

Conceptualizing Shame: Investigating Uses of the English Word *Shame*, 1418–1991

Heli Tissari¹
University of Helsinki

1. Introduction

This is a cognitive linguistic study on the English word *shame* since the early fifteenth century, as represented by data collected from several electronic corpora. Kövecses (1986, 1988, 1990) has written several books on emotion concepts in English, and Tissari (2003), in a study on the English word *love* in early modern and present-day English, used his research on the concept of love as a starting-point for looking at the metaphors of love. This paper continues in the same vein of diachronic research, turning to look at the word *shame* and the concept of shame. Because Kövecses (1986, 1990) does not pay special attention to the concept of shame, this study is modelled after his description of the concept of pride. Furthermore, it considers the possibility of using Kaufman's theory of shame (1996 [1989]) as a basis for categorizing causes of shame.

In addition to adding to our knowledge on the diachronic development of emotion words and concepts in English, this research forms part of a more general project concerning 'positive', as opposed to 'negative', emotion words. The terms 'positive' and 'negative' cannot be understood as unambiguously characterizing each emotion or emotion word, however. Shame can be considered a bad experience, but people also think that it is a proper reaction to a person's own bad behaviour, necessary for the right kind of self-knowledge. The relationship between shame and pride is thus also not straightforward, but whether pride is the 'positive' counterpart of shame depends very much on circumstances and on beliefs concerning people's rights and duties. Both pride and shame can be considered both 'positive' and 'negative'.

Kövecses's description of pride (1986: 39–60, 1990: 88–108) deals with its physiological effects, behavioural reactions to it, concepts related to pride, metaphor, metonymy, and causes of pride, providing a basis for the structure of this paper as well. Tissari (2003) attempts to quantify both the causes and metaphors of love, but this paper on shame is modelled after Kövecses's qualitative approach.² I do not suggest that this is a comprehensive investigation of the uses of *shame* in the period studied, but I do hope that it shows how corpora could be used to continue investigating emotion concepts in English. Kövecses (1986: 59, 1990: 107) finishes his description of pride by introducing a prototypical model for the concept. This paper also eventually offers two rudimentary models for understanding the concept of shame.

2. Data

I searched for instances of the verb and noun *shame* and adjectives and compounds beginning with *(a)sham** in five different corpora, some of which represent historical varieties of English, and some of which represent the year 1991. The latter are the *Freiburg-LOB Corpus of British English (FLOB)* and the *Freiburg-Brown Corpus of American English (FROWN)*. The *Corpus of Early English*

¹ While writing this paper, the author was a member of the VARIENG Research Unit for Variation and Change in English and a research fellow at the Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies.

² The quantitative results concerning the causes of shame which I reported at the HEL-LEX symposium are not reprinted here (section 3.6), because the basis of the classification which I used does not seem valid enough for their publication.

Correspondence Sampler (CEECS) covers the time span 1418–1680, the early modern English period of the *Helsinki Corpus of English Texts (HC)* that of 1500–1710, and *ARCHER (A Representative Corpus of Historical English Registers)* that of 1650–1990. Together, these corpora cover a period starting in 1418 and ending in 1991. Apart from *ARCHER* (see Biber, Finegan & Atkinson 1994), all these corpora have manuals which contain more information on them (Hundt, Sand & Siemund 1998, Hundt, Sand & Skandera 1999, Kytö 1996, Nurmi 1998).

Table 1 shows how many *shame* items were found per corpus. In this data, *shame* is much less frequent in present-day than earlier English. This in itself is significant, since it possibly suggests the emergence of inhibitions to using *shame* words.

Table 1. The data on *shame*.

Corpus	Size (words)	<i>shame</i> items	
		total	N/10,000
<i>CEECS</i>	450,000	43	0.96
<i>HC (1500–1710)</i>	551,000	104	1.89
<i>ARCHER</i>	1,700,000	200	1.18
<i>FLOB</i>	1,000,000	38	0.38
<i>FROWN</i>	1,000,000	36	0.36

Each instance of *shame* was analyzed in a context of eight (8) lines, except those from *ARCHER*, from which only seven (7) lines surrounding each item were excerpted. Each context was read several times in order to find answers to the following questions: which physiological effects of shame are mentioned? What kind of behavioural reactions are discussed? What kind of concepts could be related to shame? Which conceptual metaphors are available for shame? What is the role of metonymy? What causes shame?

3. Findings

In the examples given, the word that forms the focus of the analysis is in italics, while other relevant words are in bold font. The latter are words which give some answers to the questions posed. More specific tools could be developed for finding answers to each question, but it does not seem reasonable here, because it appears that one could design separate tools for each question, if it were to be treated in more depth.

The sources of the data are given as follows (cf. manuals):

The *CEECS*: (1) date (2) author of letter (3) line

The *HC*: (1) author of book etc. [omitted if in the title] (2) book title (3) page

ARCHER: (1) text type or genre (2) date

The *FLOB* & *FROWN*: (1) author of book [omitted in the case of journals] (2) title of book or journal (3) page

3.1 Physiological Effects

The following example of a person losing his ability to speak or act comes from the early modern data, exemplifying the metonymy INTERFERENCE WITH NORMAL MENTAL FUNCTIONING³ (Kövecses 1986: 40, 1990: 89):

- (1) I have sometimes beene so **abashed** and *ashamed*, that **I have not knowne what to say** ... (*HC*: Brinsley, *Ludus literarius or the grammar schoole* 14)

³ I have used small caps to mark metaphors and metonymies, but not to mark concepts related to shame, or causes of shame. Here my practice differs from Kövecses's (1986, 1990), who capitalizes all of these.

It is typical of shame that it interferes with one's ability to speak, either by suppressing speech altogether, or by making one's speech inaudible, as in the present-day English example (2):

- (2) Graham **muttered something inaudible**, and looked almost *ashamed* of himself. (FLOB: Green, *Tide of Uncertainty* 25)

This data underlines the idea that the INTERFERENCE WITH NORMAL MENTAL FUNCTIONING is experienced as harmful by the person who is ashamed, while Kövecses's discussion of pride (1986: 40–41, 1990: 89–90) rather suggests that when pride interferes with normal mental functioning, this is criticized by others, but not necessarily noticed by proud people themselves.

The role of the face (blushing), which is central to modern professional discussions of the emotion shame beginning from Darwin (Lewis 2004 [2000]), recurs throughout the data. In Kövecses's understanding of emotion concepts, this is the metonymy REDNESS IN THE FACE. The following, present-day English example also possibly suggests the metonymy INCREASED HEART RATE for shame (Kövecses 1986: 40, 1990: 89). The context does not seem to specify whether the effects, also including stomach pain, follow from shame, or from an act of violence, or from both:

- (3) He **lowered his hands** ... **face heated** with *shame*, turmoil, chagrin, **fierce heartbeats** saying he might be about **to bend over** the gutter and **throw his stomach up**. (FLOB: Sillitoe, *Leonard's War: A Love Story* 11)

Similarly, it is slightly uncertain whether perspiration in the early modern example (4) results from shame, or from another cause:

- (4) ... but, Madam, the wrighting this makes me **sweate** because we are so chargeable every way that I am *ashamed* of it. (CEECs: 1639 Elizabeth Cornwallis 293)

As for other physiological effects, the late modern period (ca. 1700–1900) also yields weeping, while the most recent data (C20) provides stress and forgetfulness.

The data allows one to point to some specific physiological effects, but more data would be needed for a solid frequency analysis. One might also accumulate more data in order to answer more specific research questions, such as comparing the physiological effects of shame as presented in lay and professional discussions of the topic.

3.2 Behavioural Reactions

Lewis (2004: 629) discusses the postures of shame and embarrassment, emphasizing a difference in their degree. He claims that people who experience shame wish to disappear and appear to shrink, while people experiencing embarrassment try to correct the situation by smiling, for example. Shrinking is opposite to ERECT POSTURE for pride (Kövecses 1986: 41, 1990: 90). Our data agrees with Lewis's description of shame (2004: 629), in so far as when it describes people who experience shame, it suggests that they wish to turn their faces away from others and to hide (example 5), or to hide their emotions from others.

- (5) The day she received the letter she **could hardly bear to look at him**—she felt so *ashamed* ... (FLOB: Wirdman, *Seize the Day* 14)

Shame also accompanies escaping the battlefield, although the escape may follow from defeat and fear rather than from shame (example 6). However, smiling is mentioned as medicine against shame in the early modern data (example 7). The specific context is that of a wedding, and the bride-to-be is afraid of doing something that might make her feel ashamed in front of all the people. This shows that a more specific analysis of the behavioural reactions accompanying shame should be context-sensitive,

and take into account expected codes of behaviour. Moreover, apart from behavioural reactions accompanying shame, one could look for behaviour that is recommended in order to prevent shame.

- (6) Sir undoubtedly ther was never man **departed** with more *shame* nor with more **feare** than the Duke hath doon this daye ... (*CEECs*: 1523 Thomas Howard 2 234)
- (7) (^Ka.^) ... you must not look towards me, for then I shall laugh and that will *shame* me quite.
(^Jo.^) No my dear a **smile** sometimes will do well they'l think there's the more love. (*HC: Samuel Pepys' Penny Merriments* 118)

Some of the behavioural reactions are explicitly linguistic. These comprise excuses, confessions, requests for mercy, and lamentation (example 8).

- (8) **Lamentation** aryseth of foure affections, eyther of a great **feare** or **dreade**, or of a great *shame*, or of some **sorrowe**, or els of some **hatred**. (*HC: Fisher, Sermons* 1,397)

In the earliest data (ca. 1400–1700), people lament other people's shameful behaviour, which shifts the focus from shame as a self-centered emotion (cf. Lewis 2004, Nathanson 1994 [1992]) to shame as a social and religious concept.⁴ Lamentation as noise contrasts with silence as the effect of shame (section 3.1).

3.3 Related Concepts

As suggested above, the term 'related concept' is borrowed from Kövecses's description of emotion concepts (1986, 1990). It is not the same as collocation, although for this paper, I manually searched for words sharing a context with the *shame* words. What Kövecses (1986, 1990) attempts to do is to model emotion concepts such as pride in terms of their relationships to other concepts, which need not be other emotions. The following is an attempt to sketch how this might work for shame. For a deeper analysis, one might resort to a collocational analysis of corpus data, but one might as well analyze and compare single writers' treatments of shame in order to see how they construct arguments concerning shame.

1400–1900: The data from this period suggests that related concepts form clusters with various thematic foci. Firstly, *shame* occurs with other 'negative' emotions, such as *fear*, *dread*, *hate*, and *sorrow* (examples 6 and 8). Secondly, shame goes together with bad personal characteristics described by such adjectives as *bold*, *contemptuous*, *corrupt*, *detestable*, *lewd*, *rash*, *villainous*, *weak*, and *wicked*. As a subgroup, some of these adjectives draw attention to whether people's social status is degrading, or whether they degrade their status (*poor beggar*, *mean gentleman*). Thirdly, shame is associated with calamities such as *abuse*, *death*, *injury*, *loss of reputation*, *peril*, *poverty*, and *sickness*. Fourthly, the data suggests a script or scenario in which people who cause shame to themselves by their bad behaviour are expected to experience pricks of conscience and to ask for mercy, or at least make excuses for their faults.

The data also suggests that some concepts, such as credit, honour and safety, are opposite to shame. A person who is not ashamed is described as experiencing pleasure. A minor note should also be made on *shamefastness*, a word for a then positive concept. Especially young women were expected to behave in a modest and bashful manner, and thus to exhibit their virtue.

1700–1900: This period continues to associate shame with vices, using terms for bad behaviour and personal characteristics. Example (9), which seems to refer both to a calamity or natural punishment (*sickness*), and to the conscience (*repentance*), is illustrative of this kind of thinking. Other terms of punishment and repentance include *mortification*, *to punish*, *torture(s)*, *regret*, and *remorse*. It

⁴ Damasio (2003: 45) categorizes shame under 'social emotions'. Pattison (2000: 131) writes: 'Shame may well be the most socially significant of all the phenomena that are commonly conceived of as emotions.'

seems likely, however, that in this period, illness begins to be offered not only as a misfortune following from, but also as an explanation for loose morals.

- (9) These are the real pleasures of a **gentleman**; which occasion neither **sickness**, *shame*, nor repentance. Whatever exceeds them, becomes **low vice**, **brutal passion**, **debauchery**, and **insanity of mind**; all of which, far from giving satisfaction, bring on **dishonor** and **disgrace**. (*ARCHER*: Letter 1747)

Example (10) also deals with bad personal characteristics. It suggests that respect for a father could compensate for the shame of a son to a certain limit, and moreover, that a deeper analysis of related concepts should consider individuals as parts of larger social units, and consider norms concerning people's behaviour with respect to these (cf. section 3.2). Such social units enter Kövecses's discussion of the causes of pride (1986: 44, 1990: 94), as these include 'belonging to a group' (cf. section 3.6).

- (10) Thus far, sir, I have been silent through **respect to a father** overwhelmed by the *shame* and *ignomy* of an *unworthy son*. (*ARCHER*: American literature 1828)

1900–: Shame is seen to go together with vices (*envy*, *pettiness*, *vanity*), anger (*rage*, *resentment*), and *guilt* and *stress*. The data also suggests opposites to *shame*, *pride* and *responsibility*. Example (11) combines shame and anger:

- (11) We behaved as if we were *ashamed* of him, or *angry*. (*FLOB*: Mars-Jones, *Bears in Mourning* 3)

In all, there is a connecting moral thread in the treatment of shame in this data. The idea that shame goes together with guilt and/or aggression is also shared by all periods. The two earliest periods provide a fuller picture of shame as nested in a social and religious context than the C20 data, which is far scantier. To arrive at a more nuanced picture, and to see more clearly what would remain constant in a prototypical schema for shame and what in turn would change, one would need either more data, or a more detailed theoretical framework, or preferably both. One might begin by focusing on stylistic factors, for example. Genres evolve in the course of the early and late modern periods, producing novel kinds of contexts for discussing shame, and both shame and its related concepts may be invoked in a text in order to create a stylistic effect. For example, shame can be invoked in a sermon in order to call people to repentance, or in a novel or in drama in order to emphasize a bad character's villainous behaviour. Noticing that gentlemanly behaviour is often discussed in the late modern data, one might also study how shame is gendered.

3.4 Conceptual Metaphors

This section looks at the data as divided into two periods, namely 1400–1900 and 1900–, as these seem to differ from each other. To trace in depth how, and to what extent, certain metaphors retain their significance in the conceptualization of shame, and how each metaphor relates to the others, nevertheless remains a possible venue for further research. Note also that the metaphors connect in various ways not only to each other, but to the physiological effects of shame through metonymy, and to other emotions and other concepts related to shame, as I will attempt to point out below, this being a major insight of both Lakoff's (1987: 380–415) and Kövecses's (1986, 1988, 1990) work on emotions. To arrive at a full script or scenario for shame in a certain period, all these various aspects ought to be taken into account.

There are a number of conceptual metaphors which are common to both periods: SHAME IS A CONTAINER (example 12), SHAME IS FIRE (example 13), SHAME IS IN THE FRONT / EYES / FACE (examples 14 and 15, the latter being a Biblical quote), SHAME IS A NUISANCE / UNWANTED ENTITY OR SUBSTANCE (which can be quantified, example 16), and SHAME IS A VALUABLE COMMODITY (which can be quantified, although it is not in example 17). The first two are neutral in the sense that they also apply to many other emotions, good and bad, but the third suggests 'negativity', and the fourth 'positivity'. I

here use the term NUISANCE in a more general sense than Barcelona-Sánchez (1996: 14) does, considering it to represent any (unspecified) ENTITY or SUBSTANCE opposite to VALUABLE COMMODITY. Note also that when SHAME is seen as A CONTAINER it is likely to be A CONTAINER that one wishes to come out of (A CAGE, or JAIL), in contrast to what applies to a good experience such as happy LOVE. Whether personification should be considered a metaphor occurring in both periods depends on how it is defined; possible instances are fairly vague apart from example (18).

(12) ... it lea^deth the world **captiue**, & bringeth every enemie, that riseth vp against it, **to** c'fusion and *shame* ... (HC: Hooker, *Two Sermons upon part of s. Jude's epistle* 42)

(13) ... 'tis a **burning shame** ... (ARCHER: Drama 1706)

(14) I goin' have to save your **face** from some *shame*. (ARCHER: Non-fiction 1958)

(15) All the day long my *shame* is **before mee**, and my **face** is **covered with confusion**. (HC: Fisher, *Sermons* 1, 401)⁵

(16) ... And the Remnant that scaped flying **with as much shame** as disorder into their Harbours ... (ARCHER: News 1665)

(17) **Wicked** people means people who **have no love**: therefore they **have no shame**. (ARCHER: Drama 1895)

(18) **Remorse** and *shame* and **wan regret** have wielded their **cruel** sceptres over human lives ... (ARCHER: Fiction 1880)

1400–1900: The metaphors focus on shame and the body (cf. section 3.1), but have very much to do with religion and morality (cf. section 3.3). They include: SHAME IS AN ILLNESS / A PHYSICAL INJURY (example 19), THE HEART/SOUL IS THE SEAT OF SHAME (/SIN) (examples 19 and 20), and the metaphor SHAME IS DOWN, derived from the Biblical story of the Fall (examples 19 and 21). Shame is also seen as something which covers a person (A CLOTH, A COVER, blush, example 15) and as AN EXPENSE / LOST MONEY (example 22).

(19) ... our **soul** is **smitten** with grief and *shame* to remark how this latter day she **hath fallen from her high estate** ... (ARCHER: Sermon 18xx)

(20) *Shame*, **sorrow** and **despair had incrusted her heart with a hard shell**, impenetrable to genial emotions. (ARCHER: Fiction 1880)

(21) ... ministers of the gospel **fall** from the heights of Zion, with long resounding crash of ruin and *shame*. (ARCHER: Sermon 18xx)

(22) ... it **cost** me too much *shame*. (CEECS: 1660S Winefrid Thimelby 21)

1900–: The most recent data puts only slightly less emphasis on the idea that shame belongs to healthy morals. Where it rather differs from the earlier data is that shame is not associated with sin or evil in an overtly Christian sense. The metaphors not found in the earlier data include: SHAME IS DIRT (example 23), SHAME IS A FLUID IN THE BODY (blushing, example 24), and SHAME IS A FLUID / AN OBSTACLE. Example (25) allows room for associating the receding shame after a rape (FLUID, OBSTACLE) with the fluid in a river, and thus either with an obstacle in life, or with purification. The

⁵ The New International Version has (Ps. 44: 15): 'My disgrace is before me all day long, and my face is covered with shame.'

metaphor SHAME IS A PHYSICAL INJURY also occurs, the difference between this and the earlier period being that shame does not seem to be AN ILLNESS (example 26).

(23) ... most thought it a **dirty** *shame* that someone had taken it out on his wife. (*FROWN: Trust West* 26)

(24) Christian felt a slight **flush** of *shame* at his own vanity, and hid behind his napkin. (*FLOB: Robinson, Artillery of Lies* 60)

(25) ...while the physical wounds healed and the *shame* **receded** she made herself ready to cross the river ... (*FROWN: Ms* 10)

(26) My introduction to politics was so *shameful* that I **bore the scars** for decades ... (*FROWN: Saturday Evening Post* 3)

In sum, the metaphors of shame describe shame as an overwhelming emotion which one does not wish to enter into, and which makes life more difficult and cumbersome, but which can nevertheless protect one from further mischief. Shame may have lasting (negative or positive) effects on a person's life (e.g., negative in terms of a person's sufferings, or positive in terms of what it has taught the person). A large part of the metaphors appear to remain the same throughout the data, but there are some which can be found only in one of the two periods, and there is a clear religious overtone in the earlier data which is lacking from the C20 materials. This latter finding seems to be the more reliable, since it is likely that a metaphor such as SHAME IS DIRT is actually known to people throughout the studied period (examples 23 and 33, cf. example 15 and footnote 4).

3.5 Metonymic Developments

As stated above, Kövecses's model of pride (1986: 40–44, 1990: 89–93) is built on the assumption that the physiological effects of and behavioural reactions caused by pride give rise to metonymies of pride, which in turn can give rise to metaphors of pride. Thinking in the same vein, one sees correspondences between the physiological effects of and behavioural reactions due to shame, metonymies such as INTERFERENCE WITH NORMAL MENTAL FUNCTIONING STANDS FOR SHAME and metaphors such as SHAME IS AN ILLNESS, SHAME IS A NUISANCE, and SHAME IS AN OBSTACLE. To give another example, BLUSHING STANDS FOR SHAME is closely related to the metaphor SHAME IS IN THE FACE.

One might also make a generalization on the basis of the data on related concepts and suggest that SHAME STANDS FOR VICE (metonymy), and consequently, SHAME IS DIRT (metaphor) because VICE IS DIRT. One might even see longer metonymic chains in which SHAME is caused by VICE (STANDS FOR VICE), VICE is followed by PUNISHMENT or CALAMITY (which also STAND FOR VICE), and, metaphorically, SHAME IS AN EXPENSE, or A PHYSICAL INJURY.

However, there is more to say on *shame* and metonymy in this data. In the early modern data, THE EMOTION SHAME STANDS FOR ITS CAUSE OR CAUSER, so that when someone uses the phrase *it is a shame*, it has a moral overtone, suggesting that something is shameful or that someone deserves shame. This is not a tautological statement, assuming that one can distinguish between the morality of a deed and the moral characteristics of a person. Example (27) refers to a woman who, unfaithful to her husband, charms other men, and is suspected of practicing magic (note also the quantification of her shame), while example (28) refers to the morals of a nation. Admittedly, distinguishing between the morality of the deeds and the moral characteristics of the people discussed in these cases is difficult.

(27) ... her **great** *shame* wan her much praise ... (*HC: More, The history of King Richard III* 55)

(28) ... for it is a *shame* y^t soe many **errors** shoulde bee seene & founde in ye face of ye country. (*HC: The Journal of George Fox* 84)

However, in the present-day English data, the phrase *it is a shame* begins to resemble *it is a pity*, signalling not just moral resentment, but also more general regret (THE EMOTION SHAME STANDS FOR REGRET, example 29). Kövecses (1986, 1988, 1990) does not consider this kind of metonymic developments in his discussion of emotion concepts, because his focus shifts from emotion vocabulary to more general theorizing, but they could be studied separately—not only as linguistic phenomena, but also in order to see how they relate to people’s conceptualizations of specific emotions (do other emotion words behave in a similar manner? what kind of phrases do they occur in?)⁶ and changes in these.

(29) It is a *shame that there is no natural light* but because of its size it doesn’t feel claustrophobic. Its [sic] very rock and roll ... (FLOB: *Studio Sound* 12)

3.6 Causes of Shame

Kövecses (1986: 44, 1990: 93–94) lists the following causes for pride: (I) achievements, (II) possessions, (III) belonging to a prestigious group, (IV) good appearance, (V) physical or mental capabilities, skills or properties, (VI) moral qualities, and (VII) good social status. Most of these need to be changed to their opposites in order to account for shame. The list then includes: (I) non-achievements (example 30), (II) poverty (example 31), (III) not belonging to a prestigious group, or belonging to a non-prestigious group (example 32), (IV) bad appearance (example 33), (V) lack of physical or mental capabilities, skills, or properties (example 34), (VI) moral qualities (example 35), and (VII) dubious social status. On the basis of our data, one of these causes seems central to shame, i.e., (VI) the moral quality of people or their deeds (cf. section 3.5). The other causes do seem to occur as well, but each of them is clearly rarer than (VI). ‘Dubious social status’ is a slightly problematic category, however. It is difficult to give any example that does not suggest a moral reading. Example (36) comes from a context in which a person of higher rank questions the personality of a servant, assuming that his morals are as bad as his master’s. There is a disagreement between the two interlocutors as to the master’s character as well. There are also a number of instances where I would like to say that the cause of shame is socially unaccepted behaviour, while such behaviour need not be especially immoral. One of these is example (37), which suggests that men should not cry.

(30) (Non-achievements:) Your letter of acknowlegen **more then I have or can deserve**, maketh mee ashamed of **thanks for nothyng** ... (CEECS: 1620 Margery Bouchier 67)

(31) (Poverty:) ... there is no Scandal like Rags, nor any Crime so *shameful* as **Poverty**. (HC: Farquhar, *The beaux stratagem* 4)

(32) (Suggesting that some people might suspect whether being an American is prestigious:) I am not *ashamed* of **being an American**. (FLOB: Hart, *A Sweeter Prejudice* 5)

(33) (Bad appearances:) Ye women when there is **any black spot in your faces**, or **any moole in your kerchieues**, or **any myer vpon your clothes**, be you not *ashamed*? (HC: Fisher, *Sermons* 1, 402)

(34) (Lack of mental capacity, i.e., that of sound judgment:) And for the partie I thinke my selfe someway indebted to you for him for the good will I bare him, who will *shame* neither of our **judgments**, if he continue as he was. (CEECS: 1624 Oliver Naylor I,38)

(35) (Moral qualities:) And this from a party that now **disgracefully** depends on American-style election **dirty tricks**, on **dubious** Hong Kong donations and, most *shamefully* of all, on a Greek billionaire moving his money out of colonels and into Majors—an **affront** to democracy and to Britain. (FLOB: *Yorkshire Post* 41)

⁶ Tissari (forthcoming) deals with the phrase *I fear*, which contains the verb *to fear*.

(36) (Dubious social status:) ... I ham not *ashamyd* of **my maister** ... (*HC: The Autobiography of Thomas Mowntayne* 201)

(37) To his *shame* **he burst into tears and sobbed**. (*FROWN: Purdy, Out with the Stars* 18)

It would be nice to compare Kövecses's list for pride with a list for shame, and therefore I also attempted to employ Kaufman's four main causes for adult shame (1996: 46–54): (α) powerlessness (which reminds one of one's status as an infant), (β) non-achievement of vocational goals, (γ) failures in relationships, and (δ) aging (leading to a loss of one's powers). My initial analysis (presented at the HEL-LEX symposium) suggested that, of these, (γ) failures in relationships was the main cause of shame. In this analysis, (VI) the moral quality of people or their deeds, and (γ) failures in relationships were partly overlapping categories, and, consequently, example (38) was categorized as a failure in relationships:

(38) On the other hand, a woman who **committed adultery** once was publicly *shamed*; on the second offense she was killed. (*FROWN: Michener, Mexico* 1)

However, one might also consider this an instance of female (α) powerlessness.

In retrospect, using Kaufman's description of shame (1996) as a basis for diachronic analysis was not a good idea, because his four causes of adult shame are so general and do not cover historical variation.⁷ The reason why I originally thought it might work was that reversing Kövecses's list for pride seemed to work, and he is not analyzing diachronic variation either. I also did a lot of adaptive maneuvering in order to make it work, including a reinterpretation of the category of 'powerlessness' to include misuse of power, as in example (35).

The effort I spent on Kaufman's causes of shame need not be entirely misspent, however, because when these occur side by side with Kövecses's causes, they tease out distinctions which are potentially relevant. For example, there is a difference between shame caused by (IV) bad appearance and shame caused by (δ) aging, although some might claim that aging makes a person look worse. Beside (δ) aging, which often means a deterioration of health, there exists a possible cause which was not included in either list, i.e., illness in general (although it could be included in 'powerlessness'). There is also a possible difference between (γ) failing in a relationship and (VI) acting immorally, and moreover, between (β) non-achievement of vocational goals and (V) lack of capabilities. Comparing the two lists of causes, one also comes to ask if there is not a difference between (I) failures in general and (γ) failures in relationships, and so on. The dialectic would of course be different again if, instead of Kaufman (1996), one were to use a third author on shame. Nathanson (1994), for example, emphasizes a person's size more than Kaufman (1996) does, claiming that small people experience shame.

The more I have thought of both these lists, the more it seems that a diachronic analysis might be improved by taking a completely different starting-point. Although Kövecses's list seems to work, the causes he gives by no means exclude each other. Rather, they overlap. For example, a person could be lazy ([VI] moral quality), and consequently miss his or her opportunities ([I] non-achievement). The least one should do would be to consider all these causes as overlapping categories, but it would be best to tie the analysis more tightly to sociohistorical issues and changes in people's world views. This way, one would certainly be more likely to detect changes. The analysis presented above emphasizes stability in shame, which seems to be caused either by immorality or other failures in relationships between people, and lacks precision in historical detail.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

Although the corpora used for this paper were relatively small, they suggested a fairly rich picture of how English-speaking people have used and still use *shame* words, and the kind of conceptualization

⁷ The data also includes causes of children's shame, although these are in the minority. Shame experienced by children actually plays a central role in Kaufman's (1996) developmental theory of shame.

of shame which these uses convey. The concept of shame intersects with a cluster of other concepts involving 'negative' emotions, misfortune, and bad morals. Shame is associated especially with blushing and (turning away) the face, but also with other physiological effects and behavioural reactions. The conceptual metaphors for shame suggest that shame is a valuable experience, but that it can also constrain people a negative sense, and even hurt them. Body-based metonymies play a strong role as mediators between shame and its metaphors, which also interact with related concepts, but, more generally, shame is associated with regret, which gives rise to the metonymy THE EMOTION SHAME STANDS FOR REGRET. Such regret nowadays need not be moral.

On the basis of this general survey, it is possible to construct a couple of rudimentary models for shame, which could be used as potentially correctable hypotheses in further research. One script is more religious and collective, and the other more secular and individualistic. These scripts are not historically subsequent to each other, but also alternate with each other. Although the earliest data leans towards the first one, and the most recent data towards the second, there seems to be oscillation throughout the data between these two poles.

Model A:

Shame is experienced by people who strongly belong to a larger society.

Shame occurs in a framework of religious beliefs and social duties.

Shame co-occurs with other 'negative' emotions and with other evils and misfortunes.

Shame is caused by something those who experience it or their contemporaries either do or fail to do. It can be caused either by one's own recognition of this, or by other people's reprimands.

Shame makes people silent and makes them turn their faces away, but on the other hand, people are expected to confess their sins and to change their behaviour. Lamentation makes shame more collective.

Model B:

Shame is experienced by individuals.

Shame is moral and social.

Shame co-occurs with other 'negative' emotions.

Shame is caused by a person's failure to reach moral or social standards. It can be caused either by one's own or other people's recognition of this.

Shame makes a person withdraw, but s/he can learn to avoid it.

If we compare this description of the concept of shame with Kövecses's descriptions of pride (1986: 39–60, 1990: 88–108), we can note both commonalities and divergences. Shame actually shares part of its physiological effects with pride, but departs from pride in its behavioural reactions. Pride, like shame, is also related to the 'negative' concepts of conceit and vanity. Both pride and shame are self-centered emotions, but in fact the present study also suggests a strong social and religious framework for shame, within which one can feel shame for other people, and evaluate other people's behaviour as shameful even if they would not themselves agree to that. The main metaphors for pride, PRIDE IS A FLUID IN A CONTAINER (THE CONTAINER being THE BODY), and PRIDE IS (A FLUID) IN THE HEART, are shared with shame, but do not seem to be its main metaphors. The corpus data suggests that people rather characterize shame as either a 'negative' substance (NUISANCE, DIRT, OBSTACLE, LOST MONEY), A HURT TO THE BODY, or A VALUABLE COMMODITY.

If we compare the rudimentary models for shame with Kövecses's (1990: 184–185) 'prototypical cognitive model of emotion', we notice that the latter pays little attention to the possibility of collective or social emotions, and that it emphasizes actions (behavioural reactions) which follow from the force of the emotion, rather than from religious, moral or social causes. If we accept his model as a generalization which is valid for emotions, we need to ask if shame actually behaves like an emotion concept in the present data, or whether it is largely a moral concept as well. We might also wish to amend Kövecses's model towards taking into account emotions in a social context.⁸

⁸ Kövecses himself is clearly aware of this, since his later work focuses on sociology and culture (2000, 2002, 2005).

Throughout this paper, I have emphasized that each aspect of the conceptualization of shame could be studied in more detail. Several research questions suggest themselves with regard to these aspects. To make this kind of study more linguistically-oriented, one might pay closer attention to the linguistic realizations of the physiological effects, behavioural reactions, related concepts, metaphors, metonymies, and causes on various levels, beginning from morphology and lexis and moving towards stylistics. To tie it more to the socio-historical context, one should turn to authors who deal with linguistic change and sociohistory. A further relevant question which potentially combines both linguistics and social studies is whose point of view the texts dealing with shame represent. Who experiences shame? Who assigns it to others?

Further corpus-based studies could be conducted either on pride or on a larger cluster of shame-related emotion words, such as *embarrassment* and *uneasiness*. If one continued to focus on whether an emotion is ‘positive’ or ‘negative’, it would be pertinent to ask what distinguishes one from the other. In our data, most of the subcategories under the aspects studied seemed to be ‘negative’, suggesting constraints on the body, moral judgment, or social mishap. On the ‘positive’ side, however, is the idea that shame helps people to live together.

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Selected Proceedings of the 2005 Symposium on New Approaches in English Historical Lexis (HEL-LEX)

edited by

R. W. McConchie, Olga Timofeeva,
Heli Tissari, and Tanja Säily

Cascadilla Proceedings Project Somerville, MA 2006

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Tissari, Heli. 2006. Conceptualizing Shame: Investigating Uses of the English Word *Shame*, 1418–1991. In *Selected Proceedings of the 2005 Symposium on New Approaches in English Historical Lexis (HEL-LEX)*, ed. R. W. McConchie et al., 143-154. Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Proceedings Project.

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Tissari, Heli. 2006. Conceptualizing Shame: Investigating Uses of the English Word *Shame*, 1418–1991. In *Selected Proceedings of the 2005 Symposium on New Approaches in English Historical Lexis (HEL-LEX)*, ed. R. W. McConchie et al., 143-154. Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Proceedings Project. www.lingref.com, document #1355.