Lexical and genre effects on the metaphorical conceptualization of SHAME in American English: A corpus-based investigation

Karolina Krawczak, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan

Introduction & research questions: This study presents a usage-based investigation of the figurative conceptualization of SHAME in American English. More specifically, it has two objectives, one methodological and the other descriptive. Methodologically, it seeks to combine qualitative corpus data analysis with multivariate modeling, thus advancing quantitative figurative language research (cf. Reijnierse *et al*. 2019; Glynn & Nordmark 2013; Ogarkova & Soriano 2018). The descriptions thus produced are not only empirically verifiable, but also generalizable, being representative of the sociolinguistic context under analysis. Descriptively, the aim is to map the metaphorical structure of the concept under examination, and while doing so identify possible genre and lexical effects in conceptual metaphor profiling. In other words, the question to be addressed here is whether different genres and different lexical exponents of the same concept are associated with different conceptual metaphors. The hypothesis is that variation in conceptual metaphor distribution across genres and lexemes will be observed. With regard to genre variation, fiction and magazines are expected to show greater abundance and heterogeneity in this respect than the section of spoken language.

Method, data & results: The concept of SHAME is operationalized through its two nominal instantiations, i.e., *shame* and *embarrassment*. The data were collected from three sections of the Corpus of Contemporary American English, i.e., fiction, magazine, and spoken. Data extraction involved manual search in a sample of 500 examples per genre and per lexeme of all the instances of metaphorical uses for the two lexical exponents of SHAME. This procedure was inspired by the Metaphorical Pattern Analysis put forward by Stefanowitsch (2004). The data thus obtained were annotated for four variables: <Key word>, <Genre>, <Source domain>, <Emotion cause>. Following that, the metadata were submitted to multivariate modeling. The results provide further empirical evidence for the existence of the conceptual metaphors already proposed for SHAME in prior research (e.g., Kövecses 1986; Tissari 2006; Fabiszak & Hebda 2007). However, their distribution across genres and lexemes was found to be uneven. This may demonstrate that conceptual metaphor profiling does manifest sensitivity to contextual variables such as genre and that near-synonymous lexemes display some variation in the source domains with which they are associated.

Keywords: metaphor, emotion, shame, corpus data, qualitative and quantitative analysis

References

Fabiszak, M. & Hebda, A. 2007. Emotions of Control in Old English: Shame and Guilt. *Poetica* 66: 1-35.

Glynn, D. & Nordmark, H. 2013. Anxiety between mind and society: A corpus-driven cross-cultural study of conceptual metaphors. *Explorations in English Language and Linguistics* 1: 107-130.

Hanks, P. 2004. The syntagmatics of metaphor and idiom. *International Journal of Lexicography* 17(3): 245-274.

Kövecses, Z. 1986. Metaphors of anger, pride and love. Amsterdam: John Benjarnins.

Ogarkova, A. & Soriano, C. 2018. Metaphorical and literal profiling in the study of emotions *Metaphor and Symbol* 33: 19-35.

Reijnierse, W. G., Burgers, C., Krennmayr, T., & Steen, G. J. 2019. Metaphor in communication: The distribution of potentially deliberate metaphor across register and word class. *Corpora* 14(3): 301-326.

Stefanowitsch, A. 2004. Happiness in English and German: A metaphorical-pattern analysis. In: M. Achard & S. Kemmer (Eds.), *Language, Culture, and Mind*, 134-149. Stanford: CSLI.

Tissari, H. 2006. Conceptualizing shame: Investigating uses of the English word *shame*, 1418-1991. In: R. W. McConchie, O. Timofeeva, H. Tissari, & T. Saily (Eds.), *Selected Proceedings of the 2005*

Symposium on New Approaches in English Historical Lexis, l43-154. Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Proceedings Project.