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British-English versus Polish "shame" and "guilt": an individualistic-collectivistic perspective

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BRYTYJSKO ANGIELSKIE A POLSKIE *WSTYD* *I WINA*: PERSPEKTYWA INDYWIDUALISTYCZNO- KOLEKTYWISTYCZNA

BRITISH ENGLISH VERSUS POLISH *SHAME* AND *GUILT*: AN INDIVIDUALISTIC-COLLECTIVISTIC PERSPECTIVE

Streszczenie

Na podłożu relatywnie bardziej indywidualistycznej kultury brytyjskiej względem relatywnie bardziej kolektywistycznej kultury polskiej (Hofstede 1980) „konceptualizacje brytyjsko-angielskiego *shame* i *guilt* zostały porównane z ich odpowiednikami *wstyd* i *wina* w języku polskim w celu ustalenia czy te poprzednie wskazywały na wzór zgodny z tym, jaki normalnie można znaleźć w kulturach indywidualistycznych, a te drugie zgodnie z kulturami kolektywistycznymi.

Słowa kluczowe: *wstyd*, *wina*, indywidualizm, kolektywizm, brytyjski angielski, polski, przekrój kulturowy, przekrój językoznawczy, GRID

Abstract

On the basis of the relatively more individualistic British culture versus the relatively more collectivistic Polish culture (Hofstede 1980), the conceptualisations of British English *shame* and *guilt* were compared with those of their respective Polish counterparts *wstyd* and *wina* to determine whether the former showed a pattern that conformed to what is normally found in individualistic cultures and the latter to collectivistic cultures. The results from the GRID instrument (Scherer 2005) were consistent with these expectations despite the reservations that were raised concerning conceptual and methodological criticisms of individualism and collectivism, and whether Polish culture had been particularly exposed to external influences in recent years following the fall of communism that might have increased its individualism. There was a trend showing that norm transgression was conceptualised by the British participants more as *guilt* and by the Polish participants more as *shame*. Other findings showed that *shame* had a higher outward action and focus than *wstyd* and that there was a greater distinction between *wstyd* and *wina* than between *shame* and *guilt* in terms of outward action versus withdrawal. Pearson correlation performed on the complete profile of 144 GRID features supported the relatively greater similarity of *shame* and *guilt*. These results are consistent with the relatively greater salience of *guilt* in British culture and of *shame* in Polish culture.

Keywords: *shame*, *guilt*, individualism, collectivism, British English, Polish, cross-cultural, cross-linguistic, GRID

1. Individualism vs. Collectivism

There is accumulating evidence that emotions are culturally and linguistically determined. For example, Ogarkova, Soriano and Lehr (2012) found that people of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds (English, German, French, Spanish, and Russian) provide different labels for emotional experiences pertaining to anger, shame, guilt, and pride. Further support comes from the lack of cross-linguistic equivalence between emotions. Wierzbicka (2009) explains that many languages do not have an equivalent to the English word *happy*, and Goddard (1997) observes that Malay lacks a word denoting English *surprised*. As self-conscious emotions, such as shame and guilt are central to cultural identity, it is important to examine the role of culture on the shaping of these particular emotions. Through socialisation and interactions with their parents and significant others, children learn the norms, values and emotions of their culture. One of the major cultural influences that shapes cultural identity and how we construe ourselves in terms of our relationships with others is the extent to which we see ourselves as individuals vis-à-vis connected with others. It was Hofstede's (1980) original work that led to the mapping of world cultures on the basis of individualism versus collectivism and spawned a plethora of studies investigating cross-cultural variation. Indeed, Hui and Yee (1994) reported that the results presented in over one third of published cross-cultural studies were interpreted in terms of individualism and collectivism at least to some extent. The comparison that is relevant for the purposes of the present chapter is that Britain, with a score of 89 on Hofstede's (1980) individualism-collectivism scale, is relatively more individualistic than Poland, which scores 60. The aim is to assess whether British English *shame* and *guilt* conform to the general pattern that has been demonstrated for this pair of self-conscious emotions in an individualistic culture, and if the Polish counterparts *wstyd* and *wina* follow the collectivistic pattern (e.g., Wallbott and Scherer 1995). First and foremost it is important to gain a thorough understanding of individualism and collectivism.

1.1 Individualism

In individualistic cultures one perceives oneself as an individual, autonomous entity and there is less emphasis placed on one's relationships to others. The various accounts of individualism share the fundamental features of more of an individualised construal of goals, uniqueness and control (Oyserman, Coon & Kemmelmeier 2002). Highlighting the personal autonomy associated with individualism, Hofstede (1980) views the inclusion of self-fulfilment and personal accomplishments in one's identity, the importance of rights in comparison with duties, and a focus on oneself and immediate family as central features. In contrast with collectivistic individuals who have relatively more interdependence within their in-groups (e.g., family, nation), individualists show a greater degree of independence from their in-groups, which is evidenced in the importance they place on personal goals in comparison with the goals of their in-groups, the emphasis that they place on personal attitudes over in-group norms, and their social behaviour conforming relatively more to exchange theory principles of individual costs and benefits (Triandis 2001). This relatively greater emphasis on the balance of the exchange of costs and benefits in their interpersonal relationships results in the formation and termination of their relatively more impermanent relationships being based on the shifts in these costs and benefits. According to Waterman (1984), individualists value the freedom to make choices on important issues, to take responsibility for themselves, to gain the maximum achievement with the abilities that they are endowed with, and to respect others. Schwarz (1990) states that individualism is characterised by contractual professional relationships, the importance of status achievement, and the negotiation of duties within social relationships. Individualists regard the formation of a positive self-concept as a fundamental personal characteristic that they closely associate

with personal achievement and having unique rather than shared personal opinions and attitudes (Triandis 1995). For individualistic individuals, being able to openly express one's emotions and the achievement of one's goals are inherent features of personal satisfaction (Diener and Diener 1995). Furthermore, in judgements and reasoning based on the causal inferences gained from person perception, responsibility for actions is decontextualised and deemed to fall on the individual rather than the situation (Choi, Nisbett & Norenzayan 1999).

1.2 Collectivism

The fundamental feature of collectivism is the closer interpersonal relationships that are present within groups, which result in these groups being more cohesive. Individuals within these groups have a greater obligation to fulfil their responsibilities towards other group members (Oyserman, Coon & Kemmelmeier 2002). Schwartz (1990) explains that the mutual obligations and expectations that exist within the communal, collectivistic groups are determined by the statuses held by the individual members. A central feature of collectivism is the in-group vs. out-group comparison as it emphasises the outcomes, aims and values that are common to the in-group (family, clan, ethnic religions, or other groups) vis-à-vis the out-group. The social, interconnected ties within the in-group are more important than the individual, autonomous functioning of the person within that group (Triandis 1995). Rather than being a certain rigid set of values that operate within a fixed in-group, Triandis proposes that the broad range of possible in-groups dictates that collectivism, in comparison with individualism, encompasses a relatively wider set of disparate values, attitudes and behaviours that cohere according to the different social dynamics of the specific in-groups (Hui 1988). Consistent with the more social elements of collectivism, self-concept is based on group membership (Hofstede 1980), and includes characteristics such as the sacrifice of the self for others and common goals, and the maintenance of good relations (Markus & Kitayama 1991). Well-being for the collectivist is determined by successful performance in social roles and the completion of duties (Markus & Kitayama 1991). Emphasis is placed on the achievement of in-group harmony by controlling the outward expression of emotions. As meaning is contextualised, social context and the situation are deemed more significant than the individual when drawing inferences from and attributing meaning to behavioural observation (Morris & Peng 1994). When it comes to relationality, collectivism regards membership to certain in-groups as relatively permanent and the natural way of things. Relationships within these in-groups are based on egalitarian principles, which engender a culture of generosity, but this does not extend to the out-group because of the rigid, relatively impermeable boundary that exists between them.

2. The Role of Religion

One of the possible underlying reasons for Britain being relatively more individualistic than Poland is the role played by the rise of Protestantism. One of the major historical influences that led to the predominance of individualism in western and English-speaking cultures was the Protestant work ethic, which is generally regarded as a major factor in the evolution of capitalism (Jones 1997). As Tamis-LeMonda et al. (2008) note, it was Max Weber (1904-1905/1958) who introduced the concept of the Protestant work ethic, proposing that its focus on innovation, achieving goals, hard work and personal responsibility are at the heart of capitalism and individualism. Weber (1985) (cited in Arslan 2001) believed that at the heart of the Protestant work ethic was religious individualism, which, unlike Catholicism, refers to a direct relationship between believer and God without the mediation of a clergy and the church, and that it is this that engenders the individualistic outlook associated with Protestantism. Weber further argued that this leads to the social loneliness

as well as the individual responsibility that is central to capitalism. In contrast with the individualism associated with the Protestant work ethic, in collectivistic religious cultures, such as Catholicism, people enjoy more tightly-knit connections with each other and their communities (Cohen and Hill 2007).

It is not necessary for an individual to be a practicing Protestant to have the characteristic feature and values normally associated with individualism. As Arslan (2001) observes, any individual brought up in a Protestant family, regardless of their beliefs and church involvement can be inculcated with Protestant work ethic values from their practicing Protestant parents and other family members. It is easy to see how such values might propagate within cultures across generations. Parents in individualistic cultures have been described as instilling in their children these Protestant work ethic values in order to encourage autonomy and independence (Tamis-LeMonda et al. 2008). The characteristic features of such autonomous upbringing are *personal choice*, which have been identified with fostering motivation, achievement and a unique identity; *intrinsic motivation*, which is associated with being optimistic about future success; *self-esteem*, which is based on the belief that one's personal achievements are based on a positive feeling about oneself; and *self-maximization*, which refers to being able to reach one's maximum potential (Iyengar & Lepper 1999). Equally, Catholic parents are likely to foster the more collectivistic values that are central to Catholicism in their children in a similar way. To summarise, it is easy to see how the relatively more individualistic Protestant values and the relatively more collectivistic Catholic values are maintained in their respective cultures by upbringing practice, regardless of religious conviction or church involvement.

3. Individualism and Collectivism: Criticisms and Influences

More recent research has questioned the established view of the stable social constructs of individualism and collectivism presented above. The main focal point of this challenge has centred on both conceptual and methodological criticism. Other research has highlighted the possible dynamism in these constructs, calling in question whether the traditional distinction between the relatively more individualistic Britain and the more collectivistic Poland might need to be revised.

3.1 Conceptual and Methodological Criticism

One of the main criticisms is that individualism and collectivism are conceptually "fuzzy" with many definitions and assessments being too broad and diffuse (Brewer and Chen 2007). Bond (2002, 76) similarly calls for more detailed understanding of these multifaceted constructs that permit "many different operationalizations". Fiske (2002, 87) questions the validity of the "characterization of cultures according to IND and COL" and proposes that instead of merely identifying how collectivistic cultures differ from individualistic cultures, we need to gain a more complete understanding of the intrinsic nature of the many collectivistic cultures around the world. It has also been argued that the individualistic and collectivistic construct has been applied too readily in attempts to understand a wide range of diverse cross-cultural issues (Bond 2002; Earley and Gibson 1998).

A number of methodological criticisms have been directed at empirical investigations into individualism and collectivism. Oyserman, Coon & Kemmelmeier (2002) highlight a number of methodological limitations in their comprehensive review of the literature. By using undergraduate participants, who may be more individualistic and less collectivistic (Fiske 2002), the generalizability of the results of many studies to the wider society is restricted. Other studies restrict the generalizability of the results to other nations, racial groups, or ethnic groups as they focus narrowly on a comparison between European

American undergraduates and either undergraduates from a single Asian country or a single ethnic minority group within America. Another problem concerns the different ways that researchers use and conceptualise individualism and collectivism. For example, when collectivism is assessed on the basis of belonging to in-groups and seeking advice from others, Americans see themselves as relatively collectivistic; however, they rate themselves as low in collectivism when researchers use duty to in-group in their measurement of collectivism. Finally, Oyserman, Coon & Kimmelmeier (2002) found that very few of the cross-cultural comparisons that they reviewed provided information on the ethnic background of their samples.

This criticism of individualism and collectivism has not received unanimous support. Schimmack, Oishi, and Diener (2005) argue in favour of individualism as an important and valid element of intercultural differences and that the apparent inconsistencies in the results can be explained by cross-cultural differences in self-report response styles. As noted by Brewer & Chen (2007, 134), when these response styles are statistically controlled “horizontal individualism shows high convergent validity with Hofstede’s (1980) original rankings of emotions on the I-C dimension”. However, in contrast with individualism, which is deemed to have a valid definition and assessment, Schimmack, Oishi, and Diener (2005) propose that the concept of collectivism may need to be reassessed. Such a distinction alludes to a rejection of the position that individualism and collectivism are conceptual opposites. Accumulating evidence supports the statement by Oyserman, Coon & Kimmelmeier (2002, 8) that individualism and collectivism “are better understood as domain-specific, orthogonal constructs differentially elicited by contextual and social cues”.

More research is required to address these conceptual and methodological concerns. The validity of these objections notwithstanding, the classification of cultures on the basis of individualism and collectivism has provided a great deal of insight in cross-cultural investigations.

3.2 Political and Social Influences in Poland and Britain

When one considers Hofstede’s (1980) assessment of countries in terms of individualism versus collectivism, one could be forgiven for drawing the conclusion that the assessment of cultures on the basis of individualism and collectivism measure permanent and fixed characteristics of cultures that are not influenced by contextual pressures. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to provide an in depth analysis of such influences, and so in keeping with the focus of the present chapter I will restrict the discussion to Poland and Britain. An attempt will be made to assess the possible specific effects of the fall of communism on collectivism in Poland, as well as political and social reform in the 19th and 20th centuries and the effects of the Second World War on individualism in Britain, and to provide a contemporary view of these two cultures.

3.2.1 The Fall of Communism in Poland

It is interesting to consider whether the political changes that occurred in 1989 in Poland had an influence on the relative individualism versus collectivism in that culture. It is easy to imagine the simple distinction between a relatively more collectivistic Poland becoming more individualistic in the post-communist, capitalist era. However, as Zondag, Van halen and Wojtkowiak (2009) argue, it is important to distinguish between the different spheres that might have been affected to a greater or lesser extent by this transition. Employing more fine-grained distinctions, it becomes clear from Skorowski (2007) that it is politics that has largely been affected. In contrast, the social and cultural realms, despite some increases in individualism in certain aspects, maintain similar levels of collectivism

to those found under communism. It might also be the case that younger adults, such as students, who are probably more influenced by Western and American culture, would have been more prone to individualism over collectivism during the period since the fall of communism. However, individualism and collectivism are deeply entrenched within cultures and are capable of withstanding external influences such as revolution and political turmoil for many generations (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005 (cited in Zondag, Van halen and Wojtkowiak 2009)). The recent possible exposure of Poland to more Western individualistic influences following the political changes in 1989 might therefore have made little impact on the relatively more collectivistic Polish culture. This is supported by the finding that a strong sense of collectivism has persisted in Poland (Reykowski 1994, 1998).

3.2.2. Possible Collectivistic Influences in 18th and 19th Century Britain

Britain has undergone transitions in the past which have been viewed as steps towards collectivism. It is important to determine whether these changes were grounded more in the political sphere or permeated into the social and cultural fabric of British life. Perkin (1977), for example, points to the general acceptance of the social policy changes in nineteenth-century Britain as a transition from individualism to collectivism and outlines seven collectivistic policy changes that were introduced. These were the state prevention of moral transgressions and physical dangers (e.g., regarding the employment of women and children in factories and mines); the provision of services by certain individuals or companies (e.g., the education of factory children); state finance to help the private provision of certain services (e.g., funding given to societies offering elementary education; the provision of a service directly by the state); voluntary work to provide a service (e.g., the Manchester Police Commissioners in 1819 initiated the provision of municipal services by extending their activities of lighting streets to selling gas to householders); the monopolisation by the state of an essential service or public utility (e.g., the Post Office takeover of the telegraph system in 1870); and the nationalization of the means of production, distribution, and exchange. Although these social policy changes were collectivistic in nature and improved the social conditions and welfare of many British people, it is questionable whether they had much of an impact on the collectivism expounded by Hofstede (1980). It can similarly be questioned whether social policies that led to the establishment of the welfare state and the national health service in the period after the second world war in Britain influenced the predominantly individualistic nature of British society.

It could also be deemed that during the Second World War there was a relatively greater influence of collectivism in Britain. However, although there was a great sense of common fight and pulling together, as one would expect from any nation in such a situation¹, it is not clear whether this represented a shift towards a greater degree of collectivism in the culture of Britain. It is quite likely and probable that the motivation to work with and help others in a time of need was based on a sense of duty that individuals felt was necessary at the time. Such action, based on an individualistic viewpoint, would not require individuals to change how they perceived their interpersonal relations with others. The possible sense of duty that encouraged greater collective action did not require a shift in self-perception from that based on an individual autonomous entity to one resting on closer interpersonal

¹ Although both Poland and Britain were affected by the possible collectivistic influence of the Second World War, Britain, being more individualistic, had the greatest possibility to change. It is also worth noting that the First World War also possibly exerted a collectivistic influence on Britain. However, the rousing speeches by Churchill and the isolation that Britain experienced between 1940 and 1941 when it stood alone against the Nazis could be deemed to have instilled a particularly strong sense of collectivism at this time.

relationships. A possible important factor influencing how one construes oneself is the contextual reference frame, which can be wider or more locally focused on one's immediate environment. During the Second World War, individuals were more likely to be engaged in the collective war effort at a national level out of a sense of duty, while at the same time viewing themselves as autonomous individuals with relatively loose connections with those in their immediate environment. The contextual reference frame can also possibly explain the apparent paradox between the relatively more individualistic culture of Britain and the civic sense of duty exhibited by British individuals to serve the local community and the nation, with the former having a more local reference frame and the latter a wider one.

3.3 Summary

With regard to the more general conceptual and methodological criticisms of individualism and collectivism, the objections that have been voiced need to be balanced with the plethora of information that has been gained. As a consequence of the political changes that occurred in Poland in 1989, Poland could have been more recently exposed to more influences than Britain to its relative standing in terms of individualism vs. collectivism. However, the speculation that Poland has recently experienced a shift towards a greater degree of individualism as a consequence of greater exposure to Western influence needs to be tempered with the possibility that these changes were more political than social or cultural in nature (Skorowski 2007) and the length of time taken by such changes to permeate and instigate change within a culture (Hofstede and Hofstede 2005). Considering the periods of collectivistic influence in Britain over the past 200 years, which have most notably included the social policy changes of the 19th century, two world wars, and the establishment of the welfare state and the National Health Service after the Second World War, it might be deemed surprising that Britain scored relatively high in individualism on Hofstede's collectivistic-individualistic scale in 1980. However, similar to the transition in Poland in 1989, it could be deemed that these changes were political in nature, exerting an influence at the societal level rather than influencing the collectivism associated with strengthened interpersonal relations with others at a more local level. The relatively greater sense of civic duty in Britain could also be deemed consistent with an individualistic focus on responsibility at the community or national level rather than a stronger influence of in-group on the formation of personal identity. On balance, the speculation that Poland might have become less collectivistic due to recent political changes is not supported by empirical evidence. Similarly, the apparent social and political collectivistic influences in Britain over the last two centuries, and the British civic sense of duty are inconsistent with Hofstede's (1980) more local definitions of collectivism and individualism. To conclude, there is no direct evidence to suggest a revision of Hofstede's observation that Poland is relatively more collectivistic than Britain. On the contrary, evidence shows that Polish participants exhibit collectivistic patterns in a number of spheres, including compliance behaviour (Cialdini et al. 1999) and aggression (Forbes et al. 2009).

4. Shame and Guilt in Individualistic versus Collectivistic Cultures

There is a great deal of evidence showing the cultural differences that exist between the two self-conscious emotions, shame and guilt, in collectivistic vs. individualistic cultures (e.g., Wong and Tsai 2007, Brierbrauer 1992, and Wallbott and Scherer 1995). To assess how these emotions differ in these two cultures one first needs to gain a more comprehensive understanding of shame and guilt.

Although the precise differences between shame and guilt are still a matter for debate, after reviewing the evidence Ogarkova, Soriano and Lehr (2012) offer a comparative

framework based on prototypical events. Shame is elicited in response to the violation of an important social standard in which the transgressor is concerned with others' actual or imagined evaluations, which might lead to external sanctions. The feeling of being small and the desire to avoid being seen by others lead to avoidance and withdrawal behaviours. Shame is more of an intense emotion than guilt and is associated with feelings of weakness and helplessness. Finally, there is no emphasis on reparations or penance. Guilt occurs when the violation of an important social norm results in remorse or regret. It is caused by internal sanctions and the individual is motivated to undertake actions in an attempt to deal with their misdemeanour, such as apologising, compensating the victim, or inflicting self punishment. There is little or no emphasis on whether the failure was public or not and there is no desire to avoid being seen.

A recap on the main features of collectivistic and individualistic cultures will enable an understanding of how shame and guilt might differ in Polish and English. Being relatively more individualistic, one would expect the British to have a greater degree of personal autonomy, weaker in-group relations, and place greater emphasis on personal attitudes over in-group norms. The relatively more collectivistic Poles, by contrast, emphasising closer interpersonal relationships within the in-group are more likely to view the maintenance of good relations and in-group harmony as important.

4.1 Collectivistic Cultures

When accused of committing a social misdemeanour it could be deemed that a Polish collectivist might, on the basis of the emphasis on good relations and harmony, be relatively more affected by such accusations. If one is accused of wrongdoing from significant others with whom one cherishes good relations, it is easy to understand how this would exert a relatively more intense effect. Therefore, one would expect the withdrawal and avoidance tendencies associated with shame that was outlined above should be more pronounced for a relatively more collectivistic culture such as Poland. Consistent with this, Wallbott and Scherer (1995), in a large-scale cross-cultural study involving participants from 37 countries who were required to describe instances in which they had experienced emotions including shame and guilt, observed that in collectivistic cultures shame adheres more closely to the general shame profile. Wallbott and Scherer (1995) refer to this as "real" shame, and further explain that this dominates but does not exclude the presence of guilt, which is quite distinct from shame.

4.2 Individualistic Cultures

Transgressing a social norm in an individualistic culture such as Britain is more likely to elicit guilt rather than shame. From the self-perception standpoint of an individualist, if one views oneself as an autonomous entity with relatively weaker in-group relations and a more dismissive attitude towards in-group norms, one is more likely to internally rationalise the validity of an external accusation. Rather than accepting such accusations, as a collectivist would on the basis of a greater degree of shared identity with the accusers, an individualist would rather internalise the accusation and provide a judgement of their own behaviour. From the above explanations of shame and guilt it is clear that this internal rationalisation is more akin to guilt than shame. As explained by Wallbott and Scherer (1995, 481-482), individualistic "cultures may be considered as "guilt cultures", where shame turns to guilt, or where shame experiences at least involve a rather large number of guilt components". This encroachment of guilt into shame in individualistic cultures results in similar shame and guilt experiences.

5. British English *Shame* and *Guilt* vs. Polish *Wstyd* and *Wina*

5.1 GRID Methodology

We have recently employed the GRID instrument (Scherer 2005) to provide a comparative assessment of British English *shame* and *guilt* and their Polish counterparts *wstyd* and *wina* (Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk and Wilson (2014). The GRID project is coordinated by the Geneva Emotion Research Group at the University of Geneva, the Swiss Centre for Affective Sciences, the Geneva Emotion Research Group, the HUMAINE Association and Ghent University. Our present research is part of a worldwide study of emotional patterning across 28 languages, two of which are represented by two varieties (English and Chinese).

The GRID instrument comprises a Web-based questionnaire composed of 24 prototypical emotion terms and 144 emotion features. These features represent activity in all six of the major components of emotion. Thirty-one features relate to appraisals of events, eighteen to psychophysiological changes, twenty-six to motor expressions, forty to action tendencies, twenty-two to subjective experiences, and four to emotion regulation. An additional three features refer to other qualities, such as frequency and social acceptance.

Participants completed the GRID in a controlled Web study (Reips 2002), in which each participant was presented with four emotion terms randomly chosen from the set of 24 and asked to rate each in terms of the 144 emotion features. They rated the likelihood that each of the 144 emotion features can be inferred when a person from their cultural group uses the emotion term to describe an emotional experience on a 9-point scale ranging from *extremely unlikely* (1) to *extremely likely* (9). Each of the 144 emotion features was presented on a separate screen, and participants rated all four emotion terms for that feature before proceeding to the next feature.

5.2 Results

The results showed that there was a trend consistent with the predictions that whereas *wstyd* would be relatively more associated than *wina* with the GRID feature “violation of laws or socially accepted norms”, *guilt* would be characterised by this feature relatively more than *shame*. This pattern is what one would expect of shame and guilt in collectivistic and individualistic cultures, with the relatively more collectivistic *wstyd* being more associated with norm transgression than individualistic *shame*, and individualistic *guilt* being more characterised by such transgressions than the relatively more collectivistic *wina*.

Further results supported the hypotheses that *shame* would have a significantly higher outward action and focus than the withdrawal and inward focus of *wstyd*, and that whereas *wina* would have a significantly higher outward action and focus than *wstyd*, there would be no significant difference in this regard between *shame* and *guilt*. Again, British English *shame* and *guilt*, and Polish *wstyd* and *wina* follow the pattern expected by a relatively more individualistic culture and a relatively more collectivistic culture, respectively. The individualistic nature of *shame* possibly results in the incorporation of more guilt features, and hence a greater outward action and focus than the “real” shame of *wstyd*, which is characterised more by withdrawal and an inward focus. Given the presence of guilt features in *shame*, it is not surprising that *shame* and *guilt* were found to be closer in terms of outward action/focus vs. withdrawal/inward focus than *wstyd* and *wina*. Pearson correlations performed on the complete profile of 144 GRID features provide some, albeit not too strong, support for the relatively greater similarity of *shame* and *guilt*, with the correlation coefficient being 0.88 for the British English emotions and 0.76 for *wstyd* and *wina*. The overall results follow the pattern predicted on the basis of *shame* and *guilt* being more individualistic than *wstyd* and *wina*.

6. Conclusions

The aim of this paper was to determine whether the pattern of findings for British English *shame* and *guilt*, and Polish *wstydz* and *wina* is consistent with what is normally found for these self-conscious in individualistic and collectivistic cultures, respectively. Conceptual and methodological criticisms regarding individualism and collectivism were addressed, as were political events, social policies and war on the relative standing of Britain as a more individualistic culture and Poland as a relatively more collectivistic culture. However, these concerns notwithstanding, the results from our laboratory (Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk and Wilson forthcoming) were consistent with the pattern that Wallbott and Scherer (1995) observed for shame and guilt in individualistic vs. collectivistic cultures. Specifically, our results supported the predictions based on the relatively more individualism of *shame* and *guilt* in comparison with the more collectivistic *wstydz* and *wina*: “violation of socially accepted norms” was conceptualised by the British participants more as *guilt* and by the Polish participants more as *wstydz*; *shame* had a higher outward action and focus than *wstydz*; and *shame* and *guilt* were relatively closer than *wstydz* and *wina* in terms of outward action/focus vs. withdrawal/ inward focus. Pearson correlation performed on the complete profile of 144 GRID features supported the relatively greater similarity of *shame* and *guilt*. It can be concluded that whereas *wstydz* conforms to the “real” shame that is characteristic of collectivistic cultures, the results of *shame* and *guilt* are typical of individualistic “guilt cultures”.

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