” (Silva, 2000, p. 86). This is why lexicographic enquiries are inherently subject to revision. To our mind, however, the concurrent results rendered by our sources seem to prove their validity.

For the category *shame*, our data sources were the *New Oxford Dictionary of English* (Oxford, 1988), *Collins Cobuild Dictionary* (Collins, 1995) and *Webster Dictionary* (Webster, 1986). *Oxford* is a British dictionary of long-lasting prestige; *Collins* pioneered the use of database corpora for focusing on the contexts in which words are used; and *Webster* is a representative dictionary of American English, relevant for our purposes, as most research on *shame* has been conducted in the US.

For *vergüenza*, we selected the *Diccionario de la Real Academia Española* (DRAE, 2001), the *Diccionario de Uso del Español* by María Moliner (DUE, 1988) and

the *Diccionario del Español Actual* by Manuel Seco (*DEA*, 1999). The selection of Spanish dictionaries was based on the criteria of representativeness and comparability with the English sources. *DRAE*, as *Oxford*, is a general dictionary that concentrates on the lexicon of common and learned registers. *DUE* shares with *Collins* a focus on the actual use of terms in context, while *DEA* (as *Collins*) is regarded as the first synchronic dictionary of the Spanish lexicon through contemporary written documents.

In addition, we completed the synchronic descriptions with term-correspondences taken from synonym and antonym dictionaries, the *Diccionario General de Sinónimos y Antónimos de la Lengua Española* (Blecua, 1999) for *vergüenza* and *Chambers Concise Dictionary and Thesaurus* (Chambers, 2001) for *shame*. For an enquiry aimed at knowing the ultimate source for the present day term, we resourced to the *Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology* (1966/1996) for *shame*, and to Ernout and Meillet (1979) and Corominas (1976) for *vergüenza*. For analyzing the diachronic evolution of both concepts over time, regardless of their etymological origin, we selected the *Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*, 1933/1994) and Martín Alonso's *Enciclopedia del idioma* (1982) as representative sources.

Procedure

The inclusion of three synchronic dictionaries per language allowed us to consider the frequency of a constitutive feature of *shame* and *vergüenza* as a token of the typicality of such feature within the readings included by synchronic dictionaries. Two bilingual coders analyzed the dictionaries' features. This procedure has been used in previous studies of emotional concepts (e.g. Fehr, 1988; Hurtado de Mendoza et al., 2010) and it aims at extracting all the lexical units corresponding to features of *shame* and *vergüenza*. Features in different dictionaries were tallied as the same feature if they were grammatical variations of the same sentence or sentences with a similar meaning, for example, feeling shame for "doing something embarrassing" and "doing something foolish". Given that the coders' task required minimal interpretation, there were a negligible number of discrepancies. In those sentences on which the two coders did not agree, consensus was reached by discussion. Additionally, since most dictionaries barely present a list of disconnected features, we decided to join those that we regarded as semantically related. For instance, we grouped features that even if listed separately were related to sexuality and decorum (e.g. "modesty", "genitals", "women's shawls"). Two coders discussed the groupings until consensus was achieved.

For classifying and representing the data we uploaded the features of *shame* and *vergüenza* and their corresponding frequencies into NodeXL (Smith et al., 2010), an Excel application that performs network analyses and visual representation of networks. Social network analysis relies on graph theory and it aims at representing the "links" between two or more elements, known as "nodes". Nodes can be any type of elements, such as people, organizations (Hansen, Shneiderman, & Smith, 2010), or in this case, the features of an emotion concept. In Figures 2 and 3, nodes represent the features associated in dictionaries to *shame* and *vergüenza*, while links connect semantically related features. The size of a node is determined by the frequency of the features: the bigger the node, the more frequent the feature. Synonyms and antonyms, and the resulting comparison between *shame* and *vergüenza*, were also represented using the NodeXL program (Smith et al., 2010). Synonyms are marked with "S" and antonyms with "A" in their corresponding links; those which are similar in *shame* and *vergüenza*

are linked to both, and terms with positive connotations are marked with “+” (see Figure 4).

The diachronic analysis focused on the evolution of the archaic forms of *shame* and *vergüenza* and the gradual appearance and disappearance of some of their constitutive features at different historical periods. The *OED* traces the evolution of *shame* from the year 700 to the 19th century, while *Martín Alonso* traces *vergüenza* from the year 1100 to the 20th century.

Results

Figures 2, 3 and 4 summarize the everyday concepts *shame* and *vergüenza* as presented by contemporary English and Spanish dictionaries, whereas Tables 1 and 2 show the diachronic rise and fall of conceptual features in both categories.

Synchronic Description of the Everyday Concepts Shame and Vergüenza

The synchronic description of *shame* and *vergüenza* presents similarities, but also important differences, not only in the features associated to the terms, but also in the frequency with which they are mentioned in either English or Spanish dictionaries.

Feeling and its causes. *Shame* is described as distress by the three dictionaries: an “uncomfortable feeling” (*Collins*), a “painful feeling” (*Oxford*, *Webster*), a “feeling of distress” (*Oxford*). The causes attributed to the feelings of *shame* are wrongdoing (“wrongdoing” (*Collins*, *Oxford*), the “consciousness of guilt” (*Webster*)), inadequacy (“doing something embarrassing” (*Collins*), the “consciousness of foolish behavior” (*Oxford*), the “consciousness of shortcoming” (*Webster*)), and indignity (“feeling of humiliation” (*Oxford*), “loss of respect” (*Oxford*, *Collins*), “dishonor” (*Oxford*), “consciousness of impropriety” (*Webster*)).

In turn, only one Spanish dictionary describes *vergüenza* as a “distressing feeling” (*DRAE*), whereas the three of them define *vergüenza* as indignity (a “feeling of indignity” (*DUE* and *DEA*) or a “feeling of humiliation in front of others” (*DEA*), “doing something humiliating or dishonoring” (*DRAE*), or “being insulted or humiliated” (*DUE*)). Error or incorrectness, rather than wrongdoing, is mentioned as a cause of *vergüenza* in two Spanish dictionaries (“making a mistake” (*DRAE* and *DUE*)). The three Spanish dictionaries relate *vergüenza* to the behavior of other people, quoting the expression *vergüenza ajena* “*vergüenza* one feels for the behavior of others”.

Even those features which are similarly presented for *shame* and *vergüenza* display differences when considering the frequency with which they are mentioned. As such, the “behavior of others” is mentioned as an antecedent of *shame* and *vergüenza*, but while it is mentioned in the three Spanish sources, it is only cited in one English dictionary (*Collins*). The presence of “guilt” and the “consciousness of wrongdoing” as antecedents are more relevant in *shame*: *Collins* focuses on behavior, stating that *shame* arises when you do something wrong, while *Oxford* and *Webster* mention the “consciousness of wrongdoing” and the “consciousness of guilt” with a more internal, stronger connotation. Two of the three Spanish dictionaries (*DRAE* and *DUE*) include a similar feature, but they frame it in terms of behavior, using a term that does not necessarily have a strong moral connotation (*cometer una falta* ‘to make a mistake’), whereas *guilt* as such (*culpa* in Spanish) does not appear in any of the definitions of *vergüenza*.

Shaming. Both *shame* and *vergüenza* describe the act of *shaming* (*avergonzar* in Spanish) as publicly exposing someone to make others lose respect and bring disgrace and dishonor for the person being ashamed, or for others close to him or her. Both are linked to similar expressions, such as *bringing shame* or “*sacar a la vergüenza*”. The feature “disgrace” is mentioned in the three English dictionaries and in the three Spanish ones. However, Spanish dictionaries relate *vergüenza* to an institutionalized punishment, which is not the case in English. Likewise, all the English dictionaries mention two other ways of *shaming others* not clearly present in Spanish: a scenario in which someone tries to make someone else feel guilty (as in *shame on you*) and another one in which somebody else proves better, which generates a feeling of inferiority (as in *putting to shame*). In addition, *Oxford* mentions “pity” as an expression of condolence for an unfortunate event.

Honor and dignity. The estimation of self-dignity does not clearly appear in *shame*, whereas it is mentioned in the three Spanish dictionaries. This feature entails the consideration of *vergüenza* as something positive, relevant for preserving one’s dignity and behaving according to socially approved standards. It appears as *pundonor* ‘estimation of one’s honor’, as well as in the expression *hombre de vergüenza* ‘man of shame’ (DRAE), related to the high estimation of one’s own dignity (*DUE* and *DEA*). The Spanish concept *vergüenza* includes several features related to sexuality and decorum: *DUE* mentions “modesty” and “decency”, while the three Spanish dictionaries mention *las vergüenzas* to refer to the external genital organs, and *DRAE* includes feminine shawls within the definition.

Shyness. Likewise, *shyness* explicitly appears within the concept *vergüenza*, making reference to an “uncomfortable feeling caused by fear of being involved in a ridiculous situation” (*DEA*), *DRAE* presents it as “shrinking to perform a task”, and *DUE* as “the shrinkage that inhibits someone in the presence of others”, explicitly mentioning the example of a young boy in front of older people. Although shyness does not explicitly appear in *shame*, a close feature might be embarrassing or foolish behavior as the cause of *shame*.

Figure 2 about here

Figure 3 about here

Comparison Between Shame and Vergüenza Based on Synonyms and Antonyms

Synonyms and antonyms provide complementary evidence to complete the findings from synchronic dictionaries. Most of the similarities and differences between *shame* and *vergüenza* were corroborated in the synonymous and antonymous terms that both terms get in relation to (as depicted in Figure 4). A number of synonyms are very similar in both languages, such as *embarrassment*, *dishonor* or *disgrace*, but terms such as *guilt*, *remorse*, *mortification*, or *degradation* are only associated to *shame* (Chambers, 2001), whereas *shyness*, *blushing*, *decency*, *modesty*, *decorum* or the *genital organs* are only associated to *vergüenza* (Blecula, 1999). Antonyms highlight the different connotations of *shame* and *vergüenza*. All the antonyms related to *shame* (*honor*, *credit*

and *pride*) denote positive qualities, whereas the situation is slightly different in Spanish, where both positive (*honor*) and negative features (*descaro* ‘impudence’ and *desvergüenza* ‘shamelessness’) find room. This suggests that *shame* mainly has a negative connotation, since all the synonyms are distinctly negative and all the antonyms positive, whereas *vergüenza* is more ambivalent, and hence related to both positive and negative synonyms and antonyms.

Figure 4 about here

All in all, the synchronic analysis displays a number of similarities and important differences in the semantic profiles of both categories. While both English and Spanish dictionaries describe *shame* and *vergüenza* as a feeling of distress pointing to indignity as one of the causes, English dictionaries associated *shame* with features with a stronger internal and moral connotation (“consciousness of wrongdoing”, “guilt”), while *vergüenza* presents more attenuated features (“make a mistake”). Even similar features such as “shaming” display important differences, as *vergüenza* is only linked to public disgrace whereas *shame* includes the act of shaming by outdoing or making someone feel guilty. At the same time, there are features in *vergüenza* (“shyness”, “honor and dignity”), which do not appear in the description of *shame*, as well as features in *shame* (“guilt”, “shortcoming”) not present in *vergüenza*. These similarities and differences were corroborated by the comparison of synonyms and antonyms.

Description of the Categories Shame and Vergüenza Throughout History

What is the reason underlying the contemporary divergence between *shame* and *vergüenza*? Etymological dictionaries, in suggesting different semantic domains as the origin of the terms, are of help at this point. The present-day English term *shame* comes from Old English *sc(e)amu*, in turn from Gothic *skama* ‘to be ashamed’ (a term related to Old English *scand* ‘infamous man or woman’, from *skanda* ‘disgrace’ – also from the Teutonic root *skam*). Some authors also suggest that the pre-Teutonic root *skem*, a variant of *kem* ‘to cover’, is related to the action of covering oneself (*OED*). The present-day Spanish term *vergüenza*, in contrast, comes from Latin *verecundia*, in turn from *veror* ‘feeling a religious or respectful fear for someone’. By means of derivation, the term *uerer* renders *uerecundus* ‘respectful, reserved or venerable’ and *uerecundia* ‘respect, modesty or decency’, which suggests that the main feature in *verecundia* is ‘feeling respect towards someone’. *Vergoina* is first documented in 10th-century monastic environments and later on phonologically modified into *vergüenza* (Corominas, 1976; Ernout & Millet, 1979).

In addition to different etymological origins, the concepts *shame* and *vergüenza* present different evolutions. In the case of English, the *OED* informs of the presence of three main features in *shame* already attested in Old English times. The first feature emphasizes a loss of dignity: “a painful emotion caused by doing something dishonorable, ridiculous or indecorous or by being in a situation offensive for someone’s modesty or decency”. This feature, originated in the 8th century, is attested until the 19th century, although a number of current uses suggest it might be still alive. The second feature, also attested as early as the 8th century, refers to “dishonor and disgrace” in relation to *shame*. This feature has also remained within the category to our day (one of

the ways of shaming), and has diachronically expanded to refer not only to “disgrace” but also to the cause of it or to the person that brings it along. The “genital organs”, a feature dating from the 8th century but lost in the 19th century, stands out as the third highly significant feature. Besides these, a number of other features emerge: “violation of a woman’s honor or loss of chastity”, which appears in the 13th century; “modesty”, which emerges a century afterwards; and “guilty feeling”, which does in the 17th century. These three features are attested until at least the 19th century, but only “guilt” has a clear reflection in the synchronic description of *shame* displayed by contemporary dictionaries. The diachronic rise and disappearance of features within the category in English is depicted in Table 1.

Table 1 about here

Within the category *vergüenza*, one of the most ancient features refers to a painful feeling triggered by “dishonoring or a humiliating action committed by the self or others” which leads to blushing. Already attested in the 12th century, this feature (arguably linked to the notion of indignity) remains in the language until the present day. The feature “disgrace” also dates from the 12th century, and although dictionary data suggest it disappeared at the end of the 14th century, it occurs within the synchronic definition (*DRAE*) of the term, which suggests a merger with the feature “indecorous action” that accounts for the continued presence of this feature over time. The feature “respect or reverence” is alive from the 13th to the 16th century, and it is related to “respect”, as described in the origin of the term *vergüenza* above. The feature “estimation of own’s honour” is incorporated in the 14th century, and it remains in the language to our day. The feature “external genital organs” was incorporated into the category in the 15th century and has also reached our time. Two features originated in the 16th century, “shyness” and “improper action”, reach contemporary times as well, the latter nowadays emphasizing the importance of reputation and public disgrace. Finally, *vergüenza* as an “institutionalized punishment” appears in the 18th century and still remains in the language. Other features, however, have been dropped, such as the reading “frame of the doors”, originated in the 15th century and nowadays marked as obsolescent by *DRAE*. The term *vergüenza* was used to refer to the frame of the doors that separated public rooms from private rooms at a house (Becerra, personal communication), so it seems a metaphoric displacement symbolizing the division between public and private life and the fear of being subjected to public scrutiny. The diachronic rise and fall of features within the category in Spanish is depicted in Table 2.

Table 2 about here

Summing up, the etymological origin of the concepts *vergüenza* and *shame* is different, since the English term comes from the semantic field of “dishonor” and “disgrace”, whereas the Spanish one derives from the semantic field of “respect” (the feature “respect” itself was dropped from *vergüenza* in the 16th century, but it can be traced in ancient sayings, such as *catarse vergüenza*, meaning ‘respecting someone’:

DRAE). In addition, a diachronic analysis suggests that, while both *shame* and *vergüenza* have been associated to feelings of indignity throughout the centuries, a number of historical developments distance both terms. Some of the features only present in the contemporary description of *vergüenza*, such as “modesty” and “privy members”, were in fact historically related to the category *shame*, but they were lost over time, or their relevance within the category decreased. Likewise, features only related to *vergüenza* (such as “shyness”, “respect” and “honor and dignity”) do not clearly appear either in the synchronic or in the diachronic lexicographic representation of *shame*. The feature “guilt”, significantly linked to *shame*, cannot be clearly traced in *vergüenza*.

Discussion

Most research treats *shame* and its “translation equivalents” as if representing the same or readily comparable concepts across cultures. However, recent psychological and anthropological literature highlights the inconsistencies between the translations of *shame* into other languages and warns of the danger of one-to-one translations. The lexicographic analysis presented so far supports such warning. An overall comparison between an empirical analysis of the internal structure of *shame* and *vergüenza* in US and Spanish students (Hurtado de Mendoza et al., 2010) and the present lexicographic analysis suggests significant similarities and a number of discrepancies.

With respect to the similarities with Hurtado de Mendoza et al.’s findings (2010), only American university students ranked features such as “moral transgression”, “guilt” and “regret” as most typical, as well as features related to negative self-concept (such as “self-rejection”, “inferiority” and “incongruence”). On the other hand, features related to shyness were considered typical of *vergüenza* but very peripheral within *shame*. These findings strongly resonate with the lexicographic findings described above, in which *shame* was mostly related to moral wrongdoing and lost respect, whereas *vergüenza* was closer to self-presentation failures.

With regard to the dissimilarities between Hurtado de Mendoza et al.’s findings and our lexicographic analysis, features with a larger degree of overlap between *shame* and *vergüenza* in lexicographic descriptions (“dishonor”, “humiliation”, “disgrace”) were only rated as very typical in *shame* – not in *vergüenza*. Likewise, the positive connotations of “honor and dignity” and “modesty” that dictionaries attach to *vergüenza* were not very salient for university students – even less so for the Spanish participants. These divergences are probably an additional clue about the dynamic nature of concepts reflected in our diachronic analysis through dictionaries. For example, young students in postindustrial societies have been socialized in tolerant social environments that promote self-expression (Inglehart, 1997) or even narcissist self-admiration (Twenge, Konrath, Foster, Campbell, & Bushman, 2008), a symbolic context certainly distant of concepts such as honor or modesty.

The lexicographic analysis of “translation equivalents” suggests that emotion concepts are probabilistic, flexible and mutable; as they acquire and lose features, and the relative salience of features change over time. Throughout the centuries, and because of contextual priming and internal profiling, some features have become pervasive, whereas others have remained asleep or have simply died. Features such as

“modesty” or “privy members”, associated to the category *shame* as early as the 13th century, became asleep later on and remain peripheral in contemporary lexicographic representations. On the contrary, features such as “guilt”, not explicitly related to the category *shame* until the 17th century, become more and more central, as reflected by synchronic dictionaries and student perceptions. This finding resonates with theories that claim shame to be close to guilt and characterized by a process of internal and global attributions to moral transgressions (e.g. Tangney & Dearing, 2002), and to Scheff’s (2003) observation that the concept of *shame* has increasingly become closer to *guilt*. The possibility that the evolution of the terms parallels the evolution of theories in psychology suggests that psychologists have conducted research mainly on the normative meaning of emotion terms rather than on the experiences imperfectly denoted by the terms.

To account for the reasons why a given feature, such as guilt, became linked to the concept of shame at a certain historical period is beyond the scope of this paper and would require an interdisciplinary effort, resorting to the work of authors that have analyzed historical changes in shame relying on the analysis of etiquette manuals (Elias, 2000), parent’s socialization norms (Demos, 1996), or the legal system (e.g. Kahan, 1996; Masaro, 1997). However, it is noteworthy that the diverse features currently related to shame and now highlighted by psychologists have been acquired over history and have held different degrees of saliency throughout the centuries; in the words of Geeraerts “polysemy is, roughly, the synchronic reflection of diachronic-semantic change” (Geeraerts, 1997, p. 6).

Our lexicographic analysis informs the many cross-culturally oriented psychological debates on *shame*, since the analysis of lexical items allows unveiling the relevance of elements often mentioned within psychological literature. The lexicographic analysis suggests that the concepts *shame* and *vergüenza* cannot be understood as classical concepts represented by a checklist of necessary and sufficient features. Both concepts overlap and have overlapped over time, albeit the degree of overlap between English and Spanish has been altered over the centuries. The lexicographic representation presented in this paper and the results of Hurtado de Mendoza et al. (2010) suggest the presence of a process of polarization by means of which *vergüenza* has specialized in “softer” features related to uncomfortable situations in the presence of others, whereas *shame* has maintained stronger connotations linked to guilt, moral transgressions, and situations of humiliation and disrepute in front of others. Therefore, although most cross-cultural studies present English *shame* and Spanish *vergüenza* on a one-to-one term basis (e.g., Becht & Vingerhoets, 2001; Giner-Sorolla, Espinosa, & Brown, 2005; Wallbott & Scherer, 1995), the meaning expressed by both terms is not fully coincident.

As illustrated by the foregoing discussion, emotion concepts across cultures and historical periods may be construed with somewhat similar constituent features, but given combinations are more or less probable and accessible at specific places or times in history (Russell, 2003). If we consider the lexicographic comparison of *vergüenza* and *shame*, and other studies that have documented differences between the translation equivalents of *shame* (e.g. Bedford, 2004; De Rivera, 1989; Fessler, 2004; Ho, Fu, & Ng, 2004; Menon & Shweder, 1994; Parish, 1991) we cannot rule out the possibility that some studies based on one-to-one translations might be comparing different categories

or different features within a category. When a US and a Spanish student are respectively asked to recall an experience of *shame* and *vergüenza*, they probably imagine quite different scenarios, since the most salient features primed differ to a very considerable extent. Thus, the extrapolation of conclusions about cross-cultural differences in the experience of shame is questionable, as shame and its translation equivalents might be priming different features of their emotion concepts. Knowing which constitutive features relate to concepts is as crucial as knowing their degree of salience. In this respect, when conducting cross-cultural research, resourcing to monolingual dictionaries would be useful to get an initial sense of the various features connected to a concept and prime those specific features of interest.

Lexicographic analysis broadens the scope of cross-cultural research on emotion concepts, and social network analysis stands out as a promising tool to visually represent semantically interconnected features with different degrees of salience in a way certainly closer to the one in which people actually represent everyday concepts (Murphy, 2004).

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Figure 1. Representation of Terms, Categories and Features, based on Murphy (2004)

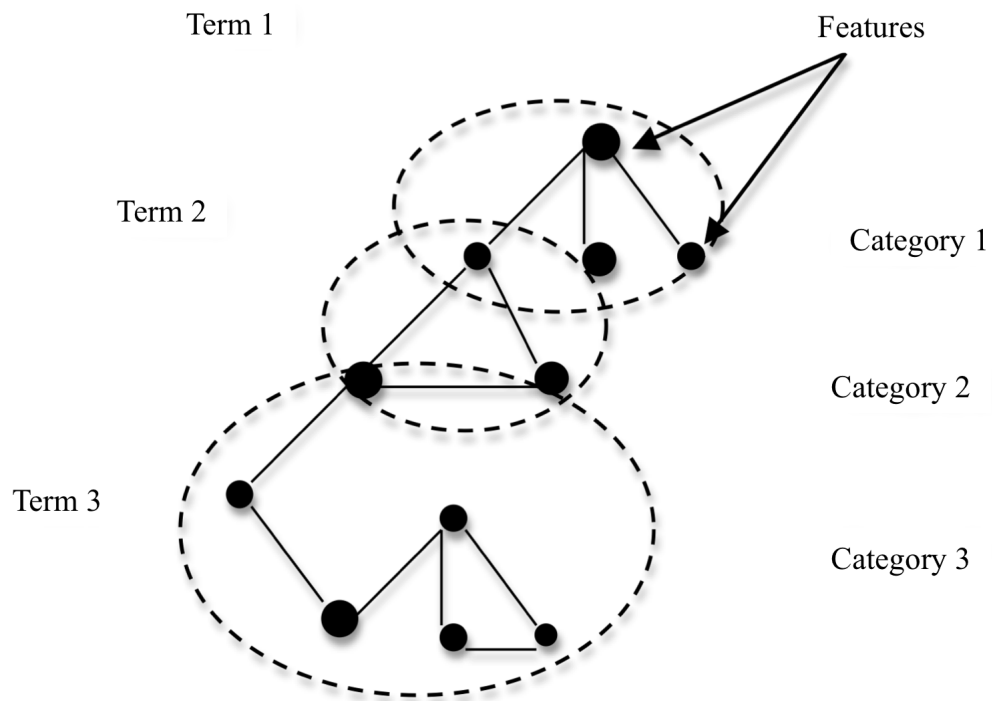


Figure 2. Synchronic Lexicographic Representation of *Shame*

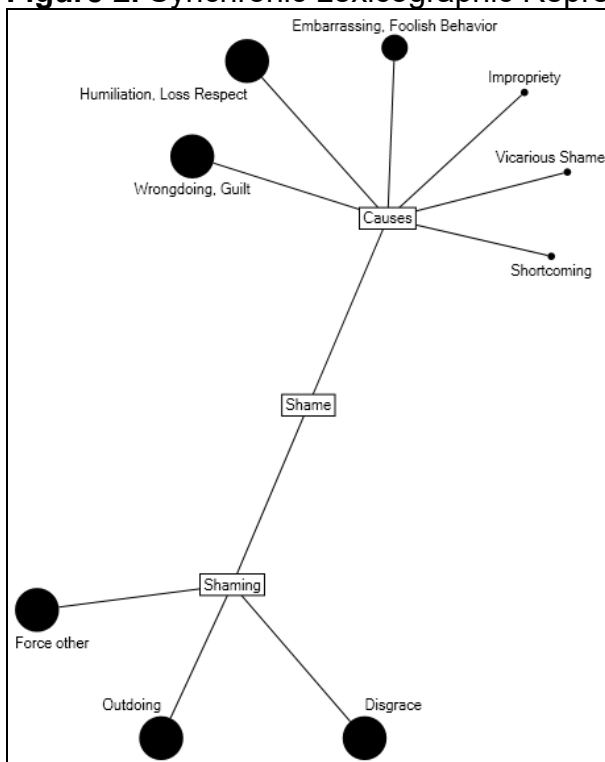


Figure 3. Synchronic Lexicographic Representation of *Vergüenza*

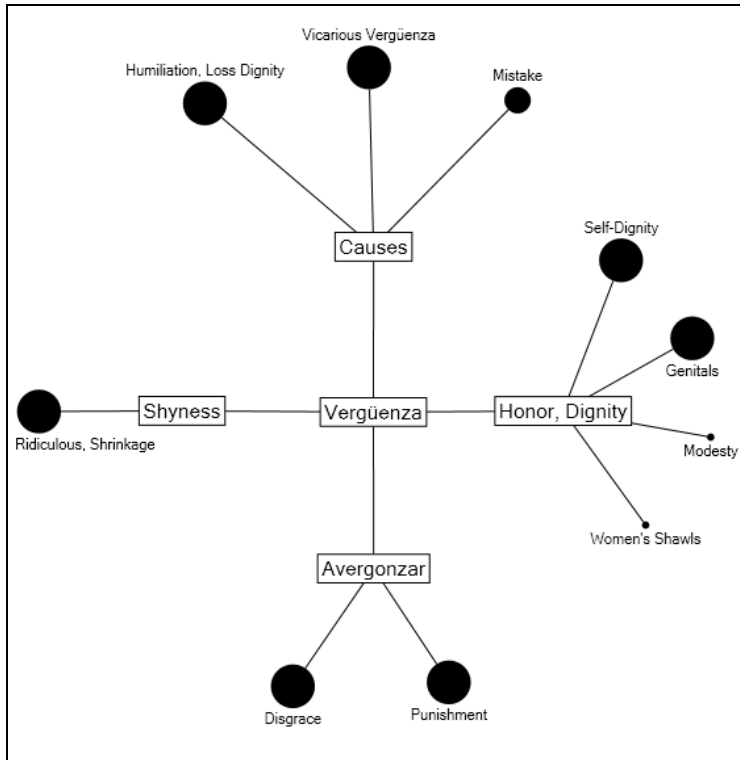
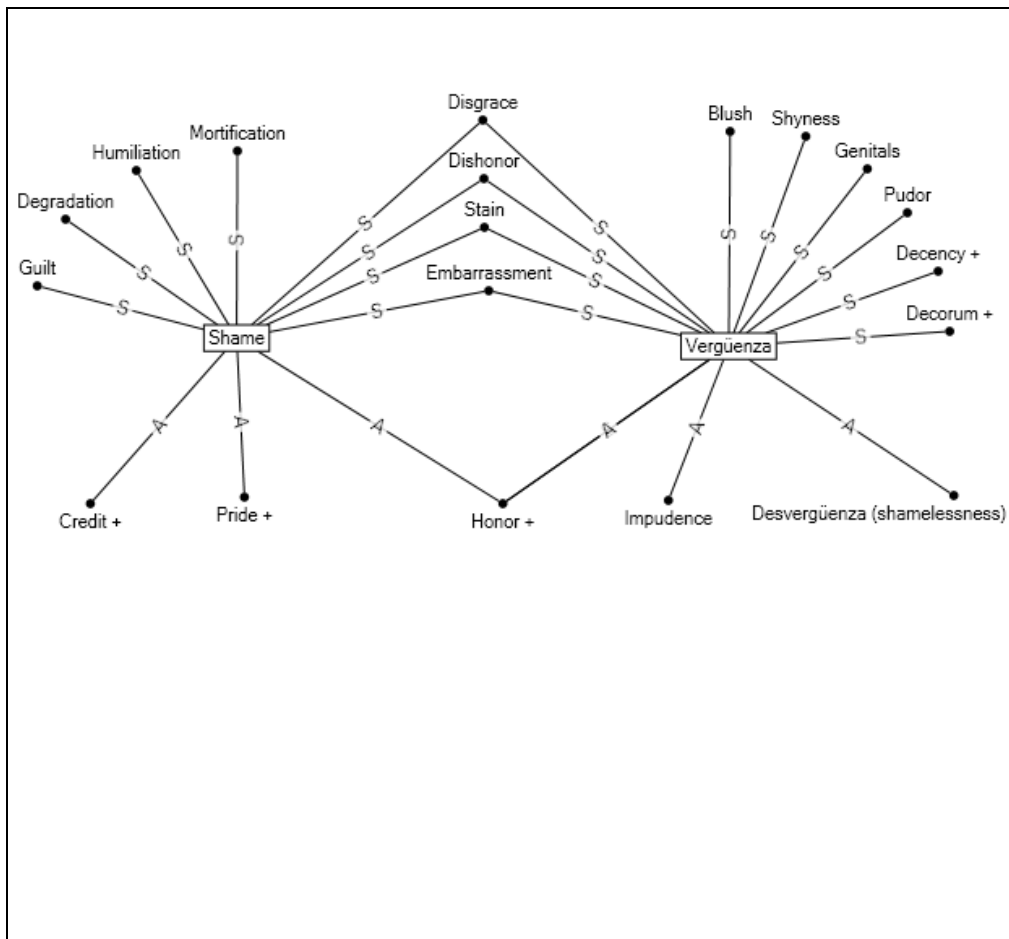


Figure 4. Synonyms and Antonyms of *Shame* and *Vergüenza*

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Note: For the sake of clarity, a selection of relevant terms has been included in the figure rather than an exhaustive account of every single synonym and antonym recorded in the sources. For the complete list, see Hurtado de Mendoza (2007).