



Components of Emotional Meaning: A sourcebook

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CHAPTER

24 Pride is not created equal: Variations between Northern and Southern Italy

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Abstract

Pride is one of the most culture-sensitive emotions, and cultural variations have been identified in its appraisal, expressive, and subjective feeling components. Such differences have been related to the societal values of personal achievement and honor. On the basis of the GRID questionnaire, we investigated how the prototypical meaning of *pride* changes between two groups of Italian speakers (one from the North and one from the South of the country). For historical, economic and linguistic reasons, indeed, Northern and Southern Italians may show slight differences with regard to their emotional cultures. Results showed that there are small variations in the meaning of *pride* (for the appraisal and feeling components) and that these differences are reminiscent of those found between collectivistic and individualistic cultures. Findings are discussed on the basis of the potentially different importance of the orientation towards others for Northern and Southern Italians.

Keywords: [pride](#), [Appraisal](#), [Feeling](#), [intra-linguistic](#), [Italian](#), [meaning](#), [Language](#), [Italy](#)

Subject: [Developmental Psychology](#), [Social Psychology](#)

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The majority of cross-cultural studies of emotions analyzed the differences between very dissimilar and geographically separated cultures, while only few studies dealt with regional differences, that is, cultural differences within a single country. Indeed, many countries, due to historical and/or geographical reasons, are not culturally homogeneous and, in principle, their different regions should be analyzed separately when considering cultural aspects. In the light of the economical and historical differences between its North and South regions and the quite recent linguistic unification, Italy may be one of these countries. In the current research, using the GRID data, we wanted to test whether Northern Italians and Southern Italians differ with respect to the meaning of emotion terms. We focused our analysis on pride (*orgoglio*, in Italian) because it is considered extremely sensitive to cultural influences (Eid & Diener, 2001), and it is experienced in very different ways across societies (Hofstede, 1984; Marcus & Kitayama, 1991).

In this chapter, we will first describe the category of self-conscious emotions in order to introduce pride and its main features. Subsequently, we will review some evidence about the cultural variability of pride. Finally, we will present an analysis of the GRID data to determine if and how the meaning of pride differs between Southern and Northern Italians.

24.1 Pride as a positive self-conscious emotion

p. 367 Shame, pride, embarrassment, and guilt are usually labeled “self-conscious emotions” (Darwin, 1872; Lewis, 1992, 1997). These emotions imply sophisticated cognitive abilities, that is, “thinking what others think of us” (Darwin, 1872, p. 325), that are not necessarily implicated in the experience of primary emotions.² Recently, Tracy and Robins (2004a) listed five features which are distinctive of the category of self-conscious emotions. First, the elicitation of self-conscious emotions requires that the person has self-awareness, self-representations, and the capacity of self-evaluation. Indeed, self-conscious emotions imply the evaluation of behavior with respect to a culture dependent set of standards, rules, and goals (Lewis, 1992; Stipek, Recchia, McClintic, & Lewis, 1992). Second, several studies proved that self-conscious emotions emerge only when children are 3 years old, that is, when they have awareness of their mental acts and the capacity of self-evaluation. Only at about that age do children experience unspecific emotional states like empathy or embarrassment and even later they start to experience more specific self-conscious evaluative emotions (Lewis, 1992, 2003; Sullivan, Bennet, & Lewis, 2003). Third, self-conscious emotions evolved to promote the attainment of social goals, by helping people in being proper member of groups, and avoiding the occurrence of more negative emotions like anger or contempt (Haidt, 2003). Fourth, self-conscious emotions do not have universal facial expressions, but they are consistently expressed and recognized starting from other nonverbal expressive cues, namely body postures – as is the case for pride (Tracy & Robins, 2004b, 2008) and blushing (Darwin, 1872; Crozier, 2001; Keltner & Harker, 1998).³ Finally, self-conscious emotions are cognitively complex, because they always require at least three evaluations: about the agency (internal vs external attribution; Weiner, 1986), about the event (success or failure), and about global or specific aspects of the self.

Pride is the prototypical positive self-conscious emotion, which is experienced in consequence of an event appraised as a personal achievement (Lewis, 2003, 2008).⁴ Pride is experienced when the person evaluates the event as a success with respect to his/her standards, goals, and rules (achievement) and he/she considers himself/herself personally responsible for the success (Lewis, 1997). The attribution of the success to either the global self, or a specific aspect of it, determines which forms of pride will be experienced. The first form of pride is called “alpha” pride (Tangney, 1990), hubris (Lewis, 1992) or hubristic pride (Tracy & Robins, 2007b). In this form, pride is directed at the global self of the person (“I am good”), is ego-focused, and relates to both arrogance and narcissism (Lewis, 2000; Tracy, Cheng, Robins, & Trzesniewski, 2009). The second form of pride has been called “beta” pride (Tangney, 1990), pride (as opposed to hubris, Lewis, 1992), or authentic pride (Tracy & Robins, 2007b). In this form, pride is directed at the specific behavior (“I did well”), relates to achievement motivation (Stipek, 1998) and to self-esteem (Tracy et al., 2009), and it is morally relevant (Hart & Matsuba, 2007). Both forms of pride evolved as emotions adaptive to attain higher social status (Tracy, Sharif, & Cheng, 2010). Human social status can derive either from agonistic (force threat – dominance) or non-agonistic (excellence in valued domains – prestige) sources (Henrich & Gil-White, 2001). Tracy and colleagues (2010), argue that the physical agonistic behavior, in contemporary human societies, is substituted by more subtle verbal and nonverbal displays. Hubristic pride evolved to foster a reputation of dominance – and thus a higher social status – without the need of physical attacks. Conversely, authentic pride evolved to motivate the attainment of prestige by evidencing one’s accomplishments and inhibiting aggression (Tracy et al., 2010).

24.2 Cultural variability of pride

p. 368 Most cross-cultural models describe societies in terms of how much they focus on the individuals (individualism) rather than on the society as a whole (collectivism), assuming the existence of a continuous dimension between the two poles of pure individualism and pure collectivism (Hofstede, 1984; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Individualism and collectivism, indeed, are both present in every society and have been related to two different forms of self: the independent self, more diffused in individualistic societies, is characterized by a unique configuration of inner attributes that define the person with respect to the other members of the society; the interdependent self, more diffused in collectivistic societies, is characterized by the other selves, with the conception that the self is made of its social relationships (Hofstede, 1984; Marcus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, Bontempo, Villareal, Asay, & Lucca, 1988). In societies where collectivism prevails, the person is not supposed to be completely independent from the others, but to harmoniously fit in the societal organization of roles and duties. These two cultures, thus, imply different conceptions of what is well-being and which are the elements at the basis of positive emotions (e.g., Galati, Manzano, & Sotgiu, 2006).

Culture influences emotions in many different aspects (e.g., Mesquita, Frijda & Scherer, 1997; Russell, 1991a), and this is even more true for self-conscious emotions because they imply social awareness and cognitive effort (Tangney & Fischer, 1995). Social awareness depends on culture because it entails the set of standards, goals and rules which are culturally determined and learnt through socialization (Lewis, 1992; Mascolo, Fischer, & Li, 2003). Similarly, the cognitive elements of emotions (i.e., appraisal) are influenced by the culture in which the evaluation occurs (Mesquita & Ellsworth, 2001; Roseman, 1991; Scherer, 2001, 2009; Scherer & Brosch, 2009).⁵ A recent wave of studies showed that pride, in particular, is deeply intertwined with the culture to which the person belongs; for example, Eid and Diener (2001) found for pride the largest differences between Australia, China, Taiwan, and United States in terms of norms for experiencing emotions (see also Van Osch et al., in this volume). The effect of culture on pride is partly mediated by two societal values, which have different relevance and salience in collectivistic and individualistic cultures: achievement, personal or collective, and honor.

In those societies where individualism prevails, personal achievement is one of the most prominent socially rewarded goals and it plays an important role in determining individuals' self-esteem (Maehr, 1974; Triandis et al., 1988). As a consequence, it is accepted that individuals mark their personal achievements by overtly expressing their pride. Conversely, in those societies where collectivism prevails, self-esteem is dependent on social harmony, and, as a consequence, individuals accept and expect the expression of pride for an achievement that benefits others too and not only the person (Stipek, 1998). The experience of group pride depends on the activation of collective self-representations, which are more salient in societies where collectivism is more diffused (Tracy & Robins, 2008).

Honor – the self-respect judged by the person himself/herself and by others (Pitt-Rivers, 1965) – has been deemed relevant for the experience of pride (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Rodriguez Mosquera, Manstead, & Fischer, 2000, 2002). Typically, in an individualistic culture, honor is associated to personal achievements and positive feedbacks, whereas in a collectivistic culture honor is associated to behavior that enhances interdependency (Rodriguez Mosquera et al., 2002). A series of studies compared Spanish and Dutch respondents – considered as having, the first, an honor-based and a rather collectivistic culture; and, the second, a rather individualistic culture – with respect to the elicitation, the experience and the communication of pride (Fischer, Manstead, & Rodriguez Mosquera, 1999; Rodriguez Mosquera et al., 2000). On the basis of prototypical descriptions of pride, Fischer and colleagues (1999) found that pride is a more readily salient emotion for Spaniards than for Dutch, confirming that an honor-based culture assigns to pride an important position in the emotional domain. Furthermore, Dutch respondents referred the experience of pride to personal achievement and to self-related appraisals, whereas Spaniards reported more frequently other-related appraisals. Finally, Spaniards were more ambivalent toward pride reporting more negative feelings, and

p. 369

a less frequent and more controlled expression. Although differences in terms of antecedents and phenomenological contents were not confirmed in a subsequent study (Rodríguez Mosquera et al., 2000), these findings seem to suggest an important role for honor and personal achievement in pride, and that collectivism-individualism may be a meaningful dimension on which to compare the experience of pride in different cultures. Both theory and evidence suggest that societies in which individualism prevails, value pride higher than those where collectivism is dominant (Eid & Diener, 2001). The different importance given to the values of honor and personal achievement may be at the basis of these variations in the judgment of pride.

The present research

We wanted to use the GRID data to test whether Northern and Southern Italians differ with respect to the implicit meaning of pride. Italy provides a good opportunity for a case study on the existence of regional differences in the implicit meaning of emotion words. All Italians, nowadays, speak the same language but the process of linguistic unification throughout the country took place only recently. One century ago only a small percentage of Italians could speak Italian, while (regional) dialects were the only languages known and spoken. The diffusion of a common Italian language happened only during the twentieth century and even now more than half of Italians use dialect on some occasions (De Mauro, 2005). In consequence of this only recent linguistic integration, it seems possible that the same Italian emotion word could have slightly different variation in meaning when used by Italians from different regions.

In addition to the linguistic argument, some scholars suggested that Northern and Southern Italians differ with regard to some social and cultural aspects (Galasso, 2002; Putnam, 1993). Southern Italians are stereotypically described as being more religious than Northern Italians (Putnam, 1993), as giving family a central position in their lives, and as being more “emotional” and expressive (Galasso, 1997; Pennebaker, Rimé, & Blankenship, 1996). Emotions, indeed, were typically indicated as one of these elements that vary between Northern and Southern Italians, and some studies documented differences between Northern and Southern Italians with respect to their emotional experience (Galati, 1987; Giovannini & Ricci-Bitti, 1986). In particular, differences have been found for the ability of recognizing emotions – with Northern Italians better able to recognize emotions from bodily cues (Brunori, Ladavas, & Ricci-Bitti, 1979; Giovannini, 1983) – and for emotional antecedents, with Northern Italians more centered on the self and Southern Italians on others and their relationships (Galati & Sciaky, 1995). Most of these differences suggest that, in general, Northern Italians have a culture closer to the individualism pole than the Southern Italians, which are thus closer to the collectivism pole than Northern Italians (for a similar position see, Knight & Nisbett, 2007; Ruggiero, 2001; Ruggiero, Hannover, Mantero, & Papa, 2000).

Furthermore, Southern Italians give more importance to honor than Northern Italians (Galasso, 1997). On this basis, Southern Italians may be more similar than Northern Italians to other Mediterranean societies in the conceptualization of pride (Fischer et al., 1999). On the contrary personal achievement seems more relevant for individualistic societies (Hofstede, 1984) and thus may be more central for Northern Italians (Galati & Sciaky, 1995).

We adopt a multicomponential perspective to the cross-cultural study of emotions (Eid & Diener, 2001) and we predict that the implicit meaning of the word pride will differ between Northern and Southern Italians in terms of three different emotion components: appraisal, subjective feeling, and emotional expression. First, in terms of appraisal, Southern Italians are supposed to be more other-oriented than Northern Italians, thus more frequently implicating “others” in their evaluations (Galati & Sciaky, 1995). We predict that Northern Italians and Southern Italians will differ for the implicit meaning of pride with regard to the social relevance of the eliciting event of pride. In particular, we predict that Northern Italians usually imply from the word pride that the emotion was elicited by an event that was more relevant for the individual than for the community; on the

contrary, for Southern Italians, we expect that the meaning of pride implies an emotion elicited by an event that can be equally relevant for the community and/or the self.

Second, pride was related to a different degree of subjective pleasantness, higher for the individualistic cultures with respect to the collectivistic ones (Fischer et al., 1999; Stipek, 1998). Pride, by focusing on the individual and signaling that the person deserves a higher status in the group, may be more ambivalent in collectivistic societies (Fischer et al., 1999; Rodriguez Mosquera et al., 2000). We hypothesize that, similarly, pride is typically a less positive emotion for Southern Italians than for Northern Italians due to the more other-oriented perspective of the firsts. We expect to find this difference in the description of the prototypical meaning of pride at the level of subjective feeling. We predict that Northern Italians estimate more likely than Southern Italians that when a person uses the word pride, he/she refers to a positive subjective feeling, and that this difference in the prototypical subjective feeling is not due to a difference in the appraisal of intrinsic pleasantness. In other words, we hypothesize that both Northern and Southern Italians assume that the word pride refers to a pleasant event. The different degree of pleasantness appears only at the level of subjective feeling, when other emotion components and cognitive evaluations are involved (i.e., the role of others).

Third, it has been suggested that individuals with an interdependent self would exert more control on the expression of pride. Indeed, as found for Spaniards (Fischer et al., 1999), the expression of pride is less overt in collectivistic societies because of its potential of threatening the harmonious functioning of the society. Similarly, the orientation toward others, which is supposedly more present in Southern Italians than in Northern Italians, should be reflected in a different regulation of the expression. We predict that Southern Italians consider more likely than Northern Italians, that pride implies control of the nonverbal expression.

Method

The GRID questionnaire was administered to psychology students of three different Italian universities: two for Northern Italy, University of Turin (n = 168) and University of Bologna (n = 122) – and one for Southern Italy, University of Bari (n = 191). Each participant rated four emotion terms on the 144 items of the questionnaire. For the current research we retained only those participants who rated the word *orgoglio* (pride), yielding a total of 78 respondents (Southern Italy, n = 29; Northern Italy, n = 49).

In order to test our predictions, we considered 13 items of the GRID questionnaire, and, based on them, we computed five variables specifically defined for the testing of our hypotheses (see Table 24.1).

Table 24.1 List of GRID items used in the current research and emotional component to which they pertain

Emotion component	Item number	Study variable	Item
Appraisal			
	i6	Pleasantness	[...] in itself pleasant for the person
	i7	Pleasantness	[...] in itself pleasant for somebody else
	i8	Pleasantness	[...] in itself unpleasant for the person
	i9	Pleasantness	[...] in itself unpleasant for somebody else
	i10	Personal relevance	[...] important and relevant for person's goals
	i11	Personal relevance	[...] important and relevant for goals of somebody else
Feeling			
	i118	Pleasant feeling	[...] felt good
	i121	Pleasant feeling	[...] felt at ease
	i123	Unpleasant feeling	[...] felt negative
	i128	Pleasant feeling	[...] felt positive
	i133	Unpleasant feeling	[...] felt bad
Regulation*			
	i140	Control	[...] showed the emotion to other less than s/he felt it
	i141	Control	[...] hid the emotion from others by smiling

Note: *Regulation is seen as a moderator of other components.

p. 371

We considered six items related to the Appraisal component. Two items referred to the relevance of the eliciting event for the individual's goals (*i10*) and for those of someone else (*i11*). For testing our first hypothesis, we calculated a variable, *Personal Relevance* (computed as $i10 - i11$, see Table 24.1), that is a measure of how much the prototypical eliciting event implied in pride is specifically relevant for the individual. Positive values indicate that the prototypical elicitor of pride is something more relevant for the goals of the person than for those of someone else – the opposite for negative values. Four items referred to the appraisal of the intrinsic pleasantness of the eliciting event (*i6*, pleasantness for the person; *i7*, pleasantness for somebody else; *i8*, unpleasantness for the person; *i9*, unpleasantness for somebody else). We calculated a single variable, *Pleasantness* (computed as: $(i6 - i8) + (i7 - i9)$, see Table 24.1), that takes into account the pleasantness of the eliciting event for both the self and the others as it was supposed by the raters. Higher values correspond to higher estimation of pleasantness of the prototypical eliciting event.

Five items were taken from the section of the GRID related to the subjective Feeling component of emotion (see Table 24.1). These five items were the ones that had the highest correlation (either negative or positive) with the VALENCE dimension in the analysis reported by Fontaine and colleagues (2007).⁶ Three of these items correlated with similar negative strengths to the VALENCE dimension (*i118*, felt good; *i121*, felt at ease; *i128*, felt

positive) and they were added to compute a single variable: *Pleasant Feeling*. High values indicate that the meaning of the emotion word typically refers to pleasant subjective feelings. Two other items correlated with similar positive strengths to the VALENCE dimension (*i123*, felt negative; *i133*, felt bad) and they were added to compute a single variable: *Unpleasant Feeling*. High values indicate that the meaning of the emotion word typically refers to unpleasant subjective feelings. We decided to keep pleasantness and unpleasantness separated for the Feeling component, because, beside positive and negative, an emotion can be conceived as neutral in VALENCE (both variables close to the central value of their range) or as an ambivalent emotion state (both variables with values higher than the central value of their range).

The last two items were related to the likelihood of implying down-regulation strategies of expression in the meaning of pride, namely, “to show the emotion less than what was really felt” (*i139*), and to “hide it by smiling” (*i140*); a fifth variable, *Control*, was computed by adding these two items. High values indicate that the meaning of the emotion word implies that it is likely that people try to conceal the emotion expression.

Results

Means and standard deviations of the GRID items considered in the present study, organized by Region (North vs South), are reported in Table 24.2. Means and standard deviations of the five variables used to test our predictions are reported in Table 24.3, organized by Region.

Table 24.2 Means and standard deviations of the GRID items used in the current study in the North and in the South samples

Item	North (n = 49)		South (n = 29)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
i6	6.73	2.23	5.66	2.45
i7	5.39	2.29	5.34	2.09
i8	3.63	2.51	4.1	2.58
i9	3.96	2.33	4.59	2.68
i10	6.96	2.25	6.07	2.58
i11	5.02	2.63	5.66	2.18
i118	7.33	2.34	5.72	3.05
i121	6.78	2.32	5.14	2.96
i123	3.14	2.46	4.38	3.06
i128	7.47	1.78	5.1	3.14
i133	2.78	1.78	3.66	2.61
i140	5	2.48	5.62	2.34
i141	5.02	2.86	5.38	2.72

Table 24.3 Means and standard deviations of the five variables used in the present study for the North and the South samples

Variable	Computation	North (n = 49)		South (n = 29)	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Personal relevance	i10 – i11	1.94	2.50	0.41	3.03
Pleasantness	(i6 + i7) – (i8 + i9)	4.53	6.39	2.31	4.94
Pleasant feeling	i118 + i121 + i128	21.57	5.90	15.97	7.77
Unpleasant feeling	i123 + i133	5.92	3.49	8.03	5.15
Control	i140 + i141	10.02	4.17	11.00	4.34

p. 373

24.3 The relevance of the antecedents of pride⁷

Our first hypothesis was that Southern Italians and Northern Italians would have partly different prototypical representations of the eliciting event of pride, especially in terms of its relevance. Accordingly, Northern Italians reported significantly higher value ($M = 1.94$; $SD = 2.50$) than Southern Italians ($M = 0.41$; $SD = 3.03$) for the personal relevance of the typical eliciting event implied from the meaning of pride (see Table 24.3; *Personal Relevance*; $MD = 1.52$; $SE = 0.63$; $t(76) = 2.41$, $p < 0.05$). Higher values indicated that the meaning of pride implies an eliciting event appraised as more pertinent to the goals of the individual who experiences pride than to those of someone else. For Northern Italians, the event that is prototypically implied by pride is something relevant for the person with no particular consideration of the event's relevance for others; Southern Italians, on the contrary, did not make this distinction and rated approximately the same the likelihood that the prototypical eliciting event implied by pride is relevant for the person or for someone else. This finding is in line with the hypothesis that Southern Italians are in general more other-oriented than Northern Italians. In collectivistic societies, pride is especially well accepted when it is experienced and shown as a consequence of an event that benefits the group (or the community) to which the person belongs (Stipek, 1998). The difference we found between the prototypical meaning of pride for Northern and Southern Italians may reflect this belief, that for the latter the personal achievement is typically beneficial for the others too. Noticeably, the difference is not the agency at the basis of the success – for both Northern and Southern Italians, pride usually implies an event caused by the individual's behavior (see footnote 6) – but its relevance, more focused on the individual for Northern Italians. Current findings suggest that Southern Italians give more importance to group and societal bonds as elements prototypically implied in pride.

24.4 The pleasantness of pride

Our second hypothesis was that Northern and Southern Italians would differ in their prototypical representation of the subjective feeling that is implied by the word pride.

In terms of subjective feeling, Northern Italians, as predicted, reported that the word pride typically stands for an experience that is very likely related to pleasant feelings (see Table 24.2 and Table 24.3) while Southern Italians rated this likelihood significantly lower (see Table 24.3; *Pleasant Feeling*; $MD = 5.60$; $SE = 1.56$; $t(76) =$

3.60, $p < 0.01$). Accordingly, the likelihood that the word pride typically refers to an experience related to unpleasant feelings was rated lower by Northern Italians than by Southern Italians (see Table 24.3; *Unpleasant Feeling*; MD = 2.12; SE = 0.98; $t(76) = 2.16$, $p < 0.05$). Subjective feeling supposedly integrates all the other emotion components, being $\hookrightarrow$ the component corresponding to the emotional quality perceived by the subject (Scherer, 2001). Even though the subjective feeling typically implied by pride is pleasant for both groups, Northern Italians use the word pride to refer to an emotion exclusively related to subjective pleasant feelings; Southern Italians, conversely, estimate the presence of pleasant feelings only slightly more likely than the presence of unpleasant feelings. The different degree of pleasantness of the subjective feeling inferred from Northern and Southern Italians suggests that in the two Italian regions people see the prototypical meaning of pride as qualitatively different. Northern Italians conceived pride as a desirable positive emotion as it is typical for most Western individualistic societies (Eid & Diener, 2001). On the contrary, Southern Italians did not exclude the presence of negative feelings in the prototypical experience of pride – which, nevertheless, remains positive – as it could be expected for individuals who have a more other-oriented perspective (Fischer et al., 1999; Rodriguez Mosquera et al., 2000; Stipek, 1998). If pride is due to personal achievement, a proud person, typically, demands to be regarded as someone who deserves higher social recognition than what he or she has: individuals who are more other-oriented could fear that asking for this status recognition could lead to social rejection if the request appears unjustified. Southern Italians may be more concerned by the reactions of others, thus including in the prototypical representation of pride negative feelings due to the social risks intrinsic to showing pride to other members of the in-group.

An alternative explanation for this finding would be that the difference in the prototypical subjective feeling is due to a dissimilar prototypical appraisal of intrinsic pleasantness. Indeed, legitimately, one could argue that Southern Italians included in the typical meaning of pride, its use for preserving honor, which is a more salient value for Southern Italians (Galasso, 1997). If this is the case, the more likely presence of unpleasant feelings would be due to the fact that Southern Italians considered possible that the eliciting event of pride was negative (as it is the case when pride happens in response to threats to one's honor). We investigated this hypothesis by analyzing the prototypical appraisal of intrinsic pleasantness in Northern and Southern Italians. Coherently with our explanation, we hypothesized that for both Northern and Southern Italians the prototypical event implied by pride was a positive event, that is, a personal achievement. The analysis confirmed that for both Southern and Northern Italians pride typically implies an intrinsically pleasant eliciting event with no difference between the two groups (see Table 24.3; *Pleasantness*; MD = 2.22, SE = 1.38; $t(76) = 1.61$, $n.s.$). This finding confirms that the typical elicitor of pride is a positive event (achievement) for Southern Italians too: the difference in the rating of the prototypical subjective feeling of pride, thus, does not seem due to a different prototypical pleasantness of the eliciting event implied by pride. We speculate that a purely positive subjective feeling is considered less likely by Southern Italians, because they include in the representation of pride concerns about potential negative reactions of other members of the in-group.

24.5 Regulation of pride

p. 375

Our third hypothesis concerned the difference between Northern and Southern Italians in the expected degree of regulation of the expression implied by pride. Even though Southern Italians seemed to imply a little more control in the expression of pride, there was no significant difference with Northern Italians (see Table 24.3; *Control*; MD = 0.98, SE = 0.99; $t(76) = 0.99$, *n.s.*). Previous studies hypothesized that the expression of pride is more controlled in collectivistic societies than in individualistic cultures (Fischer et al., 1999). Contrarily to this hypothesis, we did not find a similar difference between Northern and Southern Italians in our current analysis of the prototypical meaning of pride. For both groups, the meaning of pride does not necessarily imply hiding or deintensifying the expression. We can suggest two possible explanations. A first explanation would be that the meaning of pride does not include any clear and established indication regarding the regulation of its expression (neither exaggeration nor suppression). In other words, it would still be possible that Italians regulate their expression when they are feeling pride, but there is not a socially shared normative prescription at this regard that has become part of the prototypical meaning of pride. Furthermore, this potential regulation of expression can be different between Northern and Southern Italians: for example, Southern Italians may be more sensitive to contextual information. A second explanation is that the experience of pride is socially accepted in both groups and thus the expression, as it could be implied from the meaning of pride, does not need to be regulated.⁸ From this perspective, then, both groups can be seen closer to the individualistic pole than to the collectivistic one.

It is worth mentioning, however, that our variable measured whether Southern and Northern Italians differed in terms of the control exerted on the expression that could be implied from the meaning of pride, and not whether the two groups implied a different expressive behavior. Thus, it is still possible that the two groups, from the word pride, imply a different expressive behavior that is not regulated in both groups.

24.6 Conclusion

Previous research indicated that Northern and Southern Italians do not have exactly the same emotional culture (Galati & Sciaky, 1995; Giovannini & Ricci-Bitti, 1986; Pennebaker et al., 1996); we investigated whether these differences can be found in the case of pride and if they are similar to those found when comparing cultures positioned differently on the individualism–collectivism dimension (Hofstede, 1984; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). We predicted differences between Northern and Southern Italians in the meaning of pride for three emotion components: appraisal, subjective feeling and regulation of expression. In terms of appraisals, results confirmed that Southern Italians considered more likely than Northern Italians an eliciting event with positive consequences that was relevant for someone different from the individual. This suggests that Southern Italians are similar to other cultures (Spaniards) that consider the other members of the in-group in their prototypical appraisals of pride. Our prediction was confirmed for subjective feeling too: Southern Italians implied more negative feelings from the meaning of pride, while Northern Italians considered pride a clearly pleasant emotion. Contrary to our third prediction, the negative feelings implied by the meaning of pride, were not associated with a higher expectation of regulation strategies by Southern Italians.

All in all, we can conclude that, even though the meaning of pride is largely the same for the two groups, some differences exist. Such differences can be explained on the basis of a more diffused other-oriented perspective among Southern Italians, one of the traits more typical of a collectivistic culture. However, we cannot claim that Northern Italians have an individualistic culture and Southern Italians a collectivistic one. This for three reasons: first, we did not test directly the difference between Northern and Southern Italians in terms of individualistic or collectivistic traits; second, the literature is too scarce for affirming undoubtedly that Northern Italians and Southern Italians are examples, respectively, of individualistic and collectivistic cultures;

p. 376 third, our results indicate that also for Southern Italians the meaning of pride has aspects more typical of an individualistic perspective than a collectivistic one (the absence of regulation strategies and the social acceptance implied in the meaning of pride). We would rather suggest that the differences between the two groups are better explained by some specific values (e.g., the importance of the family, the consideration of others in their judgments) rather than an abstract counter-position of individualism with collectivism.

Two methodological considerations can be drawn from the current results. First, cultural differences may be found in terms of emotion components (Eid & Diener, 2001); the GRID questionnaire showed its suitability to perform this fine-grained investigation of prototypical meaning of emotion words. In our current study, differences between Northern and Southern Italians in the implicit prototypical meaning of pride for the Feeling component were not related to a difference for the Appraisal component (namely, intrinsic pleasantness). This shows the importance of adopting a multi-componential approach to emotion research, because each component reflects only one element of the whole emotional episode, and differences in one component are not necessarily replicated in other components (Eid & Diener, 2001; Scherer, 2001). This is especially true for subjective feeling, which integrates all the other components, and thus it is the result of multiple complex interactions between the different components. Second, the fact that we found differences in meanings, despite their evident similarity, indicates how important it is to consider cultural groups on the basis of other criteria than nationality. What we found for Italians – same emotion word, slightly different emotional implications from its meaning – may be found for other countries where, even if the language is the same, regional differences may be present because of historical reasons.

At least two limitations of the current research should be mentioned. First, a common limitation of all studies conducted with questionnaires conducted with is the fact that they are based on people's knowledge about emotions, thus stereotypes may play a role in describing prototypical aspects of emotions. Nevertheless, we think that finding differences in meaning reflects a cultural variability at least in terms of social normative evaluation of what is expected to elicit a particular emotion and/or how it is typically experienced and or expressed. Second, our analyses were based on few ad hoc variables, which disregarded most of the information that is made available by the GRID questionnaire. Focusing only on these variables may mislead toward the over-estimation of the differences that exist between the two groups. We were aware of this limitation but our goal was to analyze a very specific object in terms of very fine-grained elements: the identification of such differences required such a tailored approach.

Future studies should compare the descriptions of the meaning of pride with the reports of concrete personal experiences of pride. In other words, it would be interesting to check the degree of correspondence between frozen representations of affect, as it is the prototypical meaning of emotion word, and specific experiences. Future research should also compare different groups on the basis of some specific values (e.g., personal achievement, honor) or cultural traits (e.g., orientation toward others) going beyond broad categorizations – for example, collectivistic vs individualistic cultures – when analyzing cultural variations of self-conscious emotions. For these emotions, single values, like honor and personal achievement, may play a bigger role than general cultural orientations.

Notes

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- 2 The so-called primary emotions can occur at different levels of cognitive processing: sensory-motor, schematic, and conceptual (Leventhal & Scherer, 1987). Self-conscious emotions are supposed to occur only in consequence of a conceptual cognitive processing.
- 3 Blushing was the theme of the chapter of Darwin's book "The expression of emotions in man and animals" (1872) dedicated to self-conscious emotions. This expressive feature has been regarded as a sign of appeasement (Castelfranchi

& Poggi, 1990), as a sign of shame (Keltner & Harker, 1998), or as a sign that something that should be hidden has been exposed (Crozier, 2001).

4 We label *Positive* those emotions that are elicited by an event appraised as Intrinsically Pleasant and/or Goal Conducive (Scherer, 2001).

5 A thorough discussion of the effects of culture on appraisal goes beyond the goals of the present chapter. A more general description of the effect of culture on appraisal can be found elsewhere (Mesquita and Ellsworth, 2001).

6 The strength of the correlations can be found in Fontaine et al., (2007; see Table 24.1, pp. 1052–1054).

7 We conducted a preliminary control analysis for the kind of pride that the two groups rated. A different level of collectivism and individualism in the two cultural groups could have led the two groups to rate two different forms of pride, that is, group pride and individual pride. The difference between the two kinds of pride lays in the agency, that is, whether the responsibility for the successful event is attributed to the individual's behavior or to someone belonging to the in-group. For this reason, we compared the two groups for the items concerning agency (i13, "[. . .] caused by the person's own behavior," and i14 "[. . .] caused by someone else's behavior") and we did not find any significant difference between the two groups (*i13*: North, Mean = 6.57; SD = 2.24; South, Mean = 6.17; SD = 2.38; *i14*: North, Mean = 5.24 SD = 2.20; South, Mean = 5.45; SD = 2.20). Both groups rated more likely that the word pride refers to an emotion due to an event caused by the person's behavior: for both groups, pride is typically due to personal achievement.

8 This hypothesis seems supported by the responses to the item 144 of the questionnaire. This item concerned the social acceptance of the emotion (i144, "To what extent is it socially accepted to experience this emotional state in your society"). For both Northern (M = 6.55, SD = 1.96) and Southern Italians (M = 6.34; SD = 1.99) pride is a socially well-accepted emotion.