How Teachers Shape Children's Shame and Guilt Experiences:

Development of a Multicultural Instrument

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to explain the development of the cross cultural instrument, the Moral Conflict Situation Questionnaire (MCSQ) which was developed in Argentina for the purpose of collecting data about shame and guilt. Specifically, the MCSQ is used to rate: (a) children's behavior to a moral conflict, (b), teachers' interventions to the moral conflict in which a child is engaged, (c) and children's reaction to the intervention provided by the teacher. A description of the instrument items, validity, and reliability information was provided.

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The purpose of this paper is to discuss the development of the Moral Conflict Situation Questionnaire (MCSQ), a bilingual instrument that is helpful in assessing children's shame and guilt experiences through teacher/child interactions. Information gathered from the instrument will be helpful in guiding teachers on how to assist children in repairing emotional problems. Data gathered from this instrument was fundamental to the development of the Moral Conflict Development Theory.

Historically, the discussion about emotions started with Hume (1888). This philosopher first proposed the idea that emotions were of necessary importance in moral development and character building, placing sympathy and empathy at the center of his theory. Other researchers such as Hauser (2006), Le Doux (1999) and Frijda (1993) agreed that emotions should be given a special place when it comes to observing human behavior. Additionally, Hoffman's (2000) theory of induction concerning parents and the way in which they contribute to children's moral and emotional development and the internalization of moral rules has advanced the knowledge about emotions.

Building on Piaget's (1965) work about child development, the Moral Conflict Development Theory proposes that adults do shape the way in which children develop in the moral domain, especially in the way they shape certain moral emotions. The socialization process between child and parent is important because as Harter and Whitesell have proposed "the ability to experience these self-affects (emotions) is highly dependent upon one's socialization history" (Harter & Whitesell, 1989, p. 94).

Perspective(s) or Theoretical Framework

Guilt and Shame - Adult/Child Interactions

Adults have a great influence on how children live their social and moral development. Although it is true that parents are the first socialization agents, it is also true that teachers play a fundamental part as well. Children spend many hours at schools and encounter all sorts of moral rules, limits, and punishments presented by the teachers.

Specifically, the Moral Conflict Development Theory is based on techniques that indicate that both parents and teachers use certain socialization practices that contribute to the unfolding of guilt and shame in children. Most of the research indicates that guilt is positively related to empathy and responsibility in the reparation of harm (Barrett, 1995, Barret, 1998; Eisenberg, 2000; Ferguson & Stegge, 1995; Frijda, 1993, Hoffman, 2000, Lewis, 1993; Lewis 2000; Lewis, 2007; Tangney, Burgraff, & Wagner, 1995; Tracy & Robins, 2007; Williams, 1998). Guilt can be defined as a "painful feeling of disesteem for oneself, usually accompanied by a sense of urgency, tension and regret that results from empathic feelings for someone in distress, combined with awareness of being the cause of that distress" (Hoffman, 2000, p. 114).

Shame, on the other hand, is positively related to personal distress and fear of punishment, and sometimes to anger. It is a "highly negative and painful state that also results in the disruption of ongoing behavior, confusion in thought and inability to speak" (Lewis, 2000, p. 629). As opposed to guilt, shame does not lead to the reparation of the harm (Eisenberg, 2000; Lewis, 2000).

Moral development is a combination of the development of cognition, emotion, and behavior. We could assume, then, that if children learn to repair the harm they committed because they feel guilty and responsible for what they have done, they would be in a development track towards the internalization of moral rules.

Guilt and Shame - Teacher/Child Interactions

The special aspect and contribution of our theory is that it concerns teachers because they are also very important in contributing to children's moral development. We are actually transferring to schools what we know happens in homes given that children spend a significant amount of time with adults who are not their parents (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999). We focus on the assumption that a way in which teachers intervene after a moral mishap or antisocial action involving children is related to children's experience of guilt and shame. Another assumption is related to how secondary emotions will eventually contribute to the child's moral development. In particular, the manner in which teachers judge either the child's conduct or the child's entire self, and how they provide or fail to provide positive feedback regarding reparation of harm, which will ultimately shape the child's experience of guilt or of shame.

Most of the teachers have good insight and intuition on children´s moral development. They know there is such thing as a moral conscience, that children may feel guilty or shameful when doing something wrong, or even that some children are more empathetic with peers when it comes to comforting them. However, most of them have not had the chance to put all this knowledge together and make sense of the way cognition, emotions, and behavior interact in the whole process of moral development. They may not be aware of the fact that they themselves are a key part of the whole process of children's moral development. Following Vygotsky (1978), teachers could be actually working in the "Zone of Proximal Development" if they provide the necessary feedback when moral conflict arises among children. Following our data, when teachers have more of a *guilt style* children react positively in terms of reparation of harm – they too have more of a *guilt reaction*. This implies that *guilty* children might be on track for the internalization of moral rules.

Apparently, from the second year of life, parents begin to intervene effectively in moral mishaps and antisocial behavior at home (Barrett, 1998; Kochanska, 2002; Stipek, 1995). This means that children as young as two years old might start transforming transgression guilt into reparation. If we assume that this is true for schools as well, then we could definitely work with a wide range of teachers.

In addition, as Hoffman (2000) asserts, conflicts between children are very frequent. "Children in the 2- to 10-year age range experience parental pressure to change their behavior every 6 to 9 minutes on average, which translates roughly into 50 discipline encounters a day or over 15,000 a year!" (Hoffman, 2000, p.141). If we assume that children also have their own conflicts at schools with their peers, this means that we could observe teachers´ interventions in moral mishaps and antisocial behavior with a great deal of frequency. This information could then be used to provide teachers with feedback about their practices.

The Moral Conflict Development Theory is original in as much as it concerns teacher-child interaction and the way teachers shape children's emotional and moral development. This theory builds on the established literature of both guilt and shame which has been researched by authors like Eisenberg (2000), Hoffman (2000) and Lewis (2000).

Methods, Techniques, or Modes of Inquiry

The Moral Conflict Development Theory was based on the following research on emotions. Authors divide emotions into two large groups: primary and secondary. Primary emotions such as joy, fear, anger, sadness, disgust, and surprise, appear throughout the first year of life and are so called primary because they need practically no cognitive support (Lewis, 2007). They are also accompanied by prototypic facial expressions, which make them easily recognizable (Ekman, 1999). Babies, for instance, can not only feel and express fear, which includes brows raising and widening and tensing of mouth as well as fixation on stimulus, but also recognize it in other people.

Secondary emotions such as pride, shame, guilt, embarrassment, empathy, or envy, appear later in life because they are somewhat more complex. They are also called *moral*, *self-conscious* or *social* emotions. There are several characteristics that researchers attribute to these emotions. Lewis (2000) sustains that the emergence of *self-conscious* emotions, as he calls them, is due to some cognitive processes that involve the notion of self. "It is the way we think or what we think about that becomes the elicitor of pride, shame, guilt or embarrassment" (Lewis, 2000, p.623).

Lewis points out three typical characteristics of self-conscious emotions. In the first place, these emotions appear together with the notion of self as independent from others. Between 15 and 24 months, when children recognize themselves as separate from their mother, they are already capable of feeling empathy, shame, or guilt. In the second place, Lewis (2000) adds that these emotions involve a set of standards, rules, and goals - SRGs. These are normative standards that are passed on to children via culture and that refer to the behavior that is acceptable within a social group. In most cultures, for instance, hitting others is considered an antisocial action that hurts others. Children, thus, are raised with the rule *We do not hit each other*, which they already understand by age two. These SRGs must be known and incorporated into the child's cognition (Lewis, 2007). In the third place, Lewis (2000) points out the evaluation of one's actions, thoughts and feelings vis-à-vis these SRGs. Evaluation has to be internal, as opposed to merely external, in order for the self-conscious emotion to arise. That is, the child has to evaluate if his or her behavior, compared with the standards or rules he or she was raised in, falls short of them or, on the contrary, that it coincides with them.

But how does a child evaluate his or her own behavior? Hoffman (2000) sustains that it is a matter of responsibility. Once a child empathizes with the victim, and by casual attribution knows he or she is to blame, then he or she will feel responsible for what has happened. Stipek (1995) proposes that before a child can evaluate his or her own behavior vis-à-vis some normative standards set beforehand, a socialization process has been necessary. This means, according to

Stipek (1995) that caretakers are constant sources of information when children need to know what is acceptable and what is not acceptable in the social group to which he or she belongs.

Children constantly refer to the adult in order to know whether his or her behavior is in tune with the normative standards. With repeated feedback from the adult, in the form of approval or disapproval, praise, or punishment, the child will anticipate the adult's reaction and start to feel the emotion without needing the actual presence of the adult. In time, the child will internalize a pattern about what is socially and morally accepted in the culture he or she was raised in and will feel the emotion without the presence of an external audience. It is interesting to see that most authors agree with the idea that the presence of an audience is still necessary in the experience of secondary emotions. Only now the audience has been internalized, *Nobody sees me but I see myself*.

Evaluation of personal behavior is crucial to the emergence of secondary emotions. But different ways of evaluating personal behavior may lead to different emotional experiences. Children and people in general may make specific or global attributions when evaluating their own behavior. When the child evaluates success and focuses on the whole self, he or she will feel hubris; by contrast, if the child evaluating success focuses on a single action, he or she will feel pride. Likewise, when the child feels responsible for an action that goes against the SRGs and focuses on the whole self, then he or she will feel shame. "In shame, the focus of the negative evaluation is on the entire self… the entire self is painfully scrutinized and found lacking" (Tangney et al., 1995, p. 344). If, by contrast, the child feeling responsible for a bad action, only focuses on that action, then he or she will feel guilt. "Guilt seems to result when one has some sense of a "should" or a "shouldn't" that was violated…" (Barrett, 1998, p.78). A typical shameful assertion would be *I am a bad person because I have done something wrong*. A typical guilty assertion would be *I have done something wrong and I need to repair it*. Niedenthal, Tangney, & Gavanski (1994) assert that shame is

associated with the counterfactual thinking involving the desire to undo aspects of self; whereas guilt is associated with the counterfactual thinking involving the desire to undo aspects of behavior. The shameful person rarely does something to rectify the antisocial action he or she committed. By contrast, the guilty person usually tries to repair the harm or apologize.

It is interesting to see how the bodily postures of a child feeling shame as opposed to a child feeling guilt vary. Lewis (2000) described shame as "a highly negative and painful state that also results in the disruption of ongoing behavior, confusion in thought and an inability to speak. The physical action accompanying shame is a shrinking of the body, as though to disappear from the eye of the self or the other" (Lewis, p. 629). Barrett adds that the shameful person "avoids looking at others, hides the face, slumps the body, lowers the head and/or withdraws from contact with others" (1995, p. 41). Along the same lines, Stipek (1995) describes shame as "characterized in the literature by blushing and universal facial expressions consisting of eyes lowered, lips rolled inward, mouth corners depressed, and lower lip tucked between the teeth" (p. 241). Guilt, on the other hand, makes the child look up and move as if trying to repair the harm. Once the reparation is done, guilt disappears.

The Moral Conflict Development Theory has been validated by the literature discussed above. What follows is a description of the validation of the theory based on the description of a program, an instrument, and some preliminary data.

Development of the Moral Conflict Situation Questionnaire (MCSQ)

There have been several phases to the development of the Moral Conflict Development Theory. In the first phase, The *Values Project,* a five-year program was developed and implemented. The goal of this Project is to teach children moral values, such as responsibility, honesty, respect, and justice. The *Values Project* has been implemented in several provinces in Argentina. The didactic material includes a teacher training manual and

activities for children aged 4-9. It became increasingly evident that the *Values Project* needed to be evaluated for its effectiveness in promoting the internalization of prosocial skills in children.

The *Values Project* bears two instances of assessment. The first one aims at observing which prosocial attitudes have been incorporated in children as a consequence of the implementation of the *Values Project.* The second one is the Moral Conflict Situation Questionnaire [MCSQ] (Majdalani, 2010). The purpose of the MCSQ is to rate: (a) children's behavior to a moral conflict, (b), teachers' interventions to the moral conflict in which a child is engaged, (c) and children's reaction to the intervention provided by the teacher. The MCSQ assesses spontaneous moral conflicts among children as a way of making a diagnosis of what happens at schools while simultaneously observing if and how teachers are able to handle them. The way in which teachers handle children's moral conflicts is crucial to the experience of certain moral emotions in the children involved in the conflict. The dynamics observed between teacher and child to a child's moral conflict are deemed essential in the development of the Moral Conflict Development Theory. The MCSQ was originally developed in Spanish to collect data in Argentina and was later translated into English.

Development of the Moral Conflict Situation Questionnaire (MCSQ)

Validity. The MCSQ was developed in several steps. In the first step certain procedures were followed to assure the instrument was valid. They were: (a) developing items for the MCSQ which were based on the moral development literature on shame and guilt, (b) subjecting items to two experts´ advice, (c) conducting a pilot test, and (d) subjecting our instrument to the analysis of item discrimination.

Firstly, we developed items for the child's reaction. These items carefully followed the literature describing both guilt and shame:

	Child's emotional reaction	Authors who describe it
1.	The child lowers his/her head in order to avoid the teacher's or somebody else's sight.	Lewis (2000)
2.	The child looks down or covers his/her eyes in order to avoid the teacher's or somebody else's sight.	Barrett (1998)
3.	The child blushes.	Stipek (1995)
4.	The child bends his/her back o shrinks his/her body.	Lewis (2000)
5.	The child is unable to speak.	Lewis (2000)
6.	The child stops doing what he/she was doing or freezes.	Lewis (2000)
7.	The child gets away of the victim.	Barrett (1998)
8.	The child lies in order to elude responsibility.	
9.	The child looks up as if looking for a solution to the moral conflict situation.	Lewis (2000)
10.	The child looks for the teacher as a reference to what he/she should do.	Barrett (1998)
11.	The child is reflective and/or takes responsibility on what he/she has done.	Barrett (1998), Tracy & Robins (2007), Baumeister, Stillwell, & Heatherton (1995)
12.	The child talks with the victim.	Barrett (1998), Tracy & Robins (2007), Baumeister, Stillwell, & Heatherton (1995)
13.	The child shows empathy, sympathy, help or comfort towards the victim.	Barrett (1998), Tracy & Robins (2007), Baumeister, Stillwell, & Heatherton (1995)
14.	The child gives back to the victim what he/she took away from him/her.	Barrett (1998), Tracy & Robins (2007), Baumeister, Stillwell, & Heatherton (1995)
15.	The child spontaneously apologizes to the victim or because teacher says so.	Barrett (1998), Tracy & Robins (2007),

Baumeister,
Stillwell, &
Heatherton (1995)

Then, following the standpoint of Harter and Whitesell (1989) and Hoffman (2000)

about the importance of adults' socialization practices and interventions in children's

emotional reaction, we developed items for teacher's intervention:

	Type of teacher's intervention	Guit/Shame
1.	The teacher refers negatively to the child's person saying phrases such as "You are a liar" or "You are a bad boy/girl".	Shame
2.	The teacher reinforces a negative name previously given to the child saying phrases such as "You are always the same" or "What could we expect from you?"	Shame
3.	The teacher refers to a moral rule saying phrases such as "We do not hit each other", "We do not lie" or "We do not say bad words" without providing further explanation.	Shame
4.	The teacher leaves the child without a break, sends him/her to the corner or punishes him/her in an unrelated way to the conflict.	Shame
5.	The teacher expels the child out of the classroom.	Shame
6.	The teacher does not provide any suggestion to the child so that he/she can repair the harm committed.	Shame
7.	The teacher refers negatively to the child's conduct saying phrases such as "What you did was wrong" or "What you said is not true".	Guilt
8.	The teacher refers to the moral damage –real or hypothetical- and to the emotions implied in the conflict saying phrases such as "Would you like XX done to you?", "Look how sad Jamie is" or "We should not hurt each other".	Guilt
9.	The teacher helps the child repair the harm committed saying phrases such as "What can we do to make Jamie feel better?", "Ask Jamie to forgive you" or "Give back what you took away from him".	Guilt
10.	The teacher explains the spirit of a moral rule saying phrases such as "We do not hit each other because we would hurt others and be disrespectful to them."	Guilt
11.	The teacher tries to find out about the child's intentions saying phrases such as "Did you want to hurt him or was it unintended?"	Guilt
12.	The teacher leads a moral reflection with the group of children about the moral conflict situation.	Guilt
13.	The teacher talks about the emotions the children had.	Guilt
14.	The teacher helps the children elaborate moral judgments posing questions such as "Why is it wrong to hit each other?"	Guilt

15.	The teacher uses didactic material to work on the moral conflict situation (story, movie, game, role-playing).	Guilt
16.	The teacher gives moral advice for future episodes (reinforces a moral rule by writing it on the blackboard)	Guilt

After developing all items referring to teachers' intervention and children's reaction, we provided two experts on moral emotion theory with the basics of the literature on guilt and shame. They were then asked to assess each item belonging to teachers' intervention and children's reactions and to categorize them either as guilt (G) or shame (S). The experts´ answers coincided 100% with the categorization of our items.

We also indicated to the experts that we wanted to use the information gathered for developing an instrument to determine teachers´ roles in resolving conflicts among children and the development of shame and guilt. The experts agreed with the way in which we did this. Also, thanks to one of the expert's advice, we added social and demographic data, such as: teachers´ seniority in the teaching profession, teachers´ seniority in the current school, number of children in the group observed, age of children and type of school.

The pilot test was conducted to further improve the validity of the study and the following procedures were used. Monitors (persons who actually observed the moral conflicts and filled in the questionnaire) where asked to test the instrument, and provide suggestions. We previously gave monitors the complementary paper which described shame and guilt in detail. Monitors were especially asked to provide more detail on moral conflicts. This resulted in a list of 15 antisocial actions, partly provided by the monitors and partly provided by the literature:

	Item	Dimension
1.	The child speaks louder or makes annoying noises.	Shouting
2.	The child insults or uses aggressive language.	Insulting
3.	The child hits or pushes.	Aggressive behavior
4.	The child pulls other's hair.	Aggressive behavior

5.	The child takes out his/her tongue or spits.	Aggressive behavior
6.	The child verbally quarrels (over something or about the rules of a game).	Quarrelling
7.	The child bothers or provokes other with words or actions, trying to make him/her react.	Bothering
8.	The child takes or ruins other's belongings or productions (copybooks, backpacks) or wishes to impose his/her will over others.	Subduing
9.	The child is intentionally indifferent to others asking for help or does not listen to others.	Ignoring
10.	The child criticizes or laughs at others because of physical or intellectual limitations, looks, actions, belongings or productions (drawing, grades). The child might disqualify others by giving him/her nicknames.	Disapproving/Mocking
11.	The child puts others aside (says "You go", "You don´t play with us", "You are nobody", "You are not my friend").	Rejecting / Excluding
12.	The child makes gestures as if trying to hurt other, or says something like "I´m gonna kill you" or "I´m gonna hit you".	Threatening
13.	The child says things which are not true, exaggerates, slanders, denies or unfairly accuses other.	Lying
14.	The child takes away other's belongings –stuff, money- in order to intentionally keep them with the other's consent.	Stealing
15.	The child does not abide by a promise or a task and harms others.	No responsibility

Also, monitors suggested adding whether the conflicts were among children or between children and teachers. Monitors finally suggested the possibility of qualitatively describing the moral conflicts and of writing any other child reactions different from those apparently belonging to guilt and shame:

	Child's emotional reaction	**Apparent Emotion**
16.	The child cries.	Sadness
17.	The child says he/she did not do it on purpose.	Sadness
18.	The child justifies his/her behavior.	
19.	The child finds trouble apologizing.	
20.	The child is indifferent to the teacher's intervention.	Indifference
21.	The child seems surprised with the teacher's intervention.	Surprise
22.	The child responds with a threat.	Anger
23.	The child increments his/her anger.	Anger

This pilot test (106 surveys) was conducted in 4 different cities in Argentina (San Carlos de Bariloche, Malargüe, Ushuaia, and Río Grande) and described moral conflicts in groups at schools.

Sample

We analyzed 230 protocols, correspondent to teachers from public and private schools living in Río Grande (43%; n=99), and Ushuaia (57%; n=131). The protocols are those administered during years 2009 and 2010 and of those, 83.5% (n=192) of the participants teach in a public school and 16.5% (n=38) in a private school. Of the participants, 23.9% (n=55) teach in Kindergarten, 23.9% (n=55) in Preschool, 9.1% (n=21) in 1st Grade, 13.5% (n=31) in 2nd Grade, and 18.7% (n=43) in 3rd Grade, 2.2% (n=4) work as a director or vice-director of the institution, and 8.7% (n=20) teach in 4th Grade or more.

As far as seniority in the teaching profession is concerned, the range was between 1 and 25 years of professional work (mean of 10.14 and a SD of 5.38); 61.1% (n=140) had between 1 and 10 years of professional work, 35.4% (n=81) between 11 and 20 years, and 3.5% (n=8) between 21 and 25 years.

Concerning seniority in the current school, the range was between 1 and 22 years (mean of 4.05 and a SD of 3.8), 91.7% (n=211) teach in the same school with a seniority ranging from 1 and 10 years, while 8.3% (n=19) teach in the same school with seniority ranging from 11 and 22 years. Regarding number of children in classes, 2.1% (n=5) of participants teach in groups of 10 or fewer children, 38.7% (n=89) teach in groups of 11 to 20 students, and 59% (n=123) teach in groups of 21 to 30 students, and 2.3% (n=5) indicated that they work with groups with more than 40 students. Eight protocols did not provide responses to the question about number of children taught.

Validation of the Instrument

With our 2009 and 2010 data already in hand (230 surveys), we subjected the two most important parts of the instrument – teachers´ intervention and children's reaction - to a principal component analysis with Varimax rotation and Kaiser Criterion of normalization. This gave us the possibility of leaving every item, as each one of them was selected at least once by any one of the monitors (>5%).

For teachers´ interventions: we used Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) which showed a .823 coefficient and the Bartlett Sphericity Test showed =763.680, gl 120, p <.000, all which demonstrated that the number of participants was adequate to the number of items. All this resulted in a two-factor structure which corresponds to the theoretical construct of shame and guilt, which explained to 38.42 % of the variance. The first factor corresponded to 27.2 % of the variance and only 1 item (item 3) indicated a loading with less than .30. We need to continue testing what happens with this item (See Tables 1 and 2).

For children's reactions, we used Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) which indicated a .684 coefficient and the Bartlett Sphericity Test showed =1086.555, gl 253, p < .000, all which demonstrated that the number of participants was adequate to the number of items. All this resulted in a two-factor structure which corresponds to the theoretical construct of shame and guilt, which explained 46.41 % of the variance. The first factor corresponded to 27.53 % of the variance. This procedure demonstrated that items 3, 5, 6, 8, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22 and 23 show saturation inferior to .40 to represent one of both factors or double weighing. Nevertheless, we purposely left these items in order to continue testing the instrument (See tables 3 and 4).

With regard to reliability, the MCSQ is still in stages of development. In order to verify the homogeneity of the two most important parts of our instrument with all original items included (teachers´ intervention and children's reaction) we analyzed the reliability by

means of Cronbach's alpha coefficients. As far as teachers´ intervention is concerned, the

Cronbach's alpha coefficient was moderate, both for items representing shame (α=.508) and

for items representing guilt (α=.791). As far as child's reaction is concerned, the Cronbach's

alpha coefficient was also moderate both for items describing the shame experience (α=.647)

and for items describing the guilt experience (α=.693) (See Tables 5, 6, 7 and 8). These

results are encouraging if we compare them with the 2009 results, where Cronbach's alpa

coefficient was low for the child's reaction concerning shame.

Statistical Correlation Between Teachers´ Intervention and Children's Reactions

One of the questions the instrument tries to answer is whether there exists a

correlation between teachers´ intervention and children's reaction. That is, do teachers´

pedagogical style foster certain emotional reactions in children? In order to answer this

question, we did the following:

In order to verify the existence of statistically significant correlations between

teachers´ intervention and child´ reaction, we calculated a Pearson correlation coefficient and

observed that there was a moderate/high correlation between teachers´ interventions related

to guilt and children's reactions related to guilt too (r =.765, p = 0.01). There is as well a

significant but lower correlation between teachers´ interventions related to shame and

children's reactions related to shame too. (r =.357, p = 0.01).

Our results, then, would seem to imply that teachers´ *guilt style* or *positive*

interventions might be fostering children's *guilt reactions* in terms of empathy and reparation

of harm, that is, the child's visible experience of guilt. The same does not completely hold for

the *shame style* or *negative interventions* and the children's *shame reactions*. Our aim is to

continue testing the instrument during 2012, and see whether the shame construct is weaker

than the guilt construct. Nevertheless, our results nicely pair with those about guilt and shame

in children conducted by Zahn-Waxler and Robinson (1995). Guilt and not shame is

influenced by environment, which in this case has to do with parental intervention. The way in which parents, especially mothers, discipline their children – provide affective explanations, explain a moral rule – is positively related to the reparation of harm during several years. "For guilt, the influence of shared environment became stronger with age and the evidence for genetic influence disappeared…" (Zahn-Waxler & Robinson, 1995, p. 158). However, the same is not true for shame. Which begs the question, Is shame a more "genetically influenced" emotion?

One such intervention that deserves further research is the way in which teachers give children the opportunity of being *in control* of the situation. When teachers make children aware of the fact that they *can* do something to repair the harm, children feel better and actually do something. This goes along Hoffman's (2000) lines about fostering responsibility, and along Lindsay-Hartz and colleagues (1995) proposing that "people with a higher internal locus of control, as opposed to an external locus of control, will be more likely to experience guilt" (Lindsay-Hartz et al., 1995, p. 291). And we would add "and thus repair the harm."

Also, some of our 2008 results (although not our 2009/2010 results) have shown a positive correlation between shame and anger in children, something which needs to be further investigated but which has definitely been posed by authors such as Tangney and colleagues (1995, 2007), Fergusson and Stegge (1995) and Lindsay-Hartz and colleagues (1995). "Shame also seems to motivate some people to react with rage. This type of rage reaction can be seen as a common defense against shame, but it is not an essential part of the experience of shame" (Lindsay-Hartz et al., 1995, p. 296).

Moral Conflict Situation Questionnaire (MCSQ) and 2010 Results

Sample

We analyzed 107 protocols, correspondent to teachers from public and private schools living in Río Grande (n=50), and Ushuaia (n=57). Of the respondents, 86% (n=92) belonged to a public school and 14% (n=15) to a private school. Related to teaching assignment, 20.6% (n=22) of the participants teach in Kindergarten, 20.6%m (n=22) in Preschool, 7.5% (n=8) in 1st Grade, 12.1% (n=13) in 2nd Grade, and 21.5% (n=23) in 3rd Grade Further, 2.4% (n=3) indicated that they worked as a director or vice-director of the institution and 15% (n=16) teach in 4th Grade or more.

As far as seniority in the teaching profession is concerned, the range was between 1 and 23 years of professional work (mean of 10.02 and a SD of 5.4), 60.8% (n=65) had between 1 and 10 years of professional work, 35.4% (n=38) between 11 and 20 years, and 3.8% (n=4) between 21 and 23 years.

Concerning seniority in the current school, the range was between 1 and 22 years (mean of 3.8 and a SD of 3.9), 94.4% (n=101) teach in the same school with seniority ranging from 1 and 10 years, while 5.6% (n=6) teach in the same school with a seniority ranging from 11 and 22 years. Related to number of students taught, 52.3% (n=56) indicated that they teach in groups of 10 to 20 students and 43% (n=46) teach in groups of 21 to 26 students. Five protocols left this question unanswered.

Description of the Instrument

There are six parts to the MCSQ (see Appendix). The first part requests demographic information such as: teachers´ seniority in the teaching profession, teachers´ seniority in the current school, number of children in the group observed, age of children and type of school. The second part requests qualitative information about the moral conflict situation observed. Nevertheless, we code the conflicts after the descriptions the monitors make (See Table 9 for

2010 results). Further, we analyzed antisocial behavior in order to determine which appeared more frequently in each course (See results in Table 10).

The third part requests information on whether the conflict was between child/child, child/teacher or both. Our 2010 figures indicate that most conflicts (59.8%) take place among children. Nevertheless, we do also register conflicts between children and teachers (37.4%). Only one conflict was both among children and between children and teachers (0.9%). The fourth part requests more information on the action that generated the moral conflict (15 items). Additionally, this part details the antisocial actions related to the conflict (See Table 11 for 2010 results).

The fifth part requests information on the teacher's intervention to the moral conflict (16 items). This part describes teachers´ actions and sayings regarding the moral conflict. Following the theoretical construct, we have divided teachers' pedagogical style into two factors: the *shame style* and the *guilt style*, each one of which is composed by several items (6 items belong to the *shame style* and 10 items belong to the *guilt style*).

Teachers´ shame style (6 items):

- The teacher judges the child's entire self. Example of item: "You are a bad boy";

- The teacher focuses only on the moral rule. Example of item: "This behavior is forbidden". Our analyses indicates a problem with this item, which apparently belongs to both shame and guilt;

- The teacher establishes a punishment. Punishments are disconnected from previous actions and therefore do not lead to the reparation of the harm committed. Example of item: "Get out of the classroom".

Teachers' guilt style (10 items):

- The teacher judges the child's conduct. Example of item: "What you did was wrong";

- The teacher focuses on the harm committed and induces empathy in the child. Example of item: "Look how sad Jamie is";

- The teacher establishes a consequence as the reparation of the harm committed: guides the child in restablishing the previous order. Example of item: apologizing.

Apparently, we observe more of a *guilt style* in teachers (See Table 12).

The sixth part requests information on the children's reactions to the teacher's intervention to the moral conflict (23 items). For example, this part describes two ways of reacting, one related to the experience of shame and the other related to the experience of guilt. Further, this part includes children's reactions not related to shame or guilt, but to anger, indifference, surprise or sadness (this was included following monitors advice during the pilot test).

Children's shame reaction:

- Looks down

- Eludes sight

- Face gets red

- Body comes inward

- Is unable to speak

- Gets away from victim

Children's guilt reaction:

- Looks up

- Looks for teacher

- Apologizes

- Shows empathy for the victim

- Repairs the harm committed: gives something back, buys a new toy, etc.

We observe more of a *guilt reaction* in children (See Table 13).

Conclusion

The Moral Conflict Development Theory was developed in Argentina, a Spanish-speaking country. An instrument (MCSQ*)* was developed to gather data in order to validate the theory. It was developed originally in Spanish and has now been translated into English. Data have been gathered from children ages 4-9 in four cities Argentina in children. Thus, generalizability remains limited to demographic characteristics shared by this sample. Preliminary validation results indicate the factor structure for both the children's and teachers' interaction styles are factors identified as guilt and shame. Further, preliminary reliability results that the coefficients range in the moderate range.

It is our intention to continue to collect data in Argentina and extend the data gathering to other cities in Argentina and the U.S. A next step would be to analyze the data by gender to investigate if there are gender differences. Also, it is our intention to test this instrument at homes and compare the results with those belonging to schools.

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APPENDIX 1: TABLES

Table 1: Factorial matrix. Teachers´ intervention with Varimax Rotation.

Item	Guilt	Shame
1	-.071	.725
2	-.137	.693
3	-.262	.080
4	-.078	.580
5	-.110	.481
6	-.489	.374
7	.153	.303
8	.617	-.001
9	.693	-.100
10	.471	-.277
11	.627	-.083
12	.744	-.139
13	.762	-.038
14	.651	.025
15	.543	.028
16	.305	-.314

Table 2: Factorial matrix. Teachers´ intervention with Varimax Rotation without item 3.

Item	Guilt	Shame
1	-.064	.726
2	-.129	.694
4	-.072	.581
5	-.104	.483
6	-.492	.380
7	.167	.301
8	.616	-.008
9	.700	-.109
10	.465	-.282
11	.624	-.090
12	.743	-.148
13	.755	-.046
14	.658	.016
15	.540	.021
16	.308	-.318

Table 3: Factorial matrix. Children's reaction with Varimax Rotation.

Item	Guilt	Shame
1	.186	.628
2	.111	.674

3	.364	.729
4	-.039	.657
5	-.031	.155
6	.239	-.319
7	-.187	.557
8	-.015	.091
9	.654	-.011
10	.431	-.052
11	.605	.061
12	.611	.363
13	.447	.339
14	.054	-.156
15	.517	.383
16	-.110	.349
17	-.015	-.025
18	.255	.008
19	-.289	.085
20	-.513	.011
21	.063	.165
22	-.593	.226
23	-.540	.395

Table 4: Factorial matrix. Children's reaction with Varimax Rotation without items 3, 5, 6, 8, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22 y 23.

Item	Guilt	Shame
1	.640	.195
2	.776	.042
4	.740	-.095
7	.543	-.084
9	-.139	.725
10	-.109	.485
11	-.046	.681
12	.261	.710
13	.264	.543
15	.320	.596

Table 5: Teachers´ intervention. Shame dimension

Item	Description	Saturation
1	The teacher refers negatively to the child's person saying phrases such as "You are a liar" or "You are a bad boy/girl".	.726
2	The teacher reinforces a negative name previously given to the child saying phrases such as "You are always the same" or "What could we expect from you?"	.694
4	The teacher leaves the child without the break, sends	.581

	him/her to the corner or punishes him/her in an unrelated way to the conflict.	
5	The teacher expels the child out of the classroom.	.483
6	The teacher does not provide any suggestion to the child so that he/she can repair the harm committed.	.380
	Total Alpha Cronbach	.508

Table 6: Teachers´ intervention. Guilt dimension

Item	**Description**	**Saturation**
7	The teacher refers negatively to the child's conduct saying phrases such as "What you did was wrong" or "What you said is not true".	.301
8	The teacher refers to the moral damage –real or hypothetical- and to the emotions implied in the conflict saying phrases such as "Would you like XX done to you?", "Look how sad Jamie is" or "We should not hurt each other".	.616
9	The teacher helps the child repair the harm committed saying phrases such as "What can we do to make Jamie feel better?", "Ask Jamie to forgive you" or "Give back what you took away from him".	.700
10	The teacher explains the spirit of a moral rule saying phrases such as "We do not hit each other because we would hurt others and be disrespectful to them."	.465
11	The teacher tries to find out about the child's intentions saying phrases such as "Did you want to hurt him or was it unintended?"	.624
12	The teacher leads a moral reflection with the group of children about the moral conflict situation.	.743
13	The teacher talks about the emotions the children had.	.755
14	The teacher helps the children elaborate moral judgments posing questions such as "Why is it wrong to hit each other?"	.658
15	The teacher uses didactic material to work on the moral conflict situation (story, movie, game, role-playing).	.540
16	The teacher gives moral advice for future episodes (reinforces a moral rule by writing it on the blackboard)	.308
	Total Alpha Cronbach	.791

Table 7: Children's reaction. Shame dimension

Item	**Description**	**Saturation**
1	The child lowers his/her head in order to avoid the teacher's or somebody else's sight.	.640

2	The child looks down or covers his/her eyes in order to avoid the teacher's or somebody else's sight.	.776
4	The child bends his/her back or shrinks his/her body.	.740
7	The child gets away of the victim.	.543
	Total Alpha Cronbach	.727

Table 8: Children's reaction. Guilt dimension

Item	Description	Saturation
9	The child looks up as if looking for a solution to the moral conflict situation.	.725
10	The child looks for the teacher as a reference to what he/she should do.	.485
11	The child is reflective and/or takes responsibility on what he/she has done.	.681
12	The child talks with the victim.	.710
13	The child shows empathy, sympathy, help or comfort towards the victim.	.543
15	The child spontaneously apologizes to the victim or because teacher says so.	.596
	Total Alpha Cronbach	.693

Table 9: Moral conflicts described by monitors (107 surveys).

Antisocial actions	%	Frequency
Aggressive behavior	18.75	21
Ignoring	17.86	20
Subduing	16.07	18
No responsibility	12.5	14
Stealing	7.14	8
Bothering	7.14	8
Rejecting / Excluding	6.25	7
Disapproving / Mocking	4.46	5
Insulting	4.46	5
Shouting	2.68	3
Threatening	0.89	1
No conflict	0.89	1

Table 10: Children's antisocial behavior by grade.

Antisocial action	n=23 Kinder	n=22 Preeschool	n=8 1º grade	n=16 2º grade	n=24 3º grade	n=1 Director	n=2 Vice Director	n=16 4º grade or more
Insulting	1	----	----	2	1	----	----	1
Aggressive	6	4	1	2	3	----	----	5

behavior							
Shouting	1	----	----	----	2	----	----	----
Bothering	2	4	1	----	1	----	----	----
Threatening	----	----	----	----	1	----	----	----
Subduing	6	4	----	2	3	1	----	2
Desaproving/ Mocking	----	1	----	----	4	----	----	1
Ignoring	4	3	1	3	3	----	1	5
Rejecting/ Excluding	----	3	2	2	----	----	----	----
Stealing	----	----	----	4	4	----	----	----
No responsibility	3	3	2	1	2	----	1	2
No conflict	----	----	1	----	----	----	----	----

Table 11: Children's antisocial behavior. Frequency.

Nº	Antisocial actions	%
1.	The child speaks louder or makes annoying noises.	21.7
2.	The child insults or uses aggressive language.	12.3
3.	The child hits or pushes.	31.1
4.	The child pulls other's hair.	0.9
5.	The child takes out his/her tongue or spits.	2.8
6.	The child verbally quarrels (over something or about the rules of a game).	5.7
7.	The child bothers or provokes other with words or actions, trying to make him/her react.	15.1
8.	The child takes or ruins other's belongings or productions (copybooks, backpacks) or wishes to impose his/her will over others.	19.8
9.	The child is intentionally indifferent to other's asking for help or does not listen to other.	23.6
10.	The child criticizes or laughs at other because of physical or intellectual limitations, looks, actions, belongings or productions (drawing, grades). The child might disqualify other by giving him/her nicknames.	10.4
11.	The child puts other aside (says "You go", "You don't play with us", "You are nobody", "You are not my friend").	7.5
12.	The child makes gestures as if trying to hurt other, or says something like "I'm gonna kill you" or "I'm gonna hit you".	4.7
13.	The child says things which are not true, exaggerates, slanders, denies or unfairly accuses other.	7.5
14.	The child takes away other's belongings –stuff, money- in order to intentionally keep them with the other's consent.	9.4
15.	The child does not abide by a promise or a task and harms others.	34.9

Table 12: Teachers´ intervention. Frequency.

Nº	Teacher's intervention	%
1.	The teacher refers negatively to the child's person saying phrases such as "You are a liar" or "You are a bad boy/girl".	7.5
2.	The teacher reinforces a negative name previously given to the child saying	8.5

	phrases such as "You are always the same" or "What could we expect from you?"	
3.	The teacher refers to a moral rule saying phrases such as "We do not hit each other", "We do not lie" or "We do not say bad words" without providing further explanation.	33
4.	The teacher leaves the child without the break, sends him/her to the corner or punishes him/her in an unrelated way to the conflict.	8.5
5.	The teacher expels the child out of the classroom.	10.4
6.	The teacher does not provide any suggestion to the child so that he/she can repair the harm committed.	43.4
7.	The teacher refers negatively to the child's conduct saying phrases such as "What you did was wrong" or "What you said is not true".	25.5
8.	The teacher refers to the moral damage –real or hypothetical- and to the emotions implied in the conflict saying phrases such as "Would you like XX done to you?", "Look how sad Jamie is" or "We should not hurt each other".	21.7
9.	The teacher helps the child repair the harm committed saying phrases such as "What can we do to make Jamie feel better?", "Ask Jamie to forgive you" or "Give back what you took away from him".	23.6
10.	The teacher explains the spirit of a moral rule saying phrases such as "We do not hit each other because we would hurt others and be disrespectful to them."	25.5
11.	The teacher tries to find out about the child's intentions saying phrases such as "Did you want to hurt him or was it unintended?"	10.4
12.	The teacher leads a moral reflection with the group of children about the moral conflict situation.	23.6
13.	The teacher talks about the emotions the children had.	15.1
14.	The teacher helps the children elaborate moral judgments posing questions such as "Why is it wrong to hit each other?"	1.9
15.	The teacher uses didactic material to work on the moral conflict situation (story, movie, game, role-playing).	3.8
16.	The teacher gives moral advice for future episodes (reinforces a moral rule by writing it on the blackboard)	14.2

Table 13: Children's reaction. Frequency.

N°	Child´s reaction	%
1.	The child lowers his/her head in order to avoid the teacher's or somebody else's sight.	11.3
2.	The child looks down or covers his/her eyes in order to avoid the teacher's or somebody else's sight.	10.4
3.	The child blushes.	5.7
4.	The child bends his/her back o shrinks his/her body.	8.5
5.	The child is unable to speak.	8.5
6.	The child stops doing what he/she was doing or freezes.	32.1
7.	The child gets away of the victim.	11.3
8.	The child lies in order to elude responsibility.	4.7
9.	The child looks up as if looking for a solution to the moral conflict situation.	25.5

10.	The child looks for the teacher as a reference to what he/she should do.	22.6
11.	The child is reflective and/or takes responsibility on what he/she has done.	27.4
12.	The child talks with the victim.	10.4
13.	The child shows empathy, sympathy, help or comfort towards the victim.	5.7
14.	The child gives back to the victim what he/she took away from him/her.	6.6
15.	The child spontaneously apologizes to the victim or because teacher says so.	10.4
16.	The child cries.	10.4
17.	The child says he/she did not do it on purpose.	1.9
18.	The child justifies his/her behavior.	12.3
19.	The child finds trouble apologizing.	6.6
20.	The child is indifferent to the teacher's intervention.	19.8
21.	The child seems surprised with the teacher's intervention.	6.6
22.	The child responds with a threat.	7.5
23.	The child increments his/her anger.	13.2

APPENDIX 2

MORAL CONFLICT SITUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

City: _____

Demographic data (teacher):

Seniority in teacher performance: _____

Seniority in current school: _____

Current course: _____

Number of children in current course: _____

Type of school:

○   Public
○   Secular
○   Private
○   Religious

Describe in detail the moral conflict situation observed:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Specify:

a.   Subjects involved in the moral conflict situation described above:

Child/Children – Child/Children	
Teacher/s – Child/Children	

b.   Action/s identified as generators of the moral conflict situation described above:

1.	The child speaks louder or makes annoying noises.	
2.	The child insults or uses aggressive language.	
3.	The child hits or pushes.	
4.	The child pulls other's hair.	
5.	The child takes out his/her tongue or spits.	
6.	The child verbally quarrels (over something or about the rules of a game).	

7.	The child bothers or provokes other with words or actions, trying to make him/her react.	
8.	The child takes or ruins other's belongings or productions (copybooks, backpacks) or wishes to impose his/her will over others.	
9.	The child is intentionally indifferent to other's asking for help or does not listen to other.	
10.	The child criticizes or laughs at other because of physical or intellectual limitations, looks, actions, belongings or productions (drawing, grades). The child might disqualify other by giving him/her nicknames.	
11.	The child puts other aside (says "You go", "You don´t play with us", "You are nobody", "You are not my friend").	
12.	The child makes gestures as if trying to hurt other, or says something like "I´m gonna kill you" or "I´m gonna hit you".	
13.	The child says things which are not true, exaggerates, slanders, denies or unfairly accuses other.	
14.	The child takes away other's belongings –stuff, money- in order to intentionally keep them with the other's consent.	
15.	The child does not abide by a promise or a task and harms others.	

c. Teacher's intervention in the moral conflict situation described above:

1.	The teacher refers negatively to the child's person saying phrases such as "You are a liar" or "You are a bad boy/girl".	
2.	The teacher reinforces a negative name previously given to the child saying phrases such as "You are always the same" or "What could we expect from you?"	
3.	The teacher refers to a moral rule saying phrases such as "We do not hit each other", "We do not lie" or "We do not say bad words" without providing further explanation.	
4.	The teacher leaves the child without the break, sends him/her to the corner or punishes him/her in an unrelated way to the conflict.	
5.	The teacher expels the child out of the classroom.	
6.	The teacher does not provide any suggestion to the child so that he/she can repair the harm committed.	
7.	The teacher refers negatively to the child's conduct saying phrases such as "What you did was wrong" or "What you said is not true".	
8.	The teacher refers to the moral damage –real or hypothetical- and to the emotions implied in the conflict saying phrases such as "Would you like XX done to you?", "Look how sad Jamie is" or "We should not hurt each other".	
9.	The teacher helps the child repair the harm committed saying phrases such as "What can we do to make Jamie feel better?", "Ask Jamie to forgive you" or "Give back what you took away from him".	
10.	The teacher explains the spirit of a moral rule saying phrases such as "We do not hit each other because we would hurt others and be disrespectful to them."	
11.	The teacher tries to find out about the child's intentions saying phrases such as "Did you want to hurt him or was it unintended?"	

12.	The teacher leads a moral reflection with the group of children about the moral conflict situation.	
13.	The teacher talks about the emotions the children had.	
14.	The teacher helps the children elaborate moral judgments posing questions such as "Why is it wrong to hit each other?"	
15.	The teacher uses didactic material to work on the moral conflict situation (story, movie, game, role-playing).	
16.	The teacher gives moral advice for future episodes (reinforces a moral rule by writing it on the blackboard)	

d. Child's reaction after teacher's intervention:

1.	The child lowers his/her head in order to avoid the teacher's or somebody else's sight.	
2.	The child looks down or covers his/her eyes in order to avoid the teacher's or somebody else's sight.	
3.	The child blushes.	
4.	The child bends his/her back or shrinks his/her body.	
5.	The child is unable to speak.	
6.	The child stops doing what he/she was doing or freezes.	
7.	The child gets away of the victim.	
8.	The child lies in order to elude responsibility.	
9.	The child looks up as if looking for a solution to the moral conflict situation.	
10.	The child looks for the teacher as a reference to what he/she should do.	
11.	The child is reflective and/or takes responsibility on what he/she has done.	
12.	The child talks with the victim.	
13.	The child shows empathy, sympathy, help or comfort towards the victim.	
14.	The child gives back to the victim what he/she took away from him/her.	
15.	The child spontaneously apologizes to the victim or because teacher says so.	
16.	The child cries.	
17.	The child says he/she did not do it on purpose.	
18.	The child justifies his/her behavior.	
19.	The child finds trouble apologizing.	
20.	The child is indifferent to the teacher's intervention.	
21.	The child seems surprised with the teacher's intervention.	
22.	The child responds with a threat.	
23.	The child increments his/her anger.	