

A comparative study of Japanese and Vietnamese kinship terms: using cultural Venn diagrams to enhance L2 acquisition

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Abstract: *This paper uses a quantitative approach to survey words related to family relationships in Japanese and Vietnamese. The objective of the article is to establish a close relationship between culture and language through a Venn diagram. Based on the survey results, the authors propose the application of the Venn diagram model as a method of teaching the two languages through a cultural perspective. As a result, the article sheds light on the cultural factors influencing L2 teaching in today's multicultural context. This method is designed to enhance the language acquisition process of learners by understanding the culture. Furthermore, during the L2 acquisition process, individuals often focus on constructing diagrams of the knowledge and understanding they gain from learning and communication. Therefore, the diagram serves as a fundamental connection that allows for linking new information to previous knowledge (McCarthy, 1991). The results of this paper help to redefine the Cultural Venn diagram within the cognitive framework of Japanese and Vietnamese cultural communities, serving as a valuable resource for teaching a second language in intercultural communications.*

Keywords: *kinship words; teaching language; Japanese; Vietnamese; Cultural Venn diagram*

Introduction

Although culture and language are two separate domains, they are closely related and influence each other. Linguistic characteristics of humans are linked to cultural concepts (Sharifian, 2017), while Sapir (1884-1939), Franz Boas (1858-1942), and Dell Hymes (1927-2009) believed that language shapes how individuals perceive the world. They proposed hypotheses suggesting that language structure affects how people categorize and understand the world. The intimate relationship between language and culture reflects the values and beliefs of a community. Furthermore, language serves as a tool for preserving and transmitting cultural concepts. Therefore, to effectively understand a language, one must comprehend the culture of the community using that language. Scholars have emphasized that language is not only a product of culture but also a symbol of it. Likewise, language development directly impacts the culture and cognitive frameworks of ethnic groups. The field of cultural linguistics integrates linguistic and anthropological methods to explore the relationship between language and culture. Language usage also influences human thinking and perception of the world (Sharifian, 2013; Duranti, 2009; Boroditsky, 2011). Discussions by Kramsch in 1993 underlined the role of cultural linguistics in second language teaching (L2). Understanding the connection between language and culture can aid educators in developing more effective teaching methods. Additionally, cultural materials can enhance students' interest in a new language, deepen their understanding of the native culture, and help them use the language appropriately in various cultural contexts (Sandra, 1991). Therefore, Byon (2010) introduced various ways to incorporate cultural linguistics into L2 teaching, suggesting activities and exercises to enhance students' cultural awareness and language use. Furthermore, in the research work of Lee and Van (2008), a system was presented to address issues related to cultural differences in L2 learning. The article highlights the importance for educators to understand students' cultural backgrounds in order to better support effective learning. The tools mostly used in applying the theory of cultural linguistics to L2 teaching are visual models designed to represent cultural and linguistic elements using symbols. In this article, the authors apply a Venn diagram to create two circles representing Vietnamese and Japanese, with an intersection in the middle symbolizing shared linguistic and cultural elements of the two communities.

Cultural Venn diagrams, a visual tool invented by John Venn in 1880, illustrate the relationships between objects or concepts. Developed to address the challenge of illustrating these relationships, the diagrams use circles to represent objects or concepts, with the intersection of the circles representing objects or concepts that have a relationship with each other. Cultural Venn diagrams have been successfully used in a variety of fields, including mathematics, logic, philosophy, science, and education, proving to be an effective tool for teaching foreign language vocabulary. Sharifian (2013) suggested that the cultural Venn diagram is a useful tool to help students understand and remember vocabulary. The cultural Venn diagram assists students in comparing and contrasting different cultural concepts, thereby enhancing their understanding of the meanings of vocabulary. Additionally, Duranti (2009) has discussed the use of the cultural Venn

diagram to analyze language metaphors and symbols. This tool helps students comprehend the language metaphors and symbols used in various cultural contexts. The cultural Venn diagram can be utilized to help students understand the relationship between language and culture as discussed by Boroditsky (2011), Langacker (1991), and Deutscher (2006).

This paper aims to use the Cultural Venn diagram in the cultural linguistics theory to apply to teaching a second foreign language, with a specific object being the class of words indicating kinship in Japanese and Vietnamese. The reason the authors chose the class of words that indicate kinship is to realize, that from the perspective of the miniature society that is the family, kinship words play the role of expressing each person's responsibility and position in the family and society. Moreover, this category clearly reflects the cultural concepts of family and community. It also serves to differentiate and contain regulations regarding the roles and responsibilities of individuals within the family, as explained by the cultural beliefs of that ethnic community. By applying the Venn diagram to the system of kinship terms in Vietnamese and Japanese, it not only clarifies the functions of the terms but also decodes cultural concepts, highlighting the differences between the two communities.

In this paper, the authors propose four main determinants that directly influence kinship words in Japanese and Vietnamese, and the authors employ Cultural Venn diagrams to illustrate these determinants as an effective teaching method. To be more specific, these four determinants have a great impact on the assignment of responsibilities and the roles of family members, which are specifically shown through words indicating kinship in family and social relations.

By building upon language acquisition theory and examining the impact of cultural factors on the language learning process, the authors explore the following questions.

1. How do the determiners manifest in kinship words in Vietnamese and Japanese?
2. How does the Cultural Venn diagram represent the determinants of kinship words?
3. What role does the Cultural Venn diagram play in the process of teaching Japanese to Vietnamese?

By combining quantitative methods to analyze the determinants contained in 156 words extracted from the *Shinmeikai National Language Dictionary* with a qualitative survey, the authors have described the characteristics of Japanese kinship words, thereby shedding light on national cultural characteristics. To illustrate the set of determinants of kinship words, Cultural Venn diagrams are used to visually represent the relationship between roles and determinants of Vietnamese and Japanese kinship words. Cultural Venn diagrams serve to highlight both the differences and similarities between the two concepts and the cultural characteristics of the two ethnic communities. Based on the research results, the authors propose practical applications for teaching a second language using Cultural Venn diagrams.

As the authors recognize, the number of people learning Japanese is increasing day by day. According to the “Survey Report on Japanese Language Education Abroad 2018” by the non-profit organization named Japan Foundation, statistics reveal that Vietnam (in 2018) ranks 6th out of 142 countries in terms of the number of learners, teachers, and institutions offering Japanese language education. Vietnam has consistently been one of the countries with the highest percentage of Japanese language learners, teachers, and training institutions since 2015, and this trend is expected to continue to grow. The authors hope that this paper can contribute research results to effective methods of teaching Japanese to Vietnamese learners and vice versa, emphasizing the importance of applying knowledge of both language and culture in cross-cultural communication. On the other hand, the fact that the authors conducted the research based on the determinants contained in kinship words from a cultural perspective contributes to supporting L2 learners in the language acquisition process. It also provides learners with fresh insights and a deeper understanding of the culture of the country they are studying from. It helps teachers save time, summarize important lesson points, stimulate learner interest, and improve comprehension of the Japanese ethnic community.

Problem in the Cultural Venn Diagram Theory and Cultural Elements Affect Learning a Second Language

1. Cultural Venn diagram

Cultural Venn diagrams are the visual tools that represent different cultural groups and their relationships. The diagram is composed of overlapping circles, while the overlapping areas represent shared cultural aspects between the groups.

Cultural Venn diagrams have been used in a variety of settings to understand cultural diversity. In the study “Cultural Venn diagrams: A Visual Tool for Understanding Cultural Diversity” (Jones, 2012), the diagrams were used to explore cultural diversity in a school in the United States. The author concluded that Cultural Venn diagrams are a valuable tool for understanding cultural diversity, as they can be used to visualize the similarities and differences between different cultures. In the article “Using Cultural Venn Diagrams to Promote Cultural Understanding”, Thomas (2015) proved that the diagrams had to be applied to educate students about cultural diversity. The study developed an educational program that used Cultural Venn diagrams to help students understand different cultural groups and their relationships. In the article “Cultural Venn diagrams as a Tool for Intercultural Competence” by scholar Asgari (2017), the effectiveness of Cultural Venn diagrams in developing intercultural competence was examined. The study found that Cultural Venn diagrams can be an effective tool for helping learners understand different cultural groups and how they interact. Moreover, there are many functions and capabilities of Cultural Venn diagrams. According to Smith (2018), Cultural Venn diagrams are effective tools that can help learners find the contrasts and similarities between different cultures comprehensively and insightfully. Furthermore, by visually representing the similarities and differences between many cultures, Cultural Venn diagrams can help humans to see the world from a new perspective. This can lead to a

greater appreciation for diversity and a more nuanced understanding of other cultures (Wilson, 2019). To develop the deeper knowledge and skills to interact with others from other cultures effectively, Cultural Venn diagrams provide a comprehensive visual representation of the similarities and differences between diver cultures, as it allows people to communicate effectively, build relationships, and avoid misunderstandings (Brown, 2020).

Cultural Venn diagrams are utilized in education to aid students in understanding complex and abstract concepts (Bono, 1970). In the context of foreign language instruction, they can be beneficial for comparing vocabulary, recognizing similarities and differences in words, and exploring related vocabulary. A study conducted by Kim and Suh in 2013, titled “The Effects of Cultural Venn diagrams on English Vocabulary Learning” revealed that students who incorporated Cultural Venn diagrams into their English vocabulary learning performed better on tests compared to those who did not use them. This indicates the effectiveness of Cultural Venn diagrams in enhancing vocabulary retention.

In addition, the study “The Effectiveness of Cultural Venn diagrams in Teaching English Vocabulary to Intermediate Learners” by Al-Ani (2015) found that using Cultural Venn diagrams to teach English vocabulary to intermediate learners improved long-term word retention, thereby enhancing vocabulary recall. Additionally, in a study titled “The Use of Cultural Venn Diagrams to Teach English Vocabulary to Saudi EFL Learners”, Al-Muzaini (2016) found that students who utilized Cultural Venn diagrams for learning English vocabulary performed better in applying vocabulary within context, resulting in a deeper understanding of word meanings and their practical application (Sharifian, 2013; Duranti, 2009; Boroditsky, 2011; Langacker, 1991; Deutscher, 2006).

2. Cultural elements affect learning a second language

Teaching a second language or dialect involves connecting traditional cultural concepts with various linguistic aspects of the language under study. In language instruction, educators can introduce and emphasize cultural models or culture-specific learning models (Strauss, 1992; D'Andrade, 1995). These specific models are often expressed through fundamental cultural experiences, serving as the source for extending concepts through metaphor and metonymy.

Studying a language involves more than just learning grammar rules and sentence structures; it also encompasses learning about usage rules and cultural situations. It is a dynamic process where individuals interact, share experiences, and acquire cultural understanding. Understanding how language functions within a community is a key aspect. Therefore, educators need to explain the differences in emotional expression and vocabulary usage in specific contexts between the target cultural group and the learners' own cultural background. In situations like these, using one community's cultural framework when interacting with others can lead to misunderstandings or culture shocks, potentially causing emotional distress and significant impacts on the personal and professional lives of those involved in communication.

In a world where cultural exchange between countries is progressively increasing, there are both advantages and disadvantages to learning a language. Moreover, the complexity of learning a second language depends on the extent to which the cultural schemas of the learner's first language (L1) overlap with the traditional schemas associated with the second language (L2) they are acquiring. During this process, students may encounter one of at least four possible scenarios:

- 1) The second language, L2, which students are learning, deviates from the coding conventions of their cultural concepts.
- 2) L2 has symbols for concepts that only partially align with the learners' concepts.
- 3) L2 encodes concepts that do not exist in the cultural perception upon which the learners' original understanding is based.
- 4) L2 and L1 both encode similar concepts.

In 2002, Mackay argued that it becomes difficult for native speakers to understand culture when non-native speakers use English to communicate with each other. Nowadays, it is common to communicate in English with people from various countries. Therefore, establishing cultural concepts known as “Anglo cultural conceptualizations” is not beneficial for multicultural communication. It would be unrealistic to expect English as an International Language (EIL) speakers to be knowledgeable about all the world's diverse cultural information. Instead, there is a method to recognize that there are several different cultural conceptual systems within an international language.

Furthermore, EIL speakers can develop skills and understanding of diverse cultural groups, a concept that Mackay referred to as 'cultures of learning' in 2003. Consequently, the central message is that reliance on cultural preconceptions should be reduced when engaging in cross-cultural communication and when learning a second language. As a result, life experience perspectives become more diversified, enriching the conceptual basis of EIL.

Methodology

This paper employs a mixed-methods approach to compare and contrast kinship nouns in Vietnamese and Japanese. The quantitative method is used to compile statistics and evaluate the ratios between determinants within the category of words denoting kinship relations. Specifically, it includes 156 kinship words listed in the *Shinmeikai National Language Dictionary* (Yamada, 2021) and 119 kinship words listed in the *Vietnamese Dictionary* (Hoang Phe, 2022). The qualitative method is employed to analyze and compare cultural characteristics embedded in kinship words from both Japanese and Vietnamese cultural communities. The author scrutinizes kinship words in both languages based on four determinations found within the category of kinship words: gender determination, hierarchical determination, bloodline determination, and paternal and maternal determination. To illustrate these points, the authors incorporate cultural elements through examples from everyday conversations, proverbs, and idioms derived from sources such as the book of Vietnamese folk songs and proverbs (Vu Ngoc Phan, 2005) and the Yahoo Japan website portal. Furthermore, the authors categorize kinship

nouns into seven levels, encompassing great-grandparents, grandparents, parents, great-grandchildren, siblings, uncles/aunts, and spouses, and investigate their four determinants.

Based on the survey results obtained, the authors evaluated and drew conclusions regarding the characteristics of the levels based on each specific determinant in both Japanese and Vietnamese, and from that, established a schema that highlights the similarities and differences between specific kinship nouns in the two languages. Building on the research findings, the authors employ Cultural Venn diagrams to create separate diagrams representing the roles in kinship relations. Cultural Venn diagrams are a visual tool used to depict the relationships between sets, where the sets correspond to different roles in kinship relations. For instance, a Cultural Venn diagram illustrating the roles of siblings would consist of two sets: one set for brothers and another for sisters. The overlapping areas between the two sets represent siblings of the same gender.

Through the application of Cultural Venn diagrams, the authors can clearly illustrate the relationships between kinship nouns in Japanese and Vietnamese. This approach has enabled them to develop a more effective teaching method for these nouns. The teaching method comprises the following steps:

1. Introduction of Fundamental Concepts: The teacher starts by introducing fundamental concepts related to kinship relations.
2. Use of Cultural Venn diagrams: Cultural Venn diagrams are used as a visual aid to represent the relationships between different kinship nouns.
Introduction of Fundamental Concepts: The teacher starts by introducing fundamental concepts related to kinship relations.
3. Real-Word Examples: The teacher provides real-world examples to demonstrate how kinship nouns are used in everyday situations. This step bridges the gap between theory and practical usage.

1. Quantitative analysis

The quantitative analysis in this study was used to generate statistics and evaluate the ratio between the determinants within the class of words indicating kinship relations. Specifically, 156 kinship words were listed in the *Shinmeikai National Language Dictionary* (Yamada, T., & Kuramochi, Y., & Uwano, Z., & Yamada, A., & Izima, M., & Sasahara, M., 2021), and 119 kinship words were listed in the *Vietnamese Dictionary* (Hoang Phe, 2022).

The following steps were taken to conduct the quantitative analysis:

1. Data collection: The kinship words were collected from the *Shinmeikai National Language Dictionary* (Japanese) and the *Vietnamese Dictionary* (Hoang Phe, 2022).
2. Data classification: The kinship words were grouped by four determinants: gender, hierarchy, bloodline, and paternal and maternal.
3. Data analysis: Statistics on the number of family relationship words in Vietnamese and Japanese, thereby calculating the proportion between determinants in the system of kinship words.

2. Qualitative analysis

The qualitative analysis showed that both Vietnamese and Japanese kinship nouns are rich in cultural meaning. This approach further revealed the intricate details of how the two languages categorize kinship relationships, highlighting both the common ground and the divergences between their kinship words. For example, both Vietnamese and Japanese kinship nouns are gender-specific, but Vietnamese kinship nouns are more inclusive and gender-neutral than Japanese kinship nouns.

This information was used to develop the teaching method proposed by the authors. The method uses Cultural Venn diagrams to illustrate the relationships between kinship nouns in both languages. The authors believe that this method can foster a deeper understanding among students of the convergences and divergences between the kinship words embedded within the two languages.

Results

1. Gender determination

Table 1 clearly shows the gender discrimination in the kinship words of both languages: the number of Japanese kinship words, regardless of gender, accounts for less than 20%, while this number in Vietnamese is more than 32%. However, there are no gender-sensitive words in Vietnamese, whereas Japanese kinship words at this level are evenly divided between male and female genders. In Vietnam, the majority of kinship terms used by grandparents and parents refer to either male or female gender (50% male and 43.75% female in grandparents; 48% male and 48% female in parents). Moreover, the difference in the ratio between male and female kinship words is greatest in the case of husband and wife, with wife-related words accounting for more than 56%, while male kinship words only account for 12.5%. On the other hand, in Japanese, more than 47% of kinship words among children and grandchildren are gender-neutral, but this rate is only 6.67% among husband and wife.

Table 1. Gender determinants in Japanese and Vietnamese

	GENDER DETERMINANT					
	Japanese			Vietnamese		
	Male	Female	Not mentioned	Male	Female	Not mentioned
Great-Grand Parent tier	50.00%	50.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
Grand Parent tier	44.44%	44.44%	11.11%	50.00%	43.75%	6.25%
Parent tier	33.33%	40.00%	26.67%	48.00%	48.00%	4.00%
Children - Grandchildren - Great-Grandchildren tie	26.19%	26.19%	47.62%	21.43%	10.71%	67.86%
Brother - Sister tier	44.74%	55.26%	0.00%	31.82%	31.82%	36.36%
Uncle - Aunt tier	50.00%	50.00%	0.00%	27.27%	45.45%	27.27%
Husband - Wife tier	33.33%	60.00%	6.67%	12.50%	56.25%	31.25%
All tiers	37.18%	43.59%	19.23%	31.93%	36.13%	31.93%

2. Hierarchies determination

Table 2. Hierarchy determination in Japanese and Vietnamese

	HIERARCHY DETERMINANT					
	Japanese			Vietnamese		
	Upper than Ego	Equal to Ego	Lower than Ego	Upper than Ego	Equal to Ego	Lower than Ego
Great-Grand Parent tier	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Grand Parent tier	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Parent tier	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Children - Grandchildren - Great-Grandchildren tie	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
Brother - Sister tier	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
Uncle - Aunt tier	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Husband - Wife tier	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
All tiers	39.10%	33.97%	26.92%	44.54%	31.93%	23.53%

Table 2 of this paper shows the ratio of hierarchical determinants of kinship classes in the Japanese and Vietnamese languages according to levels. Both Japanese and Vietnamese have similarities in this prefix. All the words in the rank of great-grandfather, grandparents, parents, and uncle-aunt are above Ego in both Japanese and Vietnamese, while in addition to descendants, there are words indicating kinship below Ego, while the words in the rank of brother-sister and husband-wife are equal to Ego.

3. Bloodline determination

Table 3. Bloodline-relationship determination in Japanese and Vietnamese

	BLOODLINE - RELATIONSHIP DETERMINANT					
	Japanese			Vietnamese		
	Bloodline	Non-bloodline	Not mentioned	Bloodline	Non-bloodline	Not mentioned
Great-Grand Parent tier	33.33%	0.00%	66.67%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Grand Parent tier	77.78%	0.00%	22.22%	68.75%	25.00%	6.25%
Parent tier	60.00%	30.00%	10.00%	48.00%	52.00%	0.00%
Children - Grandchildren - Great-Grandchildren tie	73.81%	14.29%	11.90%	78.57%	21.43%	0.00%
Brother - Sister tier	55.26%	34.21%	10.53%	77.27%	22.73%	0.00%
Uncle - Aunt tier	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	45.45%	27.27%	18.18%
Husband - Wife tier	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
All tiers	53.21%	27.56%	19.23%	57.26%	39.58%	2.53%

Table 3 includes the ratio of the class of words indicating kinship according to the pedigree determinants of the levels. In general, most of the nouns indicating kinship in Vietnamese distinguish whether they are related to Ego, and only 0.84% of these Vietnamese nouns are unrelated. However, this indiscriminate rate in Japanese accounts for 19.23%, especially in uncles, aunts, and uncles, all classes of words indicating kinship relations that are not distinguished by bloodline. In addition, in the spouses of both Japanese and Vietnamese, all these nouns show no blood relation to ego.

4. Paternal-maternal side determination

The fourth table shows the difference between the paternal and maternal elements of the class of kinship words in both Japanese and Vietnamese. The vast majority of these words are not differentiated from each other in 97.44% of Japanese and 80.67% of Vietnamese, respectively. In addition, in the Japanese language, the number of words for people on the inner side is equal to the number of similar words on the outside side and accounts for a very small 2.38% of the children and grandchildren.

Table 4. Paternal - maternal side determination in Japanese and Vietnamese

	PATERNAL - MATERNAL SIDE DETERMINANT					
	Japanese			Vietnamese		
	Paternal side	Maternal side	Not mentioned	Paternal side	Maternal side	Not mentioned
Great-Grand Parent tier	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
Grand Parent tier	0.00%	22.22%	77.78%	12.50%	31.25%	56.25%
Parent tier	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	8.00%	12.00%	80.00%
Children - Grandchildren - Great-Grandchildren tie	2.38%	2.38%	95.24%	10.71%	3.57%	85.71%
Brother - Sister tier	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
Uncle - Aunt tier	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	27.27%	36.36%	36.36%
Husband - Wife tier	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
All tiers	0.64%	1.92%	97.44%	8.40%	10.92%	80.67%

From the above data results, it is shown that the words indicating the kinship relationship between the two languages, Japanese and Vietnamese, are clearly shown through four survey determinants. From these four determinants, the results are similar and different for each level in the two language communities. Due to the influence of two different cultures, the division of prefixes in words indicating kinship relations will also be different. Similarities and differences will create advantages and disadvantages for learning a second language. Therefore, the authors apply the survey results to support the method of teaching Japanese or Vietnamese as a second language according to the set schemas.

Discussion

1. Gender determination

In biology, the concept of sex refers to the male and female sexes of an organism. Each sex exhibits distinct physiological characteristics and shapes; similarly, humans are also divided into two sexes, male and female. In Paper 5 of the 2006 *Law on Gender Equality*, “gender” is understood as a concept indicating biological characteristics, while it also represents the characteristics, positions, and roles of individuals in all social relationships. Therefore, the term “male and female” not only defines gender but also expresses the behavior, roles, and social expectations of men and women, all of which are influenced by society. In Japan, there is a proverb “男は家屋を作り、女は家庭を作る” (Otoko wa kaoku o tsukuri, onna wa katei o tsukuru), which says that men build houses while women make them into homes. This reflects the cultural belief that societal roles are clearly defined based on gender. Men are traditionally seen as representatives of the stronger sex, handling physically demanding tasks outside the home, while women are seen as

representatives of the weaker gender, taking on the responsibilities of caring for the family and children.

Similar to the Japanese belief, Vietnamese people also have the belief that “Đàn ông xây nhà, đàn bà xây tổ ấm” (men build houses while women make them into homes). In this proverb, in the old days, grandparents emphasized the role of women within the family, emphasizing the importance of “building a nest” for a happy and lasting family. Consequently, the role of words indicating kinship relations associated with gender prefixes was found to determine the subject's “gender” when participating in the communication. In Japanese culture, there is an influence of “machismo”. This term, which originates from Spanish and emerged in the 1930s, conveys a sense of pride in one's masculinity. It is associated with “the responsibility of a man to provide for and protect his family”. However, nowadays, this term is often used to refer to a “sexist” model and is strongly influenced by societal biases.

2. Hierarchies determination

The family is considered a microcosm of society, reflecting historical changes. Even with the emergence of social classes, clear hierarchies within the family are also expressed through words indicating kinship relations. The words “Tôn” (high) and “Ti” (low) are derived from the Chinese principle of yin and yang, known as “Kinh Dịch” (the law governing the universe through the interplay of yin and yang). Originally, “Nam tôn nữ ti” implied harmony derived from “Thiên tôn địa ti” and “Phu tua nhu thiên, Phu tua nhu địa”, suggesting that “men are heaven” and “women are land”. In this context, the wife embodies yin, emphasizing gentleness as the foundation. A woman is expected to exhibit qualities of tolerance and kindness to maintain family harmony. The man, representing Yang, focuses on his career and providing for the family. The inherent nature of men and women assigns them different roles, and if they strictly adhere to these roles, the family can achieve peace and prosperity. However, over time, societal thinking and prejudices have significantly altered the original meaning of this perspective.

Vietnam and many other East Asian countries have been significantly influenced by Chinese civilization. Confucianism played a crucial role in introducing hierarchical systems, both within the family and throughout society, establishing roles for superiors and subordinates.

Within the family, a harmonious male-female relationship is emphasized, often expressed with sayings like “phu xướng thì vợ phải tùy” (Women must depend on men), “tam tông, tứ đức” (three obediences, four virtues), and “đồng vợ đồng chồng tát biển Đông cũng cạn” (The same men and women who attacked the Eastern Sea also dried up). In parent-child relationships, children are expected to show filial piety to their grandparents, parents, and those who contributed to their upbringing and birth. Similarly, Japanese culture places great importance on hierarchical prefixes in kinship relationships, as indicated by survey data. Influenced by Confucian philosophical ideas, Japan retains a strong cultural identity characterized by hierarchical hierarchies. This hierarchical structure is evident in various aspects of Japanese life and work, such as “先輩-senpai •

後輩-kohai” (senior-junior) relationships, particularly prominent in Japanese corporate culture. Hierarchical relationships also extend to “cấp trên-cấp dưới” (superior-subordinate), “bề trên-bề dưới” (superior-subordinate), “khách hàng-nhân viên” (customer-employee), and “lớp đi trước- lớp đi sau” (Leader – follower lớp đi trước- lớp đi sau) dynamics.

3. Bloodline determination

During the early Common Era (C.E.), the social organization in Vietnam followed a matrilineal clan structure comprising three key members: mothers, children, and grandchildren. These terms have their origins in South Asia. However, as Chinese culture began to influence Vietnam during the Northern Domination period, a new social structure emerged, which introduced the concept of 'family' for addressing relatives. Consequently, the 'bloodline' became a significant determinant in the Vietnamese system of address determinants.

By using pronouns, a witness can understand the relationships between the characters in the process of communication. For example, the term “uncle”, when used as a self-proclaimed word, indicates that the communicators who play the role of the subject are not related by blood to the ego. However, in Japanese, they use a neutral term, “伯父/叔父- oji”, to refer to a man, whether blood-related or not, who was born before or after the ego parents. Similarly, “伯母/ 叔母- oba” is used to refer to a woman, regardless of blood relation, who is married to a blood-related man or woman, whether born before or after the ego's parents. Pronouns play a crucial role in conveying relationships during communication.

In Vietnamese, when referring to a man as an uncle, there is a distinction, while in Japanese, “伯父- oji” is used. Similarly, when referring to a woman as an aunt, Japanese employ “叔母-oba”.

4. Paternal- maternal side determination

In Vietnamese culture, family structures are divided into two opposing positions known as the “internal side” and the “external side”. The “internal side” comprises the grandparents who gave birth to the father, and the father's siblings typically have paternal surnames. Conversely, the “external side” includes the grandparents who gave birth to the mother, and the mother's siblings generally bear maternal surnames.

Vietnamese society traditionally holds the “paternal side” in high regard while often giving less importance to the maternal side”. For instance, there's a saying that reflects this bias: Your son and daughter are far away; your son and uncle are really brothers”. As a result, when a son gets married and has children, he and his offspring are closely associated with the “paternal side”, often being called “grandchild”. In contrast, when a daughter gets married and has children, she and her offspring are also referred to as “grandchildren”, reinforcing the focus on the 'paternal side.' This emphasis on the “paternal side” runs deep in Vietnamese culture, influencing naming conventions as children typically adopt the surname of the “paternal side”, and their place of origin is linked to the birthplace of the paternal grandparents. Consequently, a common saying

emerges: “A daughter is a human being.” This saying underscores the societal expectation that when a girl gets married, she is expected to care for, nurture, and serve her husband’s family, including tending to the needs of the “paternal side”. This aspect contributes to the deepening of the bias of “respect for men and disregard for women”.

Unlike Vietnamese kinship terms, which incorporate the distinctions of the “internal side” and “external side”, Japanese lack such explicit designations. Japanese kinship words are generally neutral and do not inherently specify internal or external factors, similar to how Vietnamese use the terms “uncle” and “aunt”.

To differentiate between these factors, Vietnamese employ sub-morphemes such as “internal” and “external” (to indicate internal and external determinants), “intestine”, “mulberry”, “in-law”, “reared” (to add a bloodline prefix), “boy”, “girl”, or “grandparents” (for gender identification). In contrast, Japanese resort to lexical explanations, such as “母の兄 - haha no ani” (mother’s brother) and “父の妹 - chichi no imōto’ (father’s sister)”.

Building on the survey and analysis results discussed earlier, the authors have created a diagram that utilizes a set of four determinants for kinship words. This diagram serves as a valuable tool for teaching Vietnamese to Japanese as a second language. In this case, the objects represent classes of kinship words, while the concept pertains to an individual’s role within the family and society. Thus, the authors have chosen to employ Cultural Venn diagrams as a foundational model for second-language learning.

According to the survey results in this study, each word indicating kinship is expressed in the four determinants. Furthermore, even though the two cultures are different, the expected behavior of society for each specific role is the same, while every role schema in kinship relations is similar. However, according to the mentioned results, some diagrams have the existence of a case where there is no determinant distinction while in the collation language, there is a clear distinction. Therefore, there are two cases: one case when the number of determinants in the similar determinant set is four, and another case when this number is less than four. From the above two cases, the authors also propose appropriate teaching methods as follows. In the first case, when the number of determinants in the similar determinant set includes all four determinants and, as a result, the specific kinship words in both languages are identical, a direct translation method is recommended. This method involves a literal translation of words denoting kinship relationships between Vietnamese and Japanese. For instance, the word “母/Me” (mother) serves as a specific example.

Diagram 2 illustrates the Venn diagram of “母/Me” (mother) in both Vietnamese and Japanese, based on the same survey. A mother is a female person who is higher than Ego in the hierarchy and in the bloodline with Ego while she does not belong to any side in paternal-maternal side determinants. A mother is a female individual who holds a higher position than Ego in the family hierarchy and shares a blood relationship with Ego, without being specifically associated with either the paternal or maternal side. When teaching the kinship words “母/Me” (mother) in Vietnamese and Japanese, teachers can use the illustrated diagram above to help learners understand the characteristics and general meanings of the word. Additionally, the role of criteria will also determine the

meaning and functionality of the word. If she is not in a bloodline relationship with Ego, there are some extended words such as *Mẹ kế/ 継母* (stepmother), *Mẹ nuôi/ 養母* (stepmother), and if paternal-maternal side determinant is considered, there is a word “*義母*” (mother in law) in Japanese, while in Vietnamese, “*Mẹ vợ*” (mother of wife) is on the maternal side and “*Mẹ chồng*” (mother of husband) is on the paternal side. Furthermore, determinants also clearly demonstrate roles through meanings in idioms such as “*必要は発明の母 (Hitsuyō wa hatsumei no haha)*” literally meaning that the demand is the mother of the inventions while “*勤勉は成功の母 (Kinben wa seikō no haha)*” literally meaning that diligence is the mother of success. This explains the roles based on the gender determinant, where the mother plays a role in giving birth and nurturing children; hence, the image of a mother symbolizes the origin of innovation from human needs, or diligence as the core leading to success. From that meaning, Vietnamese also call nature with the familiar phrase “*Mẹ thiên nhiên*” (Nature Mother).

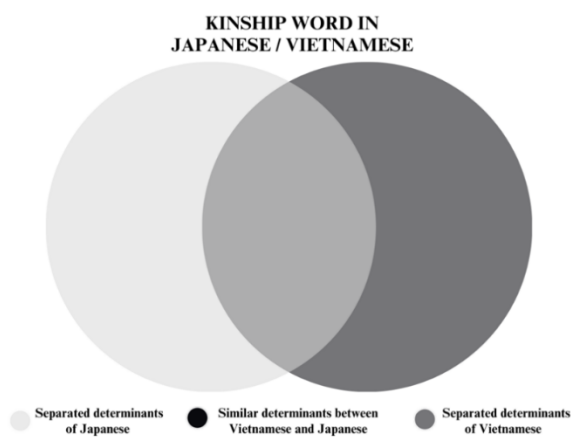


Diagram 1. Venn diagram including 4 determinants represents kinship word in Vietnamese and Japanese

In the second case, when set A consists of fewer than four determinants, the specific kinship word in Japanese may carry less meaning than its Vietnamese counterpart, or vice versa. In such situations, teachers employing the aggregation scheme teaching method can assist second-language learners in understanding the meaning and function of kinship-related words.

For example, when dealing with terms for uncles, aunts, and cousins, there are notable differences between Vietnamese and Japanese. The words used to indicate kinship at this level include “Uncle, uncle, aunt/uncle/ 伯父 (Oji), 叔父 (Oji)”. Apart from the four predicates mentioned earlier for kinship words, additional conditional factors are involved to avoid confusion regarding the roles of individuals within the family.

母 / MẸ (MOTHER)

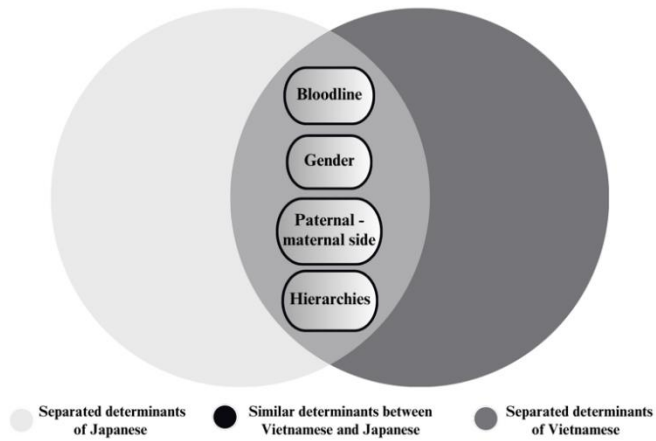


Diagram 2. Venn diagram of the kinship word “母/Mẹ” (mother) in Vietnamese and Japanese

In Japanese, to refer to a man who is the brother of a parent or get, the term used is “伯父” (oji). This word specifically denotes the male gender and a higher hierarchical level than the Ego, without specifying bloodline and paternal-maternal factors. When teaching this concept to Vietnamese speakers, there isn't a single word that exactly matches all four criteria. However, the term “Bác” is used, which can refer to an uncle or aunt who is older than the parent, without distinguishing gender at the hierarchical level. The common point in both languages is that they both refer to individuals who have a biological relationship with and are older than the parents of the EGO. Therefore, “伯父/Bác” does not differentiate based on bloodline and paternal-maternal determinants.

伯父 / BÁC (UNCLE)

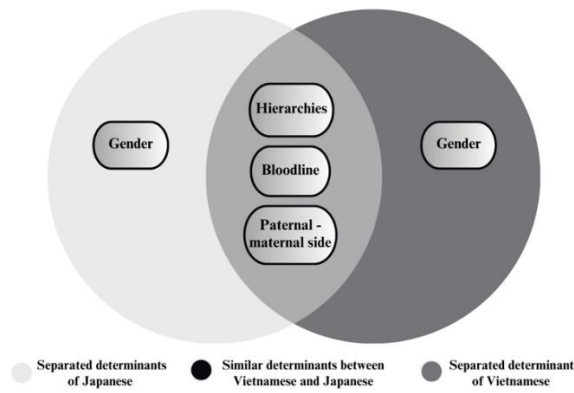


Diagram 3. Venn diagram of the kinship word “伯父/Bác” (uncle) in Vietnamese and Japanese

However, in the Uncle-Aunt tier, in Japanese, the word “叔父” (Uncle) has 3 Vietnamese equivalents, which are “Chú, Cậu, Dượng” (Uncle), respectively. To differentiate these words, the analysis is based on determinants, starting with the model of “叔父/Dượng” (uncle), who is related by marriage to the mother's sisters, according to diagram 4.

He holds a higher position in the hierarchy than Ego and is not determined by the paternal or maternal side. However, there is an inequality in the bloodline determination. These words differ in the bloodline determinant; in Japanese, 叔父 (oji - uncle) is used to refer to a man born after Ego's parents or who has a marital relationship with someone born after Ego's parents. Hence, there is no distinction in the bloodline determinant. On the other hand, in Vietnamese, the word “Dượng (uncle)” is used to refer to a man with a marital relationship with someone born after Ego's mother, so in the bloodline determinant, there is no bloodline relation.

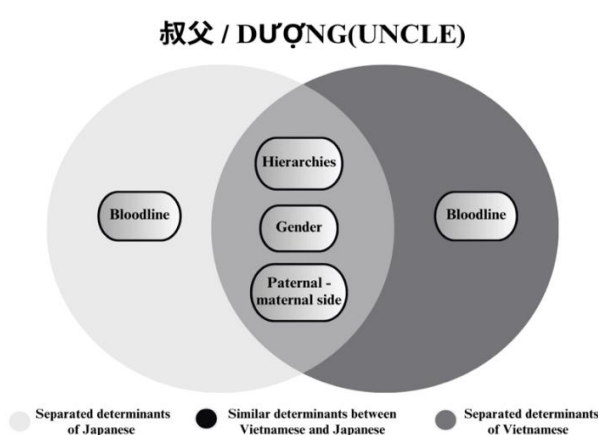


Diagram 4. Venn diagram of the kinship word “叔父/Dượng” (uncle) in Vietnamese and Japanese

Analyzing the Venn diagram of the terms “Cậu” and “叔父” based on the model illustrating four determinants reveals the following factors: Gender - Male; Hierarchies - Upper than Ego; Bloodline line - Not mentioned (In Japanese), Yes (In Vietnamese); Paternal-maternal side - Non (In Japanese), Maternal side (In Vietnamese). Subsequently, examining the Venn diagram of the terms “Chú” and “叔父” according to the model representing four determinants yields the following specifications: Gender - Male; Hierarchies - Upper Ego; Bloodline line - Not mentioned (In Japanese), Yes (In Vietnamese); Paternal-maternal side - Non (In Japanese), Paternal side (In Vietnamese). This comparative analysis provides a structured insight into the nuanced distinctions between the terms in question within the specified cultural and linguistic contexts.

In Diagram 5, the similarities among the words “Chú/Cậu/叔父” (uncle) are clearly shown, all referring to male individuals in relation to EGO. However, in Japanese, the

word “叔父” (oji - uncle) mentioned above is used to address a man younger than EGO's parents or someone related through marriage to someone younger than EGO's parents. Hence, the bloodline lineage is not determined in this case. On the other hand, in Vietnamese, the word “Chú” (uncle) is used to refer to a man younger than Ego's father, thus carrying a bloodline lineage element and belonging to the maternal side. Conversely, if the man is younger than Ego's mother, he is called “Cậu”, which contains a bloodline lineage element and belongs to the paternal side.

The diagrams enable the authors to identify the differences and similarities between these determinants, allowing them to understand the semantics and operational characteristics of kinship words. Determinants reflect specific roles and positions, and vice versa, the roles interact with the determinants, leading to changes in each set and making it easier to recognize symbolic features. Teaching a second language with visual aids helps educators streamline the analysis process, clearly pinpointing the features of both languages. Additionally, it assists learners in understanding and using the language correctly in specific family and social communication scenarios.

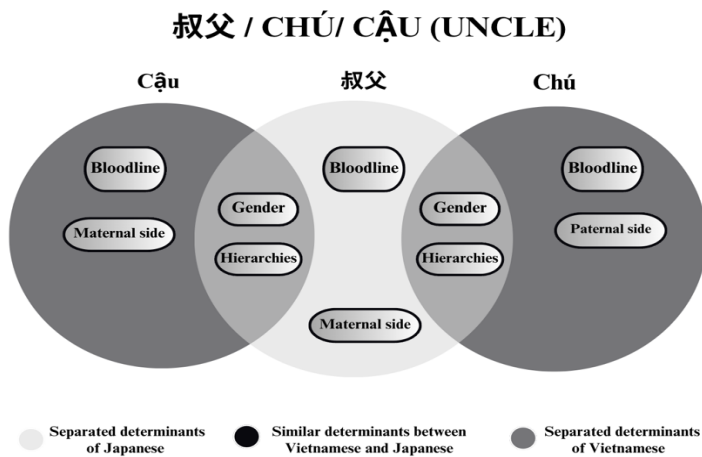


Diagram 5. Venn diagram of the kinship word “Chú-Cậu/叔父” (uncle) in Vietnamese and Japanese

According to the analysis results, although the two cultural communities are different and the two languages are different, the exemplary roles of individuals within the family exhibit remarkable similarities. Based on the common schema model, each language community will have its own definition of kinship nouns in terms of the function, role, and position of individuals in society. Moreover, built upon this shared role model, two distinct cultural communities can have common aspects of life and phenomena. This common ground enables people to learn, translate languages, and gain insights from one another in a straightforward and understandable manner. However, it's important to

recognize that even within differing cultures and life perceptions, the naming systems for kinship may exhibit significant variations. Through the application of words that indicate kinship based on role schema theory, the article effectively highlighted and understood both the similarities and differences in the perceptions and lifestyle habits of the Vietnamese and Japanese people.

Conclusion

Utilizing Cultural Venn diagram in language teaching allows learners to discover various intriguing aspects of learning a second language. Given that each language and culture possesses its own unique characteristics and worldviews, teaching with cultural maps serves to address the challenges of culture shock in multicultural communication. It enables learners to gain practical experience and genuine exposure to the culture they are studying. By analyzing and elucidating the four main determinants in kinship nouns: gender, hierarchy, and bloodline (paternal and maternal), the cultural traits existing in these countries can be discerned. While they are all influenced by Chinese culture, particularly “Confucianism” the development and cognitive characteristics of Vietnamese and Japanese people in terms of family and their perception of the world exhibit both similarities and differences. The application of these determinant diagrams in language learning simplifies vocabulary retention and fosters a closer connection to the language. Teaching a second language with diagrams aids educators in expediting the analysis process and highlighting the distinctions between the two languages. Moreover, it assists learners in gaining a clear understanding of and using language appropriately in specific family and social communication contexts.

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