

## LINGUISTICS AND VIETNAMESE LINGUISTICS

**APPROACHING TO THE WORD CLASS INDICATING  
KINSHIP RELATIONS IN VIETNAM LANGUAGE  
FROM THE THEORY OF ROLE SCHEMA****TRAN THI PHUONG LY\* - NGUYEN VO TAM NHU\*\***

**ABSTRACT:** As a processing information model of perception to make sense of the complex world and society where people live (Martha Augoustinos & Iain Walker, 1995), Role Schema serves as a key concept in Cultural Linguistics to a direction to the perception and process of social information about people, social groups and events. Role Schema theory has proved valuable in deciphering concepts constructed by culture, including the full range of human experiences expressed through the linguistics of each Vietnamese ethnic community. In this article, realising that the hierarchical cultural characteristic of the Vietnamese is most clearly shown through the class of kinship words indicating not only the relations but also the mean of the roles of all people in the family and society, the authors have chosen the research topic "Approaching to the word class indicating kinship relations in Vietnam language from the theory of Role Schema". Based on the theoretical perspective of the Role Schema in Cultural Linguistics, we conduct a survey and study the cultural characteristics in detail through the Vietnamese kinship words with the data source collected through the *Từ điển tiếng Việt* (Hoang Phe, 2021) and samples from *Tục ngữ, ca dao, dân ca Việt Nam* (Vu Ngoc Phan, 2020). By virtue of the qualitative method of semantic features, the structural system of the kinship word class is clearly shown that there are four main determinants in this class. For the sake of the quantitative method, the authors drew diagrams and made statistical tables on the number of words indicating kinship relations in Vietnamese to clarify the unique characteristics of Vietnamese culture. Therefore, the research results of the article are considered as sources for teaching Vietnamese as a foreign language and Vietnamese translation.

**KEY WORDS:** role schemas; culture; cultural linguistics; kinship words; Vietnamese ethnic community.

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**1. Introduction**

In a social community, the relationship between culture and language always goes hand in hand. As soon as learning a new language, people learn not only vocabulary, alphabet or grammar rules but also the culture, way of life, and customs of that country. For this reason, language is a cultural activity, people interact with the outside world through the tool of language.

Cultural linguistics is a field of linguistics that specializes in the study and exploration of the relationship between language and cultural concepts. During the nineteenth century, researchers studied these two fields together at various times, then the intersection of anthropology and linguistics became prominent throughout the early twentieth century. In this area, the characteristics of the human language are elucidated in cultural concepts through Cultural Schemas. These schemas play a crucial role to develop distinct cultures and also store both information and cultural experiences of other cultures. Besides that, National cultural identity is also supported for preservation. According to Farzad Sharifian (2011), there are 8 Cultural Schemas in Cultural Linguistics. Consequently, we rely on the theory of Role Schemas to decipher the components in the Vietnamese kinship word class.

Communities, despite having different cultures, have formed similar Role Schemas. Given being a miniature society, a family also has specific categories and Role Schemas, which are expressed

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through terms indicating kinship relations, in addition to not only hierarchies but also the means of clearly indicating roles and responsibilities among everyone. Through each generation, depending on the relationship, close or distant bloodlines, and position, the designation is different. These word classes show both the specific linguistic features of a community and the culture of that country.

In the research "Approaching to the word class indicating kinship relations in Vietnam language from the theory of Role Schema", the authors hope to contribute to perfecting the theory of Cultural Linguistics and other issues relating to the Role Schema and the technique of teaching Vietnamese as a foreign language. Based on the theory of role schema, we solve the following questions: What are the characteristics of the Vietnamese kinship word class from the perspective of the Role Schema theory? How are the cultural features in the class of Vietnamese kinship words shown? Through the combination of qualitative and quantitative, the authors have described the characteristics of the word class. In this manner, the structure of the Role Schema in the Vietnamese community is demonstrated in cultural situations as well as specific examples in folk songs, proverbs, and features contained in this class.

## **2. The problems in Cultural Linguistic theory**

Since the 18th century, there have been many researchers interested in the relationship between language and culture. Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767-1835), Franz Boas (1858-1942), Edward Sapir (1884-1939), and Benjamin Whorf (1897-1941) were famous scholars, all of whom emphasized the relationship between language, ideology, and culture. In the development of cultural science in the first half of the 20th century, there was a significant contribution of American Cultural Anthropologists expanding the number of objects and the scale. In the 30s and 40s of that century, studying the culture and language of the Native Americans was concerned vigorously. The signature Scientific research in the Cultural Linguistic field are "Apply Cultural Linguistics" and "Cultural Linguistics", which were conducted by Farzad Sharifian and Gary B. Palmer and published in Philadelphia in 2007. These marked the discovery of the relationship between language and culture and established not only the definition of "Cultural Linguistics" but also the application of Cultural Linguistics in intercultural communications. Furthermore, the works launched a lot of techniques to teach the first and second languages. That was followed by Farzad Sharifian's books named "Advances in Cultural Linguistics" and "Cultural conceptualizations and language", which were published in Philadelphia in 2011. The book synthesizes both the diversified disciplines in many different cultures around the world and the start of the large cross-cultural pragmatics.

The theories of Cultural Schemas, synthesized by Sharifian in the "Cultural Linguistic" book, are derived from the research "A cognitive approach to intercultural communication based on schema theory". by Hiroko Nishida (1999). In that article, the creator applied the theory of Social Psychology Schemas to propose the interdisciplinary results which were applied by Sharifian in the Cultural Schema Theory of Cultural Linguistics. Thence, the research works related to the cultural schema were issued. There was a typical study named "The Cultural Schema: Towards Conceptual Compatibility in Culture-Cognition Interaction Research" by Jacob Strandell - a Cognitive Sociologist. Besides, there were some Scientific works utilizing Cultural Schema such as "Cultural schemas in intercultural communication: A study of the Persian cultural schema of "sharmandegi" - "being ashamed" (2011) by Farzad Sharifian and Maryam JaMarani.

### ***Key issues in the theory of Cultural Linguistics***

Relying on the mentioned concepts, the authors summarise the core contents of the theory of Cultural Linguistics as follows:

#### ***Cultural Linguistics***

"Cultural Linguistics" (Palmer, 1996) or "Ethnolinguistics", which is commonly taken in Europe, is a conception discussing the general field of the relationship between language and culture. Cultural Linguistics, an almost recently developed specialty (Sharifian, 2017), has been exploited to decrypt cultural concepts, embracing the extremely large range of human experiences. In other words, human language features are associated with cultural concepts.

The theoretical foundation of Cultural Linguistics is set up from subphylums including Cognitive Psychology, Complexity Science, Distributed Cognition, and Anthropology. Further, Cultural Linguistics has been put into a huge amount of fields such as Applied Linguistics from the perspective of cross-cultural communication, Intercultural Pragmatics, teaching English as a language international linguistics, and political discourse analysis. (Sharifan, 2017).

For example, in the study of the Cultural Concept of "color", separate languages may have different concepts related to different colors. For example, observed in English by Shakespeare, some Cultural Schemes associate the color "green" with envy, while in Muslim countries and Arab, Muslims consider "green" as the color of heaven. On the other hand, separate languages may have different cultural metaphors related to color. Some English expressions reflect cultural metaphors such as white lie (small, harmless lie); black sheep (rebellious, scandalous people); black market (a place where economic transactions are not authorized by the government); black humor (unfair theme comedy); green old age (people who are old but happy), red tape (administrative and bureaucratic positions), and so on.

In addition, an important aspect is the human perception of existing Cultural Concepts. This phenomenon is evolved by escalating cross-border commerce, colonization, and globalization, which increases the connection between different language communities and organizes divergent cultural conceptual systems. As a fine example, "reconceptualize" was an adaptation or combination of Cultural Concepts in certain domains which are faiths, traditions, customs, and so on. By that time, the cultural system of that locality had been constituted. For instance, the "Christmas" event in many either non-Christian or non-Western countries, the Christmas schema covers some activities like Christmas parties, Christmas gifts, Christmas food, and drinks. All categories of Christmas are conceptualized as a Western celebration rather than as a religious holiday. Moreover, in the history of Western, "Christmas" has been redefined many times. This event was considered a pagan celebration (Yule). Recently, many "Christmas" cases have evolved into commercial events or family reunions.

Besides that, "Reconceptualisation" is based on groups of events, such as "Valentine's Day" - developed from the ancient Lupercalia Roman fertility festival, "Thanksgiving Day" and "Halloween" - derived from Celt's Harvest Festival. In some areas of the world (including China), people celebrate "Thanksgiving Day" to thank teachers and parents, rather than to give thanks to God for a bountiful harvest and blessings of the year in the United States.

In general, Reconceptualisation can take many different forms, including blending elements of conceptual systems summarised from speech communities and separate cultural traditions, so this conception also can be regarded as "Cross-Cultural Reconceptualisation". It can be figured out that Cultural Linguistics operated as a bridge to connect many subphylums from many different fields. Accordingly, the authors will focus on research problems from an entirely new perspective.

#### ***Cultural Schema and characteristics of Cultural Schemas***

A Cultural Schema is regarded as a mental structure containing expectations and knowledge about the world. This knowledge comprises people, social roles, events, and behavior in certain situations. Schema Theory, gathered from experience or social, has the role of suggesting that the knowledge is applied to select and process information from society. It will be difficult to work, communicate, and be aware of human daily life without prior knowledge of the objects and events, so the schema gives people a sense of anticipation and control of the world.

At the same time, the purpose of studying schema is to understand how people represent social information in memory and the way how new information is assimilated with existing knowledge. A schema is an abstract and general structure of knowledge in that specific field. For example, the "Party" scheme is a social event intended to bring people together in pursuit of pleasure and entertainment. Expected behaviours/behaviors at parties include drinking, talking, eating, and dancing. This schema will be used as a general organizational template for such events. While it is not always planned to drink or dance at a party, it is generally assumed that at least one party will include the mentioned expected behaviors.

According to social psychologists, there are four schema types corresponding to each field: person schemas, self-schemas, role schemas, and event schemas. However, in Nishida's intercultural study (1999) which was the first one to classify schemas in the cultural approach, Nishida classified eight major schemas in social communication:

- |                             |                      |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Fact-and-Concept Schemas | 2. Person Schemas    |
| 3. Self - Schemas           | 4. Role Schemas      |
| 5. Context Schemas          | 6. Procedure Schemas |
| 7. Strategy Schemas         | 8. Emotion Schemas   |

### **Role Schemas**

Social psychology mentions the function of the Role Schema as the framework of knowledge about the standards and expected behaviors of the specific roles in society. Augoustinos and Walker (1995) defined Role Schema as the “knowledge structure that people have of specific role positions in the cultural group”.

Nishida (1999) states that “knowledge about social roles which represents sets of behaviors that are expected of people in particular social positions” [2. page 758], such as secretary, teacher, bus driver, and so on. These schemas include knowledge of the various characteristics associated with each role, such as cloth, age, manner of speaking, and income level.

For a practical example, people from detached cultural groups will construct different categories and schemas for the same role. In fact, in Australian English, the word "mother" conjures up a role of the biological mother or it can even be extended to a male gender member of the family such as 'uncle' because the role schema usually involves knowledge of duties and responsibilities between children and the so-called "mother".

In brief, thanks to the definitions of “Role Schemas” in Psychology, Social Psychology, and Cultural Linguistics, the authors conclude that the Role Schemas are composed of knowledge paradigms that can be understood in society, and the expected behaviors of a certain role in the society.

### **3. Methodology**

The article concentrates on studying the kinship word classes in Vietnamese from the theory of Role Schemas in Cultural Linguistics. We determined the scope of the article related to the characteristics of Vietnamese kinship from the perspective of the Role Schema. Quantitative is practiced to estimate the frequency of occurrence of kinship words in the survey taken from "Từ điển tiếng Việt" (Hoang Phe, 2021), and samples are taken from "Tục ngữ, ca dao, dân ca Việt Nam" (Vu Ngọc Phan, 2020)<sup>1</sup> to analyze and give specific examples to clarify the characteristics of the word system and Vietnamese national culture. The qualitative is applied to describe the semantic features and the determinants in the Vietnamese kinship words. Thence, the author has an evident overview of the characteristics related to the culture of the Vietnamese people.

### **4. Results and findings**

In this paper, the authors study Vietnamese kinship words through essential factors, such as gender (male or female), hierarchy (upper or lower) blood relationship, and paternal-maternal side, which are identified as determinants. In this survey, 117 Vietnamese kinship words have been filtered out and the authors will divide them into specific hierarchy levels as follows: great-grandparents, grandparents, parents, children - grandchildren - great-grandchildren, brother - sister, uncle - aunt, husband, and wife. From these levels, we will apply for analysis in each specific determinant and then give the results by percentage graph to describe the family and social-cultural characteristics through the class of important kinship words system.

#### **4.1. Approaching Vietnamese kinship words in Vietnamese determinants from the perspective of Role Schemas theory**

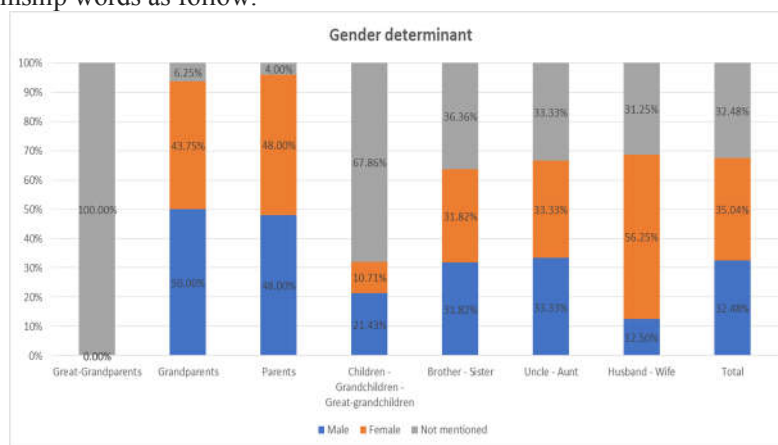
##### **4.1.1. Gender determinant**

In biology, the concept of gender refers to the masculine and feminine gender of the organism, each gender has individually physiological and shape characteristics, similarly, humans are divided into male and female. Moreover, due to being also specified from the gamete inherited from the

parents, gender is assigned from birth to adulthood. People already belong to a certain gender no matter where they live, or how long they live, which means that there is no change. Nowadays, there is a "third gender" concept, but this is not correctly called. As the result, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender are sexual dispositions, so the authors do not mention and research in the article.

According to the fifth article of the Law on Gender Equality in Vietnam in 2006, "sex" is a concept that refers to biological characteristics, while "gender" is defined as social characteristics, positions, and roles of men and women in all aspects of social relationships. Therefore, the word "male and female" not only ascertains gender but also has the meaning to express the behaviors and roles which are expected of men and women. These expectations are related to the characteristics and abilities that determine what is a man or a woman (or boy or girl) in a society or culture.

In the mentioned hierarchy levels, the authors survey and obtain the chart of gender determinant in Vietnamese kinship words as follow.



**Figure 1. Gender identification**

In total, in gender determinants, the three components male, female, and not mentioned account for approximately 32.5%, 35%, and 32.5% respectively. For more specifics, the not mentioned gender of a great-grandparent, uncle - aunt, brother - sister; children - grandchildren - great-grandchildren take more percentage than others. Because "cụ, bác, con, cháu, cháu em" words are no gender words, they do not contain any gender determinants, while gender determinants of the grandparents and parents' levels are separated clearly in the male and female.

#### 4.1.2. Hierarchy determinant

Hierarchy is a concept used to refer to the high and low classes in society. Hierarchy appears in not only social classes but also in every household. The hierarchy (Tôn Ti) words, including "Tôn" (high) and "Ti" (low), originated from the Chinese theory named Yin and Yang. According to the Chinese theory, a woman must be tolerant and gentle to keep the home harmonious, while a man is going to spend a lot of time on his career to build the family. The distinguishing characteristics of men and women lead people to have different positions, so every person might strictly follow these positions to maintain the family happily and prosperous. However, experiencing the impact of society's thinking and prejudice for a long time, the original meaning of the above view has been completely changed.

Hierarchy is an important determinant in the relationship between family and society. In terms of hierarchy in traditional Vietnamese families, there are usually 3 generations including grandparents, parents, and children. However, there are also some cases of families with up to 4 or 5 generations (Sharifian, F., 2017, P. 28). Assuming that "I" is the center (Ego), Vietnamese pronouns contain a very detailed and strict hierarchy. In other words, the distinction between the higher and lower classes is not only present in the generation equalling Ego (Brother, Sister) but also in the Parent generation that gave birth to Ego. The hierarchy determinant is partitioned off Great Grandparents,

Grandparents, Parents, Children, and Grandchildren respectively, in each level, there are many suitable kinship words.

Notice: (+) means yes and (-) means no.

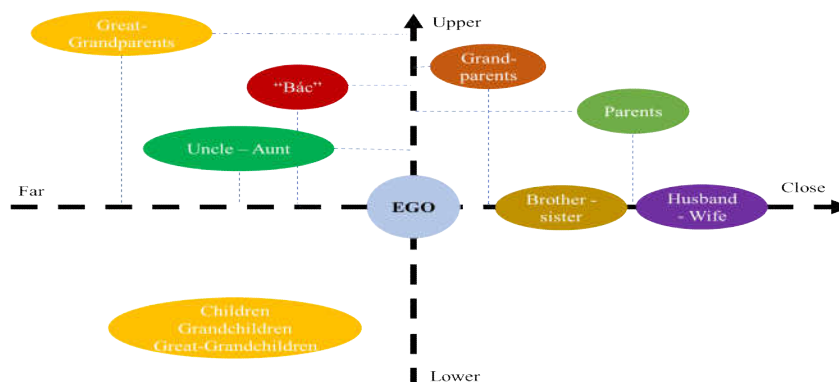
**Table 1.** Kinship word divided by the horizontal and vertical relationship with EGO

| Hierarchy                 | Kinship words                                                                                                                                           | Meanings                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | How is the relationship with EGO? |       |           |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------|-----------|
|                           |                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Upper                             | Lower | Equalling |
| <b>Great-Grandparents</b> | 1. Cụ<br>2. Kị                                                                                                                                          | 1. Great-Grandparent<br>2. Parent of Great-Grandparent                                                                                                                                                                                              | +                                 | -     | -         |
| <b>Grandparents</b>       | 1. Ông<br>2. Bà<br>3. Ông nội<br>4. Ông ngoại<br>5. Bà nội<br>6. Bà ngoại<br>7. Ông chú<br>8. Ông bác<br>9. Ông trẻ                                     | 1. Grandfather<br>2. Grandmother<br>3. Father of father<br>4. Father of mother<br>5. Mother of father<br>6. Mother of mother<br>7. Younger brother of grandparent<br>8. Older brother of grandparent<br>9. Brother or brother-in-law of grandparent | +                                 | -     | -         |
| <b>Parents</b>            | 1. Bố<br>2. Bố đẻ<br>3. Bố chồng<br>4. Bố vợ<br>5. Bố nuôi<br>6. Bố dượng<br>7. Mẹ<br>8. Mẹ đẻ<br>9. Mẹ chồng<br>10. Mẹ vợ<br>11. Mẹ nuôi<br>12. Mẹ ghê | 1. Father<br>2. Birth father<br>3. Father of husband<br>4. Father of wife<br>5. Adoptive father<br>6. Stepfather<br>7. Mother<br>8. Birth mother<br>9. Mother of husband<br>10. Mother of wife<br>11. Adoptive mother<br>12. Stepmother             | +                                 | -     | -         |
| <b>Uncle - Aunt</b>       | 1. Bác<br>2. Bác ruột<br>3. Bác họ<br>4. Chú<br>5. Cậu<br>6. Chú ruột<br>7. Chú họ<br>8. Cậu ruột<br>9. Cậu họ<br>10. Bác dậu cô<br>11. Thím            | 1. Older brother of father<br>2. Older brother or sister of parent<br>3. Older cousin of parent<br>4. Younger brother or male cousin of father<br>5. Brother or male cousin of mother                                                               | +                                 | -     | -         |

|                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |   |   |   |
|-------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|
|                                                       | 12. Cô ruột<br>13. Cô họ<br>14. Dì ruột<br>15. Dì họ                                                                                                                             | 6. Younger brother of father<br>7. Younger male cousin of father<br>8. Brother of mother<br>9. Male cousin of mother<br>10. Wife of uncle<br>11. Wife of father's younger brother<br>12. Younger sister of father<br>13. Younger female cousin of father<br>14. Sister of mother<br>15. Female cousin of mother                                  |   |   |   |
| <b>Husband - Wife</b>                                 | 1. Chồng<br>2. Vợ<br>3. Vợ cả<br>4. Vợ lẽ<br>5. Vợ hai<br>6. Vợ ba                                                                                                               | 1. Husband<br>2. Wife<br>3. First wife<br>4. Concubine<br>5. Second wife<br>6. Third wife                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | - | - | + |
| <b>Brother - Sister</b>                               | 1. Anh trai<br>2. Anh họ<br>3. Anh chồng<br>4. Anh rể<br>5. Em trai<br>6. Em họ<br>7. Em rể<br>8. Chị họ<br>9. Chị chồng<br>10. Chị dâu<br>11. Em gái<br>12. Em họ<br>13. Em dâu | 1. Older brother<br>2. Older male cousin<br>3. Older brother of husband<br>4. Husband of older sister<br>5. Younger brother<br>6. Younger cousin<br>7. Husband of younger sister<br>8. Older female cousin<br>9. Older sister of husband<br>10. Wife of older brother<br>11. Younger sister<br>12. Younger cousin<br>13. Wife of younger brother | - | - | + |
| <b>Children - Grandchildren - Great-Grandchildren</b> | 1. Con trai<br>2. Con rể<br>3. Cháu trai<br>4. Cháu rể<br>5. Con gái<br>6. Cháu gái                                                                                              | 1. Son<br>2. Son-in-law<br>3. Male great children or son of brother/sister<br>4. Grandson-in-law                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | - | + | - |

|  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |  |  |  |
|--|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|--|
|  | 7. Con dâu<br>8. Cháu dâu<br>9. Cháu nội<br>10. Cháu ngoại<br>11. Con trưởng<br>12. Con thứ<br>13. Con út<br>14. Con nuôi<br>15. Con riêng<br>16. Con đẻ<br>17. Con đầu lòng<br>18. Chắt<br>19. Chắt nội<br>20. Chắt ngoại | 5. Daughter<br>6. Female great children or son of brother/sister<br>7. Daughter-in-law<br>8. Granddaughter-in-law<br>9. Children of son<br>10. Children of daughter<br>11. Firstborn<br>12. Cadet<br>13. The youngest child<br>14. Fosterling<br>15. Step child<br>16. Biological child<br>17. First child<br>18. Great-grandchildren<br>19. Grandchildren of son<br>20. Grandchildren of daughter |  |  |  |
|--|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|--|

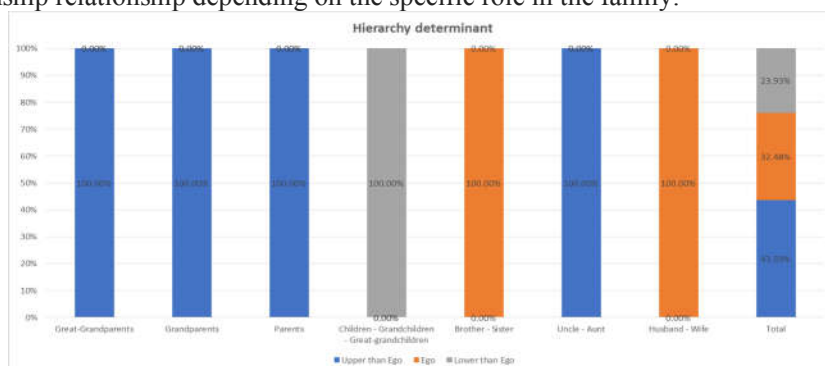
The authors have interpreted the hierarchical relationship with Ego on the horizontal and vertical axis to compare these relationships. Diagram 1 shows that:



**Diagram 1.** Horizontal and vertical relationships between hierarchies and EGO

Diagram 1 is general and there will be a lot of changes due to many objective factors such as environment, space, time, and subjective factors (feelings, personality, family relationships). Each individual can base on the general diagram to create a personal relationship diagram. The vertical axis stands if hierarchy (upper and lower) while the horizontal axis presents how close the relationship is (far and close). The Diagram indicates that the *Great-Grandparents* and *Grandparents* are superior relations of Ego, but *Great-Grandparents* will not have a more intimate relationship with Ego than *Grandparents*, because of the relatively long generation gap and 3 generation families (grandparents, parents, and children) in many cases. In addition, "*bác*" is also higher than Ego, and the *Parents* are the people who gave birth to the Ego, but due to living with grandparents and parents, the degree of closeness of "*bác*" is less than *Parents*. Moreover, *Uncle - Aunt* is lower than *Parents* but higher than Ego and the level of intimacy with Ego is further than that of *Parents*. Furthermore, *Husband - Wife* has an equal relationship with Ego, similar to *Brother - Sister* which is not as close to

Ego as *Husband - Wife*. Finally, *Children - Grandchildren - Great-Grandchildren* is under the Ego and have a kinship relationship depending on the specific role in the family.

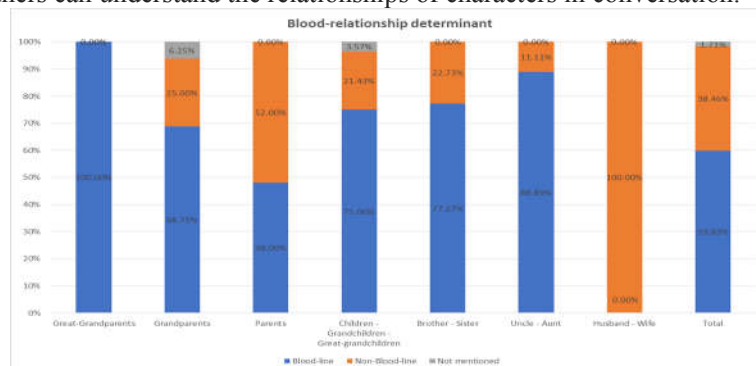


**Figure 2.** *Hierarchy determinant in Vietnam*

From the hierarchical determinant chart, there are three categories (upper Ego, equaling Ego, and below Ego) where all the kinship words are clearly distinguished. For more specifics, *Great-Grandparents, Grandparents, Parents, and Uncle - Aunt* are higher than Ego while there are *Brother - Sisters and Husband - Wife* equaling to Ego, and *Children - Grandchildren - Great-Grandchildren* is lower than Ego.

#### 4.1.3. Blood-relationship determinant

In the Vietnamese marriage and family law in 2014, Blood-relationship is explained as "Those have blood-line, in which, one person gives birth to the next generation alternately." Thanks to kinship words, others can understand the relationships of characters in conversation.



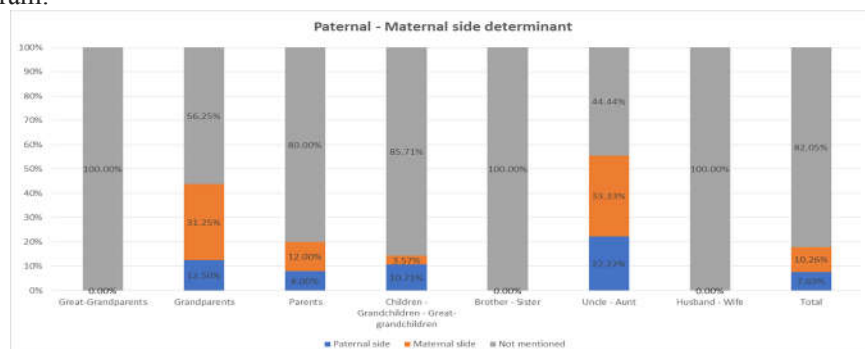
**Figure 3.** *Blood-relationship determinant in Vietnam*

There are 117 kinship words totally, and all of them are extremely clearly dissociated. 59.8% of the words stand for the blood-line relationship while the non-blood-line ones take 38.46%, and there is a quite small percentage (accounting for 1.7%) dedicated to the words not mentioning the blood relationship determinant. In brief, it is reflected that the Vietnamese kinship words contain a very clear blood determinant.

#### 4.1.4. Paternal - Maternal side determinant

Vietnamese is divided into two adversative parties "Paternal side" and "Maternal side". More specifically, "Paternal side" includes not only father's parent and siblings but also their relatives (父系 - "Fuxi" in Chinese). In contrast, the mother's parents, siblings and their relatives are called "Maternal side" (母系 - Mǔxì in Chinese). The similarity of two Chinese words is that "父" - "Phụ" - Father is in the "父系" - "Fuxi" word (Paternal side) and "母" - "Mẫu" - Mother is in the word

"Maternal side". Paternal - Maternal side determinant is specifically presented by the following general diagram:



**Figure 4.** Paternal - Maternal side determinant in Viet Nam

Looking at the statistics on the 4th figure, the authors found that in general, the number of words regardless of Paternal - Maternal side accounted for 82.05% and the left is the number of words mentioning Paternal side or Maternal side. clear. More specifically, there is not any word that deals with neither Paternal slide nor Maternal side in *Great-Grandparents*, *Brother - Sister* and *Husband - Wife*. On the other hand, *Uncle - Aunt* has the highest number of words that separate Paternal - Maternal side and accounts for 55.55% (Paternal side: 22.22% and Maternal side 33.33%), followed respectively by *Grandparents* with 43.75% (Paternal side: 12.50% and Maternal side 31.25%) and *Parents* accounted for 20% (Paternal side: 0% and Maternal side 12%) while this index of *Children - Grandchildren - Great-Grandchildren* accounted for 14.28% (Paternal side: 10.71% and Maternal side 3.57%).

#### 4.2. Discussion

There is a sentence "Đàn ông xây nhà, đàn bà xây tổ ấm" (Men build the house, women make it home), which implies that men are responsible for heavy work in society, while women will take care of the housework, cooking, taking care and teaching children. In this proverb, ancestors always uphold the role of women in the family, "xây tổ ấm" (make home) is extremely important to maintain a merry and stable family. Moreover, in modern life, the improvement of a man's career is also contributed significantly by the resistant home, so it is said that "Đằng sau sự thành công của người đàn ông luôn có bóng dáng của người phụ nữ" (Behind every great man, there is a great woman) or the phrase "Của chồng công vợ" (Husband's property is wife's contribution). However, this traditional conception is not gradually suitable for modern society, where both men and women have careers, and all members of the families can share roles, and go hard together, which means that there is not any either specific assignment or delineation of men or women. However, some localities still apply this concept to determine the roles and expected behaviours of men and women in society. The reason for this problem is that these citizens are imposed by the perception of "Trọng nam khinh nữ - Nam tôn nữ ti" (respecting men and disrespecting women). Especially in feudal families, women who give birth to boys will be more respected than ones who give birth to girls as the sentence "Nhất nam viết hữu, thập nữ viết vô" (one boy means one while ten girls mean none; only boys are worthy). Moreover, the power of the eldest son in the family is tremendous as the quote "quyền huynh thế phụ" (eldest brother replaces father). In addition, the throne of the dynasties is handed over to the son only as well as only the son has the right to inherit the property of the parents because of the thought "Con gái là con người ta" (Daughter is a child of a stranger). Furthermore, nobody but the son is allowed to learn for exams, while the woman only takes care of the housework - "Nữ công gia chánh", which covers domestic science (housework, cooking, and needlework) and household arts. Not stopping there, a man enables to marry many wives while the wife has to follow the principle of "Tam tòng tứ đức", which refers to not only three ways in which women are supposed to obey a male in life (At home, obeys father; Married, obeys husband. Widowed, obeys son) but also four virtues

(housekeeping skills, beauty, appropriate speech, and moral conduct). Last, when children became corrupt, all the faults are of the woman in the family “Con hư tại mẹ, cháu hư tại bà” (Grandmother and mother pampered their child too much that child becomes naughty).

From another perspective, gender roles assign the power and structure the society through the division of labour. Although human civilization has been advancing the equality between male and female people to promote the impartial rights in the society of women, natural biological characteristics of gender formed for millions of years of evolution are immutable. According to a recent study by Harvard University, even in societies and organisations that dignify gender equality (e.g. Western Europe, North America), male monuments (scientists, leaders, generals, sports masters, and so on) get a majority. Women occupy a small percentage of most senior leadership positions in organisations and societies. They make up less than 5% of the world's top 500 CEOs and less than 20% of Scientists around the world. Since the natural traits give men a lot of advantages (health, logical thinking, and mental concentration), it is customary to claim that men become excellent in complex works such as leaders, scientists, artisans, and so on. Even with jobs typically reserved for women (cooking, sewing), the most prominent individuals (professional chefs, famous fashion designers) are generally male.

On the other hand, the hierarchy determinant demonstrates that Eastern Asian countries in general and Vietnam in specific are greatly influenced by Chinese civilization. Since the 11th century, the feudal state in the Ly - Tran dynasties paid gigantic attention to Chinese Confucianism, considered it as a political-moral doctrine in managing society, and playing an important role in building infrastructure in feudal society. At present, because the hierarchy determinant has become a Vietnamese traditional culture, typically the “kính trên nhường dưới” (glass above yield below) conception has been maintained and handled in all situations. Derived from those cultural quintessence, there is now a largely precious tradition called “kính lão đắc thọ” (respecting the elderly to obtain longevity), which is the Vietnamese motto to behave in family and society. In this valuable tradition in Vietnam, a wine party, “lễ yển lão”, is held to celebrate the age of the elderly, in this birthday party, parents and children also organise a longevity celebration (“lễ mừng thọ”). For Vietnamese, “lên lão” (getting older) is a merry and happy occasion of the family, unlike in some Western countries it is considered as a not good one.

Since ancient times, there has been a custom of ancestor worship in Vietnam. On this occurrence, families, close and far relatives gather to worship, tighten blood ties, and memorialise gratitude for the birth and success of the ancients. The habit means of educating filial piety for the younger generation “uống nước nhớ nguồn” (When drinking water, think of its source.). Therefore, the article confirms that the hierarchy determinant is designed not only to educate filial piety, but also to ascertain obligations according to the hierarchical levels of grandparents, parents, spouses, children, and brothers in the family. The element of hierarchy makes people think of features such as rituals, filial piety, positions, ethics, and so on. Hence, each member of a traditional family is obliged to be self-aware of his or her position, duty, and status in the family. In the parent-child relationship, children should respect and take care of their parents.

*“Công cha như núi Thái Sơn,/ Nghĩa mẹ như nước trong nguồn chảy ra.*

*Một lòng thờ mẹ kính cha/ Cho tròn chữ hiếu mới là đạo con.”*

(“Father's efforts are like Thai Son Mountain, mother's meaning is like water in the source.

Worshiping mother and father is the son's religion to fulfil filial piety.)

In the antithesis, parents must not only be a good example for their children to learn but also have an important role in building a home and teaching children.

*“Cha giàu con có, cha khó con không”;*

(If the father is rich, the son has a fortune. If the father is in trouble, the son has nothing.)

*“Mẹ dạy con thì khéo, cha dạy con thì khôn”;*

(Mother teaches children skilful, while father teaches children smart)

*“Đời cha ăn mặn, đời con khát nước.”*

(The sins of the fathers will be visited upon the children)

The Brother - Sister relationship has to behave according to the rules of courtesy, love, and care for each other, likely the point of view of “máu chảy ruột mềm”; “ruột rà máu thịt” (blood is thicker than water).

*“Anh em như thể chân tay,/ Như gốc với rễ như cây với cành.*

*Anh thời phải thuận đạo anh,/ Em thời hiếu để mới đành đạo em.”*

(Brothers and sisters are like limbs, like roots, like roots, like trees, like branches.

The older brother had to be filial, while the younger brother had to be filial)

Likewise, it is exhibited that the Vietnamese express the Blood-relationship determinant by the kinship words to call all members in the family. Especially, there is an extraordinary not existing in many other languages, which is that Vietnamese people converse by kinship words to address people in society who are not related by blood. To explain this, the legend of "Con Rồng Cháu Tiên" (Children of the Dragon, Grandchildren of the Immortal) and the "Trăm Trứng Nở Trăm Con" (One hundred eggs that gave birth to one hundred children) story substantiate the national unity of the Vietnamese people. Hence, this cultural tradition permeating the soul and emotions becomes a Vietnamese customary morality. According to Uncle Ho's teaching ("Hung Kings had merits to build the country, Vietnamese must protect the country together"), every year on the anniversary, people from all over the country gather to worship and express their gratitude to the ancestors - Hung Kings. In 1946, the President issued a decree to make the Hung Kings Anniversary of March 10 an official national holiday. Moreover, in 2007, the Government passed Article 73 of the Labor Law to allow employees to take leave from work with full salary on the annual Hung Kings Anniversary Day.

*“Dù ai đi ngược về xuôi/ Nhớ ngày giỗ tổ mùng mười tháng ba*

*Khắp miền truyền mãi câu ca / Nước non vẫn nước non nhà ngàn năm.”*

(No matter where going, every Vietnamese remembers the anniversary of their ancestors' death on the tenth of March. The song is spread everywhere, the country is home)

The belief, that there is a similar origin and the same lineage between Vietnamese, is associated with folk songs and proverbs in daily life.

*“Anh em bốn bề là nhà/ Người dung khác họ vẫn là anh em”,*

(People everywhere are family even though they have different family names.)

*“Con người có cội có ông/ Như cây có cội như sông có nguồn”*

(Humans have ancestors like trees have roots, and rivers have sources)

As a result, the Blood-relationship determinant not only is important to Vietnamese people but also claims that everyone living in a country is a big family.

*“Bầu ơi thương lấy bí cùng/ Tuy rằng khác giống nhưng chung một giàn”,*

(Literal meaning: Despite being of different species, winter melons and gourds are grown on the same structure, in the same place. Figurative meaning: The Vietnamese people have a tradition of mutual affection.)

*“Nhiều điều phủ lấy giá gương/ Người trong một nước phải thương nhau cùng”*

(People within the same country should be loving each other.)

In Vietnamese, there is a separate distinction in the Paternal - Maternal side determinant in the family. Vietnamese people have high regard for the "Paternal side" and a slight one for the "Maternal side" such as the sentence "con cô con cậu thì xa, con chú con bác thật là anh em" (the children of the mother's brother and sister are far away, but the children of the father's brother and sister are really brothers). The "Paternal side" family is taken as the basis, so when the children are born, they always take the surname of the "Paternal side" and the original place is the birthplace of the Paternal grandparents. That is a reason why there is a saying “Con gái là con người ta” (Daughter is a child of a stranger) because when a girl gets married, she has to take care of and nurture her husband's family. Even the grandchild will take care of the "Paternal side" family, so this is also one of the factors that make the prejudice “Trọng nam khinh nữ - Nam tôn nữ ti” (respecting men and disrespecting women) more and more profound.

*“Cổng cộc bắt cá dưới sông,/ Mấy đời cháu ngoại giỗ ông bao giờ.”*

(Children of daughter does not celebrate the anniversary of grandparent's death. Likely, cormorant never catches fishes in the river because it is in island.)

“Có con mà gả chồng gần,/ Có bắt canh cần nó cũng mang cho.  
Hoài con mà gả chồng xa,/ Trước là mất giỗ, sau là mất con.”

(If a daughter marries a husband nearby, her parents are also taken care of.

But if a daughter gets married far away, first she forgets the anniversary, and then she rarely visits)

### 5. Conclusion

After many years of formation and development, kinship words now contain more and more deeply the typical culture of the Vietnamese ethnic cultural community. By analyzing and clarifying the role schemas in the 4 main determinants (Gender, Hierarchy, Blood-relationship, Paternal - Maternal side) of the kinship nouns, the authors realized that the characteristics of this word system are influenced by the cultural characteristics existing in this country, although motivated by Chinese culture, especially “Confucianism”. However, the development and perception of Vietnamese people have created very specific characteristics of Vietnamese culture. The role of each of these determinants in the word kin clearly shows the relationship between the communicator and the Ego. Therefore, when using kinship nouns in specific communication, people need to have a clear understanding and determine positions, communication objects, and communication situations to choose suitable words to address. The kinship words also show the attitude and the feeling of the speaker towards the listener and the person being talked about. In addition, kinship words not only are not only used to communicate, but also to help people have a common understanding of the role schema related to the responsibilities, positions, feelings, and relationships of each family member and extended to society. When applying kinship words for teaching or translation, it is necessary to pay much attention to the sentence and grammar by basing on the cultural features of a particular community, such as in some areas. For example in Japan, they never use honorifics with their family members, but in Vietnam, on the contrary, Vietnamese people highly appreciate the culture of “kính trên nhường dưới” (glass above yield below) conception from within the family and also in society. Thanks to mastering the knowledge of grammatical structures and cultural perspectives, communicators can deepen social relationships and contribute to the development and improvement of other aspects of life such as family and surrounding jobs.

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#### Tiếp cận lớp từ chỉ quan hệ thân tộc trong tiếng Việt từ lý thuyết lược đồ vai trò

**Tóm tắt:** Là một mô hình xử lý thông tin về nhận thức của con người để hiểu được thế giới, xã hội phức tạp mà họ đang sống (Martha Augoustinos & Iain Walker, 1995), lược đồ vai trò đóng vai trò như một khái niệm then chốt trong Ngôn ngữ học văn hóa khi hướng đến nhận thức và xử lý thông tin xã hội, tức là thông tin về con người, các nhóm xã hội và sự kiện. Trong bài viết này, dựa trên góc nhìn lý thuyết lược đồ vai trò trong ngôn ngữ học văn hóa, chúng tôi tiến hành tìm hiểu những đặc trưng văn hóa thông qua lớp từ thân tộc tiếng Việt với nguồn ngữ liệu được thu thập từ *Từ điển tiếng Việt* (Hoàng Phê, 2021) và tuyển tập *Tục ngữ, ca dao, dân ca Việt Nam* (Vũ Ngọc Phan, 2020). Thông qua việc sử dụng kết hợp phương pháp định tính và định lượng, chúng tôi đã phân tích các đặc điểm ngữ nghĩa, hệ thống cấu tạo của lớp từ chỉ quan hệ thân tộc được thể hiện rõ thông qua 4 định tố chính trong lớp từ thân tộc tiếng Việt trên cơ sở lý thuyết lược đồ vai trò để từ đó làm sáng tỏ những nét đặc sắc trong văn hóa dân tộc Việt Nam. Kết quả nghiên cứu của bài viết có thể được sử dụng làm nguồn tư liệu bổ trợ cho việc dạy học tiếng Việt như một ngoại ngữ và dịch thuật Việt ngữ.

**Từ khoá:** lược đồ vai trò; văn hóa; ngôn ngữ học văn hóa; từ thân tộc; cộng đồng người Việt.