

Vietnamese Migrants' Attitudes towards Vietnamese Sexist Language

by

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis does not contain material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university; nor does it contain material previously published or written by any other person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

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Abstract

This thesis examines Vietnamese Australians' attitudes towards sexist language. One can not separate language from the cultural and social issues as they are intertwined with one another. The shaping of an individual's behaviours, attitudes, life values, his/her application of language largely depends on the social environment where s/he has grown up. In Vietnamese society, Confucianism has played a part in shaping many individuals' thinking. Although in the present time it is not as popular as many years ago, it still exists in a number of families, it can be seen through the way they behave, what they believe. There are many research studies on the sexist language in English whereas it is rare to find a research study dealing with sexist language in Vietnamese. This thesis deals with the Vietnamese migrants' attitudes and perception of sexist language. It investigates the nature and characteristics of sexist language in Vietnamese and makes some comparison with that in English. Special attention is given to the socio-cultural context in which sexist language was derived and used. Both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used.

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Vietnamese Migrants' Attitudes Towards Sexist Language

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Overview

After the Second World War, the population growth in Australia has increased to nearly sixty percent due to immigration from overseas. Most immigrants in the post-war period came from a variety of European countries, more than half of the immigrants came from non-British origin and only a small number of migrants were from Asian countries. The number of migrants coming to Australia was about four millions, three millions have settled and two million children have been born. The study reveals that in 1947, there were only 9.8 percent of people living in Australia were born overseas, whereas in 1976, twenty-one per cent of people were born overseas (Hassan et al., 1985).

In 1975 due to wars and chaos in several Asian countries, Asian migrants began to come to Australia and the majority was migrants from Vietnam.

The Vietnamese families faced hardships and problems in the resettlement process. Not only are there difficulties in having to learn English as a second language to be able to communicate effectively with native speakers, find suitable employment, adapt to new way of life, cultural conflicts have arisen from changes of the traditional family pattern and other familiar cultural norms. In addition to the financial losses that the Vietnamese families suffered in their escape, feelings such as anxiety, grief, depression followed due to family break-ups and separation from their homeland. (Lewis as cited by Hassan et.al., 1985). Loss of extended family net work caused many problems for Vietnamese migrants, many felt lonely and did not have moral support. There were also inter-generational problems concerning values and morality between parents and children that develop within families, children in Vietnam were more restricted than their Australian counterparts. Not only do cultural conflicts affect family relationships they aggravate inter-generational differences. Even though living in a new country, a large number of people of the older generation continue to adhere to the morals and values that existed in Vietnam. Despite the fact that some of these morals and values were even out of date there. While the young Vietnamese who grow up in Australia want the freedom enjoyed by their Australian peers, their parents struggle to maintain Vietnamese family identity. The parental saying to their children

such as ‘đừng quên mình là người Việt Nam’ (lest forget that we are Vietnamese) is often heard as a reminder to children that they have to maintain old customs and traditional values. As a problem of migration, the Vietnamese families in Australia are caught between two cultures and identity confusion. This in turn creates behavioural problems between family members. According to the Krupinski study cited by Storer (1985), eighty per cent of parents of migrant families wanted their children to maintain old customs and values, whereas less than fifty per cent of children preferred this.

In addition to generation conflicts between grandparents, parents and children, the Vietnamese family faced problems concerning conjugal roles. There have been changes in terms of traditional roles of male and female, even though women worked in Vietnam, in many cases they still had to defer to their husbands’ opinions. They were not treated as equals to their husbands socially and culturally and praises were still there for women who were passive and deferred to their husband’s wish. In Australia the traditional role of a passive woman is conversed to an active one when many Vietnamese women are prepared to take a stand for themselves and become financially independent as well as liberally in their thinking. Women learn English, join the workforce to supplement the family budget. For extremely dominant males, this represents a threat to their identity and creates tension in the family as the men fear to be less valued than their wives.

In many other cases, there are women remaining at home looking after children. These women find themselves in fear and isolation. They feel that they are left behind, life is passing them by and they are missing out on chances to experience new things and improve knowledge. Cox’s study on conflicts between husband and wife from non-Anglo-Saxon background (quoted in Storer (1985, p. 28) reveals breakdowns for women in such circumstance occurs. This is for the reason that “the woman becomes aware that her usefulness is at an end and she is being left behind by the children and even by her husband, all of whom are becoming more assimilated in the life of the general community in contrast to her own isolation”.

In Australia, the traditional sex role of males and females has more or less changed. It is hard for many Vietnamese males to accept that they no longer have absolute authority in the family. It appears to be a challenge for several males still adopting the attitude that they are heads of the family and other members have to obey their instructions. Raising an opinion different from the father/husband’s view is regarded

as lack of filial piety for children and 'disrespectful' for his wife. Not only problems occur due to differences of opinion, but also from other factors such as work pressure, former professions can not be pursued in Australia without retraining or going back to study- a process of which a good knowledge of English is required and financial support is needed. Being the head of the family, Vietnamese males are caught in confusion. Besides, unemployment also places great strain on the spouses and undermines the dominant role of the male.

Having come from Vietnam myself, not only have I learnt from my own family's difficulty but other people's experiences of hope and despair in the new life. In particular with the suffering of Vietnamese woman and mother who devotes exhaustively, selflessly, and even blindly to the need of her husband and children. As a child, I admired the devoting image of the Vietnamese woman. I remembered hearing Vietnamese proverbs, sayings and folklore praising the role of Vietnamese women from family members, relatives, family friends, teachers and people in the neighbourhood to reading them in books and newspapers. I thought it was a beautiful picture of Vietnamese woman with the four virtues of 'công', 'dung', 'ngôn' and 'hạnh'. In my adult life, I begin to question cultural values of the sex role of Vietnamese men and women.

It appears that there are two contradictory messages of women in stories, proverb and folklore. On one level, women are represented as strong-willed and resilient beings. On another level, women are represented as passive and vulnerable beings. It is also discriminatory and unjust for the Vietnamese women as compared to what I have observed in actual daily life and what was presented in stories and folklore.

The status and contrasting images of women embodied in stories, folklore and proverb are a reflection of the traditional women in reality.

This contrast derives from the influence of Confucianism on the conception of femininity. Researches suggest that before the Chinese ruling, there was an indigenous culture wherein women had freedom and equality (Cong, IRef 19). In the early tradition, women were respected and on an equal footing with men. When the Confucian view of femininity embraced the culture, it has overshadowed the ethical tradition of equality for women in Vietnam. It sets certain models for women's and men's behaviours. It is a deep rooted influence to the extent that nowadays, in western

countries, a large number of Vietnamese continue to live in accordance with the Confucian expectations.

Is the Vietnamese woman truly happy with her expected role? Does she feel respected by her husband if she raises a different opinion from his? Or does she encounter an attitude showing “woman knows nothing”? And as for the Vietnamese man, does he still think that the role of man is superior to that of a woman? Is he prepared to listen to his wife’s radical thinking and treat her with respect? Or does he feel that his wife’s differences are a lack of respect or a violation of his values and rights? How many radical thinking males are there? Are they outnumbered the ones with stereotypical views? Are Vietnamese men and women cultural stereotypes? And that they behave only in ways that they are expected to? Do the new freedom and security of Australian society threaten the traditional role of Vietnamese men?

Despite the fact that more women have stepped out family boundaries and joined the workforce and society has recognised women for their contribution, the change in attitude is still on the surface (IRef.19). Radical change in the traditional concept of the role of women is still distant. The Confucian tradition has taken such deep root in the Vietnamese culture that men continue to view women’s contribution, not as part of women’s personal achievement, but as part of their duty to help men. As long as this conservatism is maintained, it is difficult for Vietnamese women to rise above the ordinary and contribute their effort to the commonwealth of the country.

This study examines Vietnamese migrants’ attitudes towards sexist language, which involves social and cultural issues. It is not only an academic research but also of personal interest.

1.2 The social and cultural context of discriminatory/sexist language

According to Goodacre and Follers (1987) “Communication is the lifeblood of our daily existence”. People are only aware of its importance when they encounter situations where communications break down. What seems so obvious and of importance to some can be ambiguous and of little importance to others, trying to get people understand our personal feelings or get messages across can be difficult as people have different perceptions of things. However, communication can still flow freely between people who belong to the same society, share similar ways of life and

belong to the same culture as they still can understand the message being sent and its intended meaning (Goodacre, 1987), whereas, communication can become extremely difficult for people of different cultures. Apart from the facts that they don't belong to the same society, have very different ways of life and cultural backgrounds. Language barrier is an obvious point that separates them, their messages are not fully understood as they would like them to (Goodacre, 1987).

Language and culture are intertwined with each other. Language is a powerful tool for human communication. There are hundreds of different languages spoken daily and each has its own unique structure and function. Language is used to communicate our worldviews, its nature and role in the communication process must be understood. Language does not only consist of words, it is the aspect of non-material culture (Short, 1992). As we learn language, we learn to interpret the meanings of groups of words and make sense of our message. Language is an element of a person's culture, an important part of a person and group identification. It is used to transmit thoughts, enables us to take part in the daily life and teach younger generation things they need to learn to function well as members of the culture they inherit. On the social level, not only does language convey information; it creates unity as well as reinforces divisions between social groups. Sapir and Whorf describe the two important features of language are interdependence of thought and language. The capacity of language to shape perception, language enables us to 'organise' the world we see, hear, touch and taste (Sapir and Whorf quoted by Short, 1992). Sapir and Whorf compared the ways language is used in various cultures and developed a theory of linguistic relativity suggesting that "language predisposes us to perceive and interpret reality in a particular way; linguistic patterns can direct perception, thinking and meanings we produce through communication, into certain channels" (Short, 1992).

In addition to the spoken language, we also learn the unspoken language or body language of our culture, the non-verbal symbols are equally important as the verbal symbols. In the communication process, both verbals and non-verbal symbols are taken in to interpret our meaning to a message. Thus, the way of languaging could intentionally and unintentionally create positive and negative effects. One of the negative aspects is discriminatory language. This study investigated the form and function of discriminatory language in Vietnamese and a comparison between Vietnamese and English in terms of discriminatory and sexist language was also included in the study.

The discriminatory language involves cultural and social issues. It examines the impact of what has been fully established in the culture, which has influenced the individuals since childhood, many of the individual flow in the river of life and are swept away by its strong current. Biased words, expressions, proverbs, and folklore are given as examples.

Although our cultures and societies play a part in shaping an individual's thinking, attitudes, life values and behaviours, it all begins with us as each individual has the right to their thinking and judgement. Babies are not born with attitudes or prejudices and as children we naturally love and forgive, but as we grow up we receive and internalise messages and images from our social environment. In our early age we begin to learn certain sets of social norms via our parents. At home parents not only teach their children how to name or use things but also teach their own attitudes to the children. Despite many outside factors that influence an individual thinking, each individual has a choice to whether question what they are seeing or just unquestionably accept it as a natural norm.

The culture plays an important part in shaping our view and thinking. It is impossible to discuss about language without thinking about the cultural contexts and meanings. Saville-Troike (1982) presents those social categories such as race, sex, age, social class, religion and ethnicity carry with them traditional attitudes and expectations, which strongly influence all communication. Our values and attitudes are closely related. Values are ideas, beliefs and practices that shared by people of the same culture and are regarded as important to them. People often have strong feelings about their values and may react strongly if they feel any challenge or threat to their values (Lovatt, 1987). Attitudes come with values, they are our set ways of thinking and judging things. There are certain sets of values found in a culture and not all members of the same culture hold the same values, however, most members of the same culture would show strong and positive feelings about certain distinctive values (Lovatt, 1987).

In many societies individuals are trained to accept certain community ideas and values. We are so used to these concepts that we tend to accept and follow those

without any questions. The pressure of society is strong in creating and expecting individuals to follow uniformly. At times we pause and ponder but because other people in the community do so, we thought it must be right. It is part of life and has to be accepted as it is. As Kress states:

“These codes appear usual, normal, natural; and s/he accepts them as the way the world is, as the proper picture of human nature, and as all that there can be” (Kress, 1988:11).

1.3 Context and issues of discriminatory/sexist language in Vietnamese

While there has been many works in research and academic forum on discriminatory language, particularly sexist language, there is virtually no research on sexist language in Vietnamese. Most studies on Vietnamese tend to focus on phonology, morphology, syntax and sociolinguistic rules. This lack of research is very astonishing if one takes into account the way in which women are perceived in the Vietnamese society. The Vietnamese culture is a very long one full of ideologies spreading in a dynamic cultural discourse of over four thousand years.

According to Le and Le (1999), there are a number of factors accounting for the lack of interest and action in tackling discriminatory language, particularly sexist language in Vietnamese. First, it is assumed by some that discriminatory language/sexist does not exist in Vietnamese (contrary to the position taken in this paper). Several examples are given to support this view. Women still keep their surnames after marriage. Vietnamese has the words 'đất mẹ' (motherland) and 'quê cha đất tổ' (fatherland) to refer to the native land, birthplace, home, and the nation. Elderly people are well respected in society as they have an important role to play. There are also certain privileges attached to seniority. This is not discrimination against young people.

Secondly, Vietnamese people do not take discriminatory/sexist language seriously. This could be true for a number of reasons. For some, communication is too serious to be taken seriously. The influence of Taoism can be seen in this attitude, as Taoism does not favour human intervention in life. Everything has its own reason. To

intervene is to put one's way against the others. This could create havoc instead of harmony. Whichever way we attempt to construct or reconstruct language, it does not fundamentally solve human problems as the real problem is with the mind, not the language itself (Le and Le, 1999).

Third, Confucianism has permeated deeply the Vietnamese culture and its language. The relationship between culture and language is so profoundly interwoven that it is impossible to challenge a language without challenging its culture. Confucianism is an important foundation on which the Vietnamese culture is based. It has a great impact in Vietnamese education, literature, social organisation, and human conduct. Social roles are normally defined on the basis of gender, age, profession, and authority. Individuals are positioned in a hierarchy of power and responsibility. In this context, it requires individual to adhere to 'danh chính ngôn thuận' (right words and appropriate expression).

Fourth, for some people, as a developing nation, Vietnam has many urgent problems such as transportation, national self-reliance, and access to education etc., which require national sacrifice and social harmony. Issues such as discriminatory/ sexist language and language reform are not serious enough to receive urgent action, according to this pragmatic view.

When one examines Vietnamese proverbs, one can easily find many remarks and advice, which are very discriminatory and sexist against women, people of low social status, people with disability, and people with different ethnic or regional backgrounds. This study unearthed some aspects of discriminatory/ sexist language in this regard.

1.4 Research aims

The aims of this study are:

- (a) To investigate the nature and characteristics of discriminatory language in Vietnamese, particularly with a focus on sexist language.
- (b) To construct whether there is language sexism in Vietnamese, the extent to which sexist language is used in Vietnamese society and culture and make

some comparison with that in English. Findings are based on the fundamental concepts of cultural interactivity and people reaction.

(c) To investigate whether Confucianism has exerted an influence on people's ways of living and behaviour. Special attention is given to the socio-cultural context in which discriminatory/sexist language is derived and used. It delineates the nature of the society from which Vietnamese migrants came from, examines the role of male and female with a special reference to the development of language use and evaluation of family life.

1.4.1 The statement of the problem

This research is an investigation of the Vietnamese migrants' attitudes towards discrimination in general and sexism with special reference to language and its cultural context and as a tool of communication. Most participants live in Australia and some live in other western countries. This study investigated their attitudes towards gender issues and their evaluation of discriminatory/ sexist language in particular.

The objective

To construct if language sexism exists in Vietnamese social contexts and critically examine the role of the male and female in cultural and social spheres, with a focus on key issues such as their attitudes and values, behaviour and language use.

The research questions concerning objective are:

- (a) Are the participants' attitudes towards sexist language and their approach compatible with certain cultural norms?
- (b) What social roles of males and females reflect?
- (c) Does participants' attitude change after migrating to western countries?

1.4.2 Research assumptions

In research planning and methodology, assumptions are basic but an important part. Leedy (1993:15) indicates that without assumptions the research problem itself could not exist:

“Assumptions provide the foundation upon which the entire research structure rests. In research, they are equivalent to axiom geometry: self-evident truths, the sine qua non of research. The assumption must be valid or the research cannot proceed”.

In this research the following assumptions are made:

1. There is language sexism in Vietnamese and female participants would have experienced more discrimination and language sexism through their own and others' experiences in daily interactions world than male participants.
2. Confucianism exerts a strong influence in Vietnamese society and this is shown in the roles and status of males and females.
3. Participants to the questionnaire would be competent in general English.

1.5 Research limitation

As previously pointed out, the specific aim of this research is to investigate Vietnamese migrants' views and attitudes towards sexist language. The research is constructed by using the current materials available to the researcher during the time of research. It is impossible to cover all changes of aspects of culture, male and female roles in Vietnam when the researcher resides in a western country.

Part of the study was text-based, literature search was carried out, a questionnaire was prepared involving human subjects in the research and formal/informal interviews were also conducted. Consultation with friends living in other western countries via e-mails and on Internet chat rooms were part of the research. These findings reveal to certain extend the perception and attitudes of Vietnamese migrants currently living overseas toward sexist language. It was reasonable to expect that Vietnamese speakers may not agree about the characterisation and interpretation of discriminatory/sexist language presented in this study.

1.6 Significance of the study

As stated previously, research on discriminatory/sexist language in English is abundant, whereas, it is very rare, if not impossible, to find a research study dealing with discriminatory/sexist language in Vietnamese. This study is an attempt to make a

contribution to this theme of research in Vietnamese sociolinguistics and provide some information to show the complexity of culture and society with their influence on people and language. It is not an evaluation of Vietnamese culture or discriminatory language in Vietnamese; its character is descriptive, exploratory and explanatory. In the description process, it is unavoidable to have certain comments on cultural norms, however, these comments should not be interpreted as lack of respect for one own's culture but questions concerning conservatism for problems and constraints faced by members living in that social context. This study provides evidence of the gap that exists between established cultural rules and the aspiration of certain social members; in this case, women who have been placed under the ideal of devotion, sacrifice and in reality most wishes for respect and understanding. The findings from interviews and questionnaires determine to an extent the possible causes and factors of this gap. It is, in no sense, the final work on the subject; these findings provide a basis on which more research on the subject can be done in the future. It is believed that the finding reveals people's vulnerable feelings, which emphasises the importance of looking into cultural values and beliefs when applied to people in reality.

1.7 The structure of the thesis

The study is divided into nine chapters. Chapter one introduces the topic and concepts that run through the study. It provides an accessible lead-in to the issues. It acknowledges the existence of discrimination in many cultures. In the introduction, it highlights some of the social, economic, religious and political factors converged to push Vietnamese people to migrate from their homeland. It describes some resettlement difficulties in situations that Vietnamese found themselves in Australia.

Chapter one also includes an outline of the thesis's organisation, research approach, research assumption, aims and objectives. It describes a pilot study, significance of the study as well as its limitation.

Chapter two reviews literature related to the problem and issues of prejudice and discrimination. It is made up of sections that examine what the terms prejudice and discrimination mean. It discusses factors related to what types of prejudices exist in society, how prejudiced attitudes are formed. It also discusses how these factors relate to school environment and society as a whole and ways in which these discriminatory

attitudes can be combated. This chapter examines the concept of race and racism, their development in the western thought. In English, the term race has been used for about 450 years around the beginning of the 16th century. It was commonly used to groups or categories of people. Its meanings have changed about 1750 when the term race was used to implicate groups of people with distinct biological characteristics. In the next 100 years, the term race was used to classify all humanity into a number of distinct races. Racism is referred to as a set of beliefs about the importance of race (McConnochie et al, 1988). This chapter describes the development of racism in Australia as it impacts on Aborigines and non-British immigrants.

It gives a brief summary of events of discrimination in countries over the world and their reasons as examples because it is not a modern problem or a problem between the blacks and whites only. It is a problem that has to do with human nature; it is natural for people to form cliques with others of the same minds, colour or character. People with common interests and agreements of mind and character come together, whereas we can not help disliking people whom we think are 'different' from us, our attitudes to such people may be of antipathy. If we observe this behavioural tendency at the national level, we find that people are divided into classes and groups and this social division is reinforced by economic differences. Social divisions are also based on racial differences, religion, language and culture. The chapter provides some information on what racism is and how and why it is expressed. It draws on the literature on implementation of curriculum that promotes gender difference in the educational context.

Chapter three deals with the nature of discriminatory/sexist language. It researches current knowledge on the field; it reviews issues relating to language and culture that are served as grounds for discrimination and makes some distinctions in the usage of the terms 'culture' and 'language'. How the term 'culture' is used in both a broad and narrow sense, discussion about culture must include the issue of language, as language is part of people's way of life. It also discusses the cultural and linguistic differences that exist among groups of people in society and examines if these differences are breeding grounds for discrimination. It also considers if differences in language and linguistic habits reflect people's way of life or have a correlation with people's qualities.

The study also discusses about the relation of language and gender from contrasting points of view, examines the traditional attitude of the society that passes on from one generation to another, the influence of early social conditioning, the “natural” stereotypes of our societies, which pave the way for sexist language. Social related issues such as gender and racial differences are analyzed.

The literature review is on both English and Vietnamese. It looks at the meaning and word usage in English in various contexts. The influence of the media is also taken into account.

Chapter four extends the discussion further by examining the Vietnamese culture and society and its linguistic features. It considers the notion of equality and the meaning of the numeral ‘one-hundred’ in Vietnamese culture, the female role before and after the Chinese occupation, the influence of Confucianism, its mandarin education and the linguistic features during the Chinese rule. It studies ideologies linked to some dominant ways of conceptualising gender roles in the Vietnamese contexts. Apart from discussing the Vietnamese culture and language in a Confucian context, it also examines the nature of the Vietnamese language in general. How people use their language, whether there is any hidden message in folklores and proverbs, whether word usage and stories are biased or simply a lifetime of experience that passes on from the older generation to the younger generation. It also analyses the influence of Confucianism in the Vietnamese society and discusses Vietnamese male and female’s public and private power and powerlessness, how roles within family units reflect roles within society. Examples of words, idioms, expressions, proverbs are given. The study also mentions sexism, the usage of metaphors and spoonerism in the language, along with their implications in analysing gender in texts.

Chapter five discusses contrastive analysis, its use in applied linguistics, weaknesses and strengths. This later leads to an examination of contrastive features of languages between English and Vietnamese. It attempts to cover and compare some aspects of traditional values and how these values affect every day social attitudes and behaviour.

Chapter six looks at the methodology chosen for thesis, its justification and a description of its format. Questionnaire findings and interviews validate theoretical assumptions about gender, provide a realistic picture from what the researcher has

learnt from textbooks, certain factors and their impact on society were revealed and helped clarify the issues.

These research methods are essential as they provide findings from other people's perspective, how they conceptualise things, this provides a broader understanding of the issue and at the same time, avoid the limitation and rigidity of the researcher's single perspective.

Chapter seven focuses on the quantitative data analysis. It reports on findings resulting from the data of questionnaire analysis. It provides an outline, on which resources were used, in relation to the issues of language in the socio-cultural environment, its practice reflects people's view and attitude.

The focus of chapter eight is directed at the interview process and qualitative analysis of data. It deals with the implementation of the research instruments and the results of the data analysis. Chapter eight reports on findings resulting from data analysis and interviews with Vietnamese migrants. Within the literature of cultural studies, questions have been directed at the roles of male and female in the Vietnamese perspective. This suggests that gender differences may be understood in terms of culturally transmitted codes of performances. It reveals the powerful influence of Confucianism exerted over people's thoughts, values. Views expressed reflect the extraordinary power of male dominance in Vietnamese society. This chapter intends to highlight issues and reflects Vietnamese men and women's assessments of where they stand and how happy they are in that position.

Finally, chapter nine contains an overall summary of the study, describes the implications and limitations of the study. Chapter nine offers suggestions, which may be of benefit to other researchers studying the literature of Vietnamese gender studies or other Asian countries that have similar norms.

1.8 Conclusion

Language is not merely a tool of communication. It is encoded with human attitudes and cultural values that are sometimes deeply hidden in words, sentences, and presuppositions. It conveys information, brings people close together or creates and reinforces divisions between people. A study of discriminatory language with a focus

on its sexist aspect is an important step in unpacking the assumptions and misconception deeply rooted in the language and its culture.

This chapter has underlined the significance of the study by elaborating background, issues on discriminatory language in Vietnamese with a focus on sexist language practice. Some assumptions and research findings on sexist language and Vietnamese migrants' attitude towards sexist language have been portrayed.

Chapter Two

Prejudice and Discrimination

2.1 Introduction: What is prejudice?

Prejudice and discrimination exist in human societies. While it is positive to believe that everyone is unique in their own way as “no man is good enough to be another man’s master” (George Bernard Shaw. Irish writer, 1905), a discriminatory mind is biased and authoritarian and tends to assign negative value judgement to those who are different. Prejudice and discrimination spring from the human beings’ wants and from the fact that human beings prefer similarities and dislike differences. The solid wall of human pride is hard to break and it is extremely difficult to change a prejudiced mind when prejudice becomes fixed in people’s minds. Calm (1990. P. 78) illustrates this human fact, saying:

“Whatever may be the general endeavour of a community to render its members equal and alike, the personal pride of the individuals will always seek to rise above the line, and form somewhere an equality to their advantage”.

Roy Wilkins, an American writer cited by Phillips, 1993:10:

“The truth is that at first colour doesn’t mean very much to little children, black or white. Only as they grow older and absorb poisons from adults does colour begin to blind them”.

According to Kerr and Skelton (1989:12), prejudice is an individual’s unfavourable opinion or feeling which has been formed unconsciously without their knowledge, thought or reason. It is based on inaccurate stereotyping and inadequate facts and irrelevant considerations. It is learned through living in a society where prejudices already exist. People with a prejudicial attitude have an unreasoned dislike for certain groups of people and culture. Lovat (1992:148) says that prejudice involves “prejudicing other people on the basis of characteristics they are assumed to possess. These characteristics are usually negative and are the stereotyped qualities of members of the group are supposed to have”. Prejudice is based on false assumption; it has a

negative effect by debasing human value. According to Creaser and Dau (1995: 45), prejudice, bias and stereotyping have the effect of devaluing the person.

McConnochie (1988) says that prejudice involves four processes. The first process is categorising or placing people into groups, the second process is stereotyping, and this involves assigning certain characteristics to all people placed into a category whether or not they have these characteristics. For example: "All football players are aggressive" or "All Irishmen are stupid". The third process is evaluating or making some judgements based on those stereotypes: "Because all football players are aggressive, I don't like them", "Because all Irishmen are stupid, I don't like Irishmen" etc. The three processes in turn are used to direct the fourth process, actual behaviour.

Phillips (1993:8) defines prejudice as "disliking people because of their sex, colour, religion, age... Prejudiced people usually believe that they and others like them are better than people who are different in some way".

Prejudiced people say that immigrants come to their countries to take their jobs. They don't come here to work but live off the government benefits.

2.2 Development of prejudice

There are several theories on what cause people to develop prejudice. One of these theories is the realistic-conflict theory (Sternberg, 1995). According to this theory, prejudice stems from the competition of various groups for scarce resources such as jobs. This theory reveals the prejudicial aspect in adults but does not account for prejudice attitude in children. This theory explains the development of prejudice in terms of economic needs of human beings in a society. When living conditions are difficult, one would expect it is a favourable condition for prejudice to develop.

In 2004, the population of Australia has reached 20 millions people, there were debates on how to raise the level of the population. Some hesitated to take in migrants for fear of losing jobs, in contrast to this view, some voiced their opinion that native speakers who graduate from tertiary institutions, have professional qualifications or tradesmanship do not worry about migrants taking their work. People who are not qualified or don't have any particular trades are afraid of skilled migrants taking away their job. Prejudice comes from low self-esteem; it is not based on fact or reality. It can blind people, filling them with frustration and even hatred.

The social identity theory (Sternberg, 1995) tends to focus on the psychological status of human beings. It theorises that people discriminate against others because they want to boost their own self-esteem. From the group point of view, people of the same group form negative attitudes against another group because they want to raise their own group's status as well as their own group's self-esteem. This could stem from the concept of ethnocentricity. Our ethnic group is special and your ethnic group is somehow abnormal, inferior or both.

The third theory (Sternberg, 1995) suggests that as people, we all have some types of prejudice whether we are conscious or not, however most people do realise that they have them. The only difference is the extents of tolerance people have with regard to prejudices.

Coon (1992: 652) states that there are two types of prejudice, personal prejudice and group prejudice. Personal prejudice takes place when an individual feels that his/her security and discomfort threatened by the presence of members of another group. This can be explained in the case of job competition, whereas, group prejudice occurs when members of one group simply act in accordance with certain rules of the group. This does not involve any personal problem but one is expected to have the same kind of attitude as other members of the group.

People who are not prejudiced can be influenced by what prejudiced people think for fear that they will be criticised at if they don't have the same ideal and belong to the same group.

Other forms of prejudices are ethnocentrism and racism. Ethnocentrism is defined as the belief that one's own group or culture is better than all others are. It has with it a feeling of scorn for other groups and cultures. Like most other prejudices, it involves four processes, categorising by culture, stereotyping, evaluating and behaviour. People are categorised into cultural groupings. This form of prejudice is either directly or indirectly taught to children by their parents in the belief that their culture and way of life is the righteous way to live (McConnochie et al., 1989: 30). To distinguish between ethnocentrism and cultural identity, McConnochie (1988) argues that the belief in the superiority and desirability of one's own culture might be described as a healthy sense of cultural identity and does not act as a motive for discrimination against other members of other cultures. Whereas the belief that all other cultures and people belong

to those cultures are inferior is ethnocentrism, this belief does act as a reason to discriminate against people belonging to different cultural backgrounds.

There is an alternative view from Goodacre (1987: 57), “ethnocentrism is triggered by encountering behaviour for which one is unprepared. Most people live all of their lives in their own culture”. When having to encounter different behaviour from that found in their own culture, it is likely that they would apply their own cultural standards or values to judge a different set of cultural values. According to Goodacre (1987), whether this culturally different behaviour is seen as wrong or worthless or may be seen as good and worthwhile, both judgements are not realistic because “the values of one culture have been used to judge behaviour that follows a different set of cultural rules. Such ethnocentric views are misleading and lead to serious communication breakdown”. The impact of the cultural shock when finding the unexpected can cause a person to make rash judgements based on their own value system and form strong and negative stereotypes towards others.

To overcome ethnocentrism, Goodacre suggests that people need to know about themselves and about others to withhold hasty or inappropriate judgements.

Tan (1985) states that physical characteristics that distinguish one people from another are insignificant. They do not indicate moral, intellectual excellence or deficiency and discrimination based on them would be unjust.

McConnochie (1988: 30) indicates that although ethnocentrism produces many undesirable effects within culturally diverse societies, it is not in itself racism. Ethnocentrism discriminates on the basis of cultural traits while racism extends the concept of ethnocentrism by including the biological concept of that race:

“Racism occurs when the alleged inferiority of other cultural groups is perceived as being caused, at least in part, by some perceived biological inferiority of members of that group” (p. 30).

Racists believe that their culture is superior and this cultural superiority is based on genetic superiority, which provides a justification for discrimination. Ethnocentrism and racism are often indistinguishable, when people discriminate against members of other cultural groups; they are likely to mix up ethnocentric and racist beliefs. McConnochie (1988) indicates an important difference between ethnocentrism and

racism. Conversion is possible with ethnocentric beliefs, if culture were assumingly learnt, then it could be re-learned by changing one's values, beliefs and attitudes and assimilating into the other cultural group. While with racist beliefs, this proves to be impossible. If an individual is assumed inferior because they have inferior genes, then it is impossible to make changes. Assimilation is impossible and even considered dangerous because of the fear that the 'inferior' genes of the victims may 'weaken' the other race's 'superior' genes (P32).

Social Darwinism (McConnochie et al., 1988) emerged at a time when indigenous Australians were hunted like animals, thousands died from imported diseases, killed through the provision of poisoned flour and legally punished by death. Not only did this law justify the extermination of the indigenous people but argued that it was beneficial to the human race. It was accepted and promoted by many sectors of Australian society. According to McConnochie et al., (1988), acceptance of this law meant to accept western superiority and that western culture was destined to rule the world and other cultures were destined to submit. Acceptance of this law also meant to accept that inferior or weaker cultures were produced by inferior or weaker races and because they were biologically inferior they were not human, therefore could not have the rights and privileges that developed races had.

With the concept of Survival of the Fittest of Social Darwinism, the 'fittest' societies claimed the rights to expand territories by taking over the territories of weaker societies. According to this concept, 'weak' cultures and its people would "inevitably disappear in the face of 'strong' culture and the 'strong people' who made up those cultures. This was considered to be the way of nature; inevitable, desirable and of benefit to the species as a whole"... (McConnochie et al., 1988: 47).

2.3 Discrimination and prejudice

While prejudice involves pre-judgement and strong feelings, which are difficult to change, discrimination can be defined as an unjust action or behaviour derived from a prejudiced attitude. In other words, discrimination is the act, the behaviour or policy that occurs against others. Discrimination is often based on race, ethnicity, gender, religious beliefs, and age. It happens anywhere and for any reason. According to Banton (1994: 7), "...any distinction, exclusion or preference made on the basis of race, colour, sex, religion, political option, national extraction or social origin..."

Discriminatory acts are the ones that involve putting other people down, excluding them from participating in events, restricting their access to work or live in certain parts of the community, denying them something they are entitled to by right and law (IRef.1). These actions have a negative effect on the group of individuals who receive such treatment (IRef.2).

Prejudice and discrimination are closely linked. People with disability, for example, may find it difficult to intermingle with others. It may be difficult for them to get work from offices, factories or shops, where they can meet and get to know other people. It may be difficult for them to use facilities such as cinemas, restaurants and swimming pools. Most able-bodied people don't often have much contact with disabled people, because of this lack of contact they may assume that "someone in a wheelchair is probably stupid" and this makes discrimination such a lasting and difficult problem to solve (Phillips, 1993).

Individuals who experience discrimination suffer in some way. They feel they do not have the same opportunities as other people and their lives are restricted. In some places in the world, if they try to change the situation, they may become victims of violent retaliation.

Another form of discrimination is institutionalised discrimination.

Institutionalised discrimination is a form of indirect discrimination, it is embedded in the policy of an institution or organisation (Byrne & Fitzgerald, 1997: 115) and consists of rules that disadvantage groups of people sharing the same attributes or people of a particular race or ethnicity (IRef.3). Social practices are considered discriminatory when they give some groups preferential treatment, allow them access to more social resources and rewards, whereas other groups are excluded.

There are six reasons that form prejudice and discrimination (IRef 5). The first three reasons are lack of information, misinformation and fear of the unknown. People often collect bits and pieces of information, which do not represent the whole truth or may even have been exaggerated, assume that such information is true, then hold stereotypical views. This involves the psychological aspect of human beings. It is always easier to put the blame on other people and hold prejudices than admit to one's lack of knowledge and make an effort to truly look at the issues.

Another psychological aspect is the lack of tolerance and understanding for other human beings. From this intolerance they do not accept other people with different values and beliefs. Instead, they are loyal and bound to the belief that their own group

and culture are supreme. Fear of being inferior to other cultures or peoples is another reason of prejudice. It is a result of poor self- image; racists want to boost their self worth by putting down powerless people as putting down others make them feel more important and powerful.

While ethnicity refers to the cultural features such as language, historical heritage, religion, national origin, which are passed on from generation to generation, race is a biological term, which refers to a group of people connected by common descent, blood or heredity (Aspin, 1996: 163). Racial discrimination is an assumption about the inferiority of a race or ethnic group with regard to their biological or physical characteristics (Webster CD-Rom, 1999). Racism may be defined as any attitude, action or institutional structure that subordinates a person or group because of their physical or cultural characteristics (Kerr & Skelton, 1989: 13). There are two particular forms of racism, individual and institutional racism (McConnochie et al., 1988). Individual racism refers to the attitudes and behaviour of the individuals in face-to-face situations. Institutional racism (as mentioned above) involves racist beliefs and values, which have been built into the operations of social institutions and these beliefs and values are used to discriminate against, control and oppress minority group.

McConnochie et al., (1988) describes the two categories of individual racism; they are overt racists and non-active racists. Overt racists discriminate against people because of their biological differences, they express their beliefs in active discrimination. The non-active racists are the silent majority described as the “gentle people of prejudice”. They hold racist views but do not express these views in acts of overt discrimination... “The significance lies in their willingness to accept the institutional racism within their society and their failure to campaign actively against individual or institutional racism...” (P33).

In group discrimination, the whole group of people is reduced to one characteristic. People who discriminate against other people on the racial grounds believe that their race and culture are superior compared to that of others.

At times discriminators may not be aware of their own prejudice. This occurs because of a closeness of mind as they can neither see nor realise that their assumptions are based on inaccurate information. They believe that “some kind of people are less well suited than others to certain positions” (Banton, 1994: 35). For example, a coloured applicant for a position may be rejected on the grounds that s/he is less suitable to

perform the work than a white applicant despite the facts that they have better qualification and may be more capable.

Institutional racism is “crystallised into a strictly enforced legal system of subjugation, designed to oppress a particular group or groups defined as races” (McConnochie et al., 1988).

In America and South Africa there is a vast difference between Black and White. It is also an issue in Australia. The indigenous people living in Australia experience racism, in the past European settlers came and took away their land by force, they are denied many rights and encounter a cycle of prejudice, stereotyping, discrimination and inferior social rewards (Aspin, 1996: 165).

The indigenous people were seen as uncivilised because of their nomadic lifestyles and lack of clothing. Their image in the white’s eyes as ‘noble savage’ did not last long, the white settlers wanted land for their cattle and the indigenous resisted. The resistance was seen as a nuisance and bar to economic progress, the white settlers drove the indigenous from their land and encouraged extermination. This meant that any means such as shooting or poisoning could be ‘justifiably’ used to kill the indigenous people (Camm & Gordon, 1990).

Pat Dodson, a leader of the indigenous people, recalls what happened when the white settlers first came to Australia:

“When the whites first came here they used the Latin phrase *terra nullius* to describe the land. That meant it was empty, unused. They knocked down the trees and blasted the sacred places. They fenced off the best water for their cattle. When we resisted, they shot and poisoned us” (Phillips, 1993: 28).

After the Europeans had defeated the indigenous people, they had plans to control them. A policy of segregation was imposed on the people. Segregation is a form of racial discrimination as it separates people of different races apart (Phillips, 1993).

Many indigenous people were forced to live in reservations and could not leave the reservations without permission. Some were employed as servants and labourers. Although allowed to live near white people, they were segregated. If lived in towns they had to live in special areas that separated them from the white community. They were not allowed to use hotels, restaurants or swimming pools.

In cinemas, they sat in rows of seats that were roped off for them. In the mind of many white Australians, the indigenous people were “too primitive to be allowed to mix with whites” (Phillips, 1993).

The European settlers resided in Australia for about 200 years and about 8 generations while the indigenous people have been in Australia for at least 50,000 years or some 2,000 generations and yet are still referred to as ‘primitive’, ‘half-cast’s’ and ‘black fellas’. Other ethnic groups in Australia, despite of having their own civilisation and culture that last for four thousand to five thousand years are still referred to as ‘barbarians’ or ‘lack of culture’ or ‘uncultured’ by people whose culture is only of two hundred years. This judgement was based mostly on seeing the aspect of material achievement of a people. The indigenous people suffered 150 years of persecution and discrimination by Europeans, although they now have the right to vote and are entitled to social benefits, they still have to struggle to preserve their language and culture within Australian society (Phillips, 1993).

Holding on to power is another reason for people to discriminate against others (Phillips, 1993). In societies where racist view is predominant and racist behaviour is rewarded by material benefits, social approval and political power, the behaviour of people will be racist:

“There is undoubtedly a psychopathology of racism, but in racist society most racists are not ‘sick’. They simply conform to social norms without ‘internalising’ their prejudices at any depth. Racism for some people is a symptom of deeply rooted psychological problems, but for most people living in racist societies racial prejudice is merely a special kind of convenient rationalisation for rewarding behaviour” (Van den Berghe, cited by McConnochie et al., (1988: 35).

Holding on to privilege is another reason for discrimination. People who have wealth and privilege can discriminate against those who don’t reach the same level of materials. Keeping the ‘under privileged’ in ‘their place’ is an effective way to consolidate the position of the privileged class and “discrimination is an effective way of keeping up this kind of inequality” (Phillips, 1993: 6).

It is a common aspect of human dynamics; some people feel better diminishing other people. Indian society was divided into castes for many hundred years. The landowners, priests and warriors belonged to the highest castes whereas the servants and labourers belonged to the lowest castes. If an individual were born into a certain caste, it would be impossible for them to change their caste; they had to stay in it for life.

In the nineteenth century in England, children who came from poor working class families had little or no education. These children had little or no chance to change their position in society when they became adults. It was likely that they would remain doing the same unskilled and low paid work that their parents had done.

Today the social division is still deep. Phillips (1993: 8) says that although there is less class discrimination than in the past, it has not completely disappeared:

“A person with an accent that sounds working class may still find it more difficult to get a good job than someone who sounds middle class. People who have important positions in society such as judges, bankers and leading government officials are still mostly drawn from the upper and middle classes”.

Another aspect of discrimination is with appearance. People who are good-looking are stereotyped, the assumption is that they are dishonest, elitist and do not have concern for other people. Other stereotypical judgements are that they are intelligent, witty and likeable (Coon, 1992: 625). Unattractive people also receive stereotypical judgements. They can be judged as “dumb”, “retarded”; this is especially popular among children. Other comments are “blondes are not intelligent”, “he is a nerd” or ‘a gig’.

Another form of discrimination is based on religion. People are prejudiced and discriminated against for their spiritual beliefs. Judging other people’s beliefs as blind or ignorant stems from a lack of understanding that all religions are one. All religious goals aim at teaching people to attain one’s goodness, inner calm and peace by returning to their true nature of serenity, their true nature of duties

toward the fellow beings. People who discriminate against others for their religious belief think that their own religious belief is superior and the only truth. The worst outcome of this discrimination is wars- the events in Kosovo, Ireland, the Palestinian conflict etc.

Some religious and racial groups are unable to mix with the community; they are bound with, proud of their traditions and would like to keep their beliefs and customs alive. However, it is necessary to mix freely with the new community to get along with others. Keeping distance or unwillingness to mix with others encourages prejudice to develop, as when we do not know people well, it is easy to become suspicious of them and develop false and ignorant ideas about them. In response to Jenny Brockie's questions about where to draw the line between hanging on to aspects of a culture that people might bring with them to Australia and absorbing Australian culture and what is wrong with people hanging on to aspects of their culture when they come to Australia. Helen Hughes from Centre for Independent Studies (Killing Multiculturalism, Insight, SBS, 1/6/04) says that the people's first responsibility is to Australian culture, which has a good and interesting history, and makes for the sort of society that we enjoy. According to Hughes most people do that but in a sense it is found on the Fitzgerald committee that multiculturalism is the cult of small groups of people who maintain ethnic differences, but who have no resonance with the rest of the community. She suggests that newcomers have to adjust to the Australian culture and not vice versa.

2.4 Prejudice and discrimination in the school context

While Corson (1993) acknowledges there are texts that are not in favour of the sexist and racist views but help to rid of the negativity of stereotypes. Lovat (1992: 82) argues that the school system proves to be "a tool of the dominant class in society". This is because the mainstream middle class culture has been established into the school system with policies that tend to produce particular type of person and therefore hold prejudice for certain individuals and ethnic groups.

As previously stated, children learn prejudicial view from listening to discussions of their family, relatives, friends and even their teachers (Hays, 1994: 19). Parents are particularly the children's primary source of socialisation. Having the right type of socialisation is vital. Children grow up thinking what they have learnt is the way to be. Studies have shown that children who live in a multicultural environment have little awareness of racial discrimination, but when they grow up and become more aware of race and ethnicity they begin to develop prejudices (Aspin, 1996: 166).

In addition to reading biased textbooks, exposure of prejudice also occurs by children watching television, reading magazines, comics and other books in general. At school children from culturally diverse backgrounds are often expected to adopt the norms and values of the dominant culture. This places the children in an awkward position for they have to strive to maintain the balance between their own culture and the dominant culture. Children of the dominant culture will also notice those ethnic children are different from everyone else, prejudice attitudes can be formed from seeing this difference.

Prejudiced attitude is also formed due to an unpleasant life experience as it leaves a long lasting impression. For instance, a child who is bullied by a member of an ethnic group may end up displaying discrimination for all people belong to that group (Coon, 1994: 652). It is basically anger building up inside of the person, feeling pain is a big thing, once a person feels the pain, s/he wants to dish it out.

In order to help to eradicate the root of prejudice and discrimination, it is important to give the children a proper beginning in education. Training children early in life to be empathetic can help to prevent them from turning into prejudiced people. The objective is to teach young children to understand the feelings of others and to treat people with kindness.

Children should also be taught to respect people and understand differences because respect helps them to get along well with other people and differences are a natural part of life. The reason that we do not accept differences is because they are not familiar to us (IRef.7). Children need to be shown how choices they make can either lead to a positive or negative result. Their choices affect their

lives and that with their effort and pure energy they can help to create a better world to live.

2.5 Prevention of prejudice and discrimination

As prejudice stems from ignorance, a venture into the unknown is necessary. Sternberg (1995: 98) suggests that:

“The best way to reduce or eliminate prejudice is to experience directly another culture, whether in another country or in your own. Learning the language of another culture, visiting that culture and actually living as a person of that culture can help us to better understand to the extent that humans are the same over”.

Knowledge of another culture helps us see other people’s point of view instead of ethnocentric thinking or seeing only our own point of view, improves our abilities in intercultural communication and avoids mistakes. It gives an insight into how people of the other culture act in a given situation and how we are expected to act. It helps us to understand their feelings and experience them to an extent, it also helps us to understand their view of our own cultural values and gives us a new perspective on our own culture (Goodacre, 1987).

Goodacre (1987) suggests several methods to acquire knowledge of another culture. The first method is to find information in books and printed materials or through friends, travellers. Other potential sources providing a wealth of valuable information are libraries, government offices, information services and bookshops. The second method is to interact with members of another culture, this can be done through conversations, interviews or by attending lectures from visiting members of that culture. The third method is to find information from media sources such as, newspaper, journals, television, and radio. Information from one source needs to be checked against information of other sources.

One technique that can be employed to dispel stereotypes and prevent discrimination in a classroom where there are more than one cultural backgrounds represented is to create a multicultural setting and recognise people’s cultural heritage (Kerr & Skelton, 1989: 118).

Kerr and Skelton (1989: 117) also suggest some other techniques to resist prejudices in the school, whenever the issues of prejudice and discrimination occur, teachers should not neglect racist remarks or behaviours but employ constructive measures and avoid the punitive ones. They should examine the situation to determine the contributing factors and take all people involved into consideration. Raising an awareness of the detriment of discrimination in school issues, policy and the curriculum may also help. Encouraging parents and community members to involve when necessary to resist racism.

Teacher need to point out the inequities to children and explain to them such behaviours and ideas are not acceptable in our society (Internet Ref. 1). In Australia the White policy was abolished in 1973. According to Australian Bureau of Statistics, by 1996 sixteen percent of Australian population speak a language other than English at home. In order to manage a culturally diverse country, the Australian government has introduced multiculturalism, a policy of inclusion. This policy is based on human rights and responsibilities. It recognises the equal rights of all people living in Australia to express their views and values (Internet Ref. 4). It recognises that all people have the rights to enjoy their cultural heritage, equal treatment and opportunities regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender, culture, religion and language (Internet Ref. 3).

With the implementation of the policy of multiculturalism, educational institutions such as schools require to have a sensitive approach to culture diversity (White, 1981: 127), recognise the equal values of all cultures through programs promoting their worth. These programs should foster positive experiences on all aspects of the cultural resources such as people, language, family structures, customs, lifestyles and expectations (Dept. For Education and Children's Services, 1996: 42). This leads to positive knowledge and attitude, develops a personal cultural identity, raise an awareness and understanding of the similarities as well as differences in lifestyles, custom, beliefs. It also develops a sense of fairness and an ability to challenge bias in children. (Dept. For Education & Children's Service, 1996: 41).

Multiculturalism may not make people become more friendly or interested in others than they have been before but it equips people to mutually understand and communicate, it fosters right thinking with regard to the various cultures.

Even though for decades, multiculturalism has been synonymous with diversity and tolerance in Australia, it has recently been attacked by many in Australia and Britain. Its ideal is under challenge as some say that it encourages separateness and fear that by celebrating difference, Australia could become a nation of separate tribes. Some argued that it's time to focus on integration and put an end to multiculturalism.

Recently, Insight, a program of SBS hosted by Jenny Brockie on 1/06/04, joined by a range of Australians from diverse backgrounds to discuss about killing Multiculturalism reveals that Britain, where one of that country's leading supporters of ethnic diversity has stunned the nation by calling for an end to Multiculturalism as it is no longer the right policy.

Trevor Phillips, Chair, Commission for Racial Equality states that he thinks multiculturalism is no longer just the recognition of diversity in a society, and no longer the aim of integration. What he thinks is that it has become a way of putting ethnic minorities and other people in general in a little box, which is marked 'white' or marked 'Asian'. He further explains that what the institutions, government and private companies do is to say that as long as we recognise your difference and give you a cultural evening or a food festival, then you should be happy with that. For many years, Britain's view of multiculturalism has been the same as Australia's, that is, by encouraging different ethnic communities to maintain their own cultures, traditions and languages, you build a tolerant, diverse and rich society. Trevor Phillips now says that by saying to recognise difference is not going to help but freezes people as foreigners. An example was given that in Britain three years ago when there was a wave of riots involving whites and Asians, it was the first real sign of the divisions between Christians and Muslims. Trevor Phillips says his call to move on from multiculturalism is not just about the dangers of Islam, but he says there is a real risk that some young Muslims are being encouraged to believe they'll never be truly British, and multiculturalism isn't helping. He says the aim is to give the

British Muslim communities, and everybody else, the space and the flexibility to develop the British Muslim identity. However, there is an international situation, which makes that more difficult, he is afraid that because of what Britain has done internationally, the extremists may use this issue to say to the vast majority of Muslims that Britain will not allow Muslims to be truly British. Trevor Phillips stresses that the aim is to encourage good relations between communities and integration. Priority should be given to public funds and to organisations which set themselves up to encourage a sense of integration and to avoid conflict between different communities and to try to find ways in which all the people who live here and stay here can find a common citizenship.

Brian Galligan, Author 'Australian Citizenship', says that Australia have a different situation from Britain, multiculturalism is not as strong as in Britain but has wilted and the fact that Mark Latham as well as John Howard now are saying that was evidence that it's dying away.

In his view, Australia is not a multicultural country and most Australians have never accepted multiculturalism as a way of defining themselves. It has been rather a top down sort of a policy driven by a few. It's not a multicultural society because Australia is not made up of separate and distinct groups with distinct cultures. To an extent in the first generation of migrants, particularly from non-English speaking background, there's a certain identity, but that very quickly disappears as they integrate, or largely disappears. That's not to say Australia has not changed beneficially in the process.

In response to Jenny Brockie's question of whether multiculturalism can encourage ethnic communities to maintain elements of their own culture sometimes at the expense of unity. Abd Malak, Federal Ethnic Communities council reveals that, where multiculturalism has been used and abused severely in Australia, especially in the talkback shows. Multiculturalism is basically about Australian democratic values, the respect of the law, the freedom of speech, the freedom to live free from racists, the freedom to practice your religion and the ability and opportunity to contribute to the Australian community, to give one hundred percentage of your ability for benefit of the whole community.

Brian Galligan states that multiculturalism is only a policy - more as a welfare thing - and a decent policy to help people from non-English speaking background who needed help and it also has promoted diversity. Even though he is in favour of that, he still thinks that multiple cultures don't continue in Australia because people do become integrated over generations.

Waleed Aly, Islamic Council of Victoria, says that multiculturalism, in a sense was something protective for someone who came from an ethnic minority. A multicultural society made racism harder to persist with. Losing multiculturalism may open door to racism.

Other research findings show that the lack of self-esteem is another main cause of prejudice and discrimination. Some children wrongly believe that dragging down other people give them a sense of power, gain more attention, become more popular and help them to be accepted by their peers (Internet Ref. 6).

These children have difficulty interacting with fellow students; the problem at first seems to be a lack of close friends and the ability to confidently share time, feelings and activities with someone on a regular basis. One of the solutions they think may become reasonably successful as a strategy is to demand the attention they need. This could occur in a number of ways such as verbally mastering the situation, physically dominating others or forcing peers to team and include or exclude certain people into the team. These strategies probably work in their favour to satisfy the needs of self or others on their team but rarely felt good for people around them. The popularity of leadership has seduced them into doing wrongs to other people.

Thus students should be encouraged to boost their self-esteem through positive thinking and schools need to create opportunities for success.

Parents are not only the primary source of socialisation for children, the role of teachers is equally important. To be able to educate students in the right direction, teachers themselves need to understand their own attitudes, feelings and opinions because their effort in teaching children the detriment of prejudices can become ineffective if they unconsciously project negative attitudes (Weiner, 1990: 56).

Through the programs of anti-bias, teachers should teach children interpersonal skills such as how to form positive relationships with people from different backgrounds, how to resist to the negative attitudes they may have for others and vice versa. School needs to stress the need for tolerance, safety and personal best efforts and promote respect for the individual, support for one another and celebration of personal achievement.

Arthur (1996: 31-32) studied the four main goals that help with diversity as well as combat prejudices. The first goal is to have a “knowledgeable, confident self-identity”, the second goal is “positive attitudes towards diversity”, the third goal is “critical thinking about bias” and the fourth goal is “confronting bias”.

The first goal helps children to develop a positive identity and self-esteem, especially children from minority groups. This includes children of the indigenous people, children of various ethnic backgrounds and children who are physically or intellectually different from others.

The second goal is to adopt positive attitudes towards diversity. Teachers have the responsibility to teach children valuing others as equal and different. Diversity needs to be seen as a cultural resource. It is necessary for teachers and children to recognise the importance of cultural and ethnic heritages and the influence of these heritages in school. It is important for teachers to integrate these heritages into the classroom to benefit students.

The third goal focuses on critical thinking about bias. Children need to be explained about the conception of fairness and the oversimplified and conventional ideas used to label people.

The fourth goal is to confront bias. Children should speak out on occasions when they or other people become victims of discriminatory remarks or acts.

Hays (1994: 85) presents another effective method to combat racism in school is to let children involve and teach each other. He suggests this can be done by planning a role model program in which a group of selected students participate

in workshops that teach them how to become role models for other students in the school. As role models they will be looked up and listened to.

Another technique is to encourage children to share their personal experiences or events they have known of with other children. Through discussion, they will learn that discriminatory language and behaviour hurt other people and are detrimental to society. Hays contends that this method works because it helps both the speaker and listener. It provokes feelings and emotion of human beings. The speaker feels more capable to cope with his/her experiences whereas the listener gains further understanding of the issue and this may help to change his/her negative personal point of view.

Brown (cited by Hays: 1994: 83) says that:

“The most powerful way to change someone else’s attitude is to give them a chance to hear a personal story...We can refute facts and figures but we can not ignore someone else’s story. Only when (children) can claim pride in their own ethnicity can they rid of racism”.

In addition, racist and stereotypical jokes should be discouraged in the classroom. It is not funny if someone end up feeling hurt or left out. The use of language plays a significant role, teachers should not tolerate if students use discriminatory or sexist language, however they should avoid the use of punishment for this may create a more hostile attitude for the individuals concerned. At times children can say things and do not realise what they say are hurtful, if teachers do not give feedback they will continue to do this. Teachers need to address the issue quietly but firmly by explaining to students that such language is not appropriate to use.

Teachers need to be aware of their own use of language, avoid labeling, or use of language that could provoke discontentment and draw attention to racial/gender issues. Instead, use neutral language to resist prejudices. For example, human race or human beings should replace mankind; salesman should be replaced by sales assistant etc.

According to Lewis and Habeshaw (1990: 49), there are alternative methods that help to promote equality in the classroom. Teachers should encourage all students to participate in classroom activities and discussions. Teachers need to avoid personal preference and consider students as sensitive individuals with different abilities and personalities. Everyone should take turn to answer questions, however, there may be some students who do not feel comfortable raising their opinion in front of the class, in such case teachers can encourage them to speak but do not force them, instead, make clear that they have a choice not to. Alternatively, in order to help students to build up confidence teachers need to encourage them to discuss subjects that students have knowledge of.

It is understandable that education alone can not change the power structure of society, however, education does exert an influence on the life and chances of the individuals. A humane education produces broad-minded individuals, who will contribute more to the benefit of the country and create a more harmonious society in the future. Social norms and values will be questioned earnestly and constructively.

Education begins at home. Parents need to assume the shared role of leadership for children and should not leave all training to some school program. Although the school does their best to resolve problems, it does not create the personal interactions that occur each day. Personalities can not be cured in a day and strategies to deal with life are not acquired overnight.

If parents do not want their children to become discriminators, they need to teach children by word and by example how to treat others with respect and dignity.

If children come from a household, in which parents are cold or uninvolved, hold prejudiced views against anything or have in effect, taught their children to use rage or violence to handle problems. It is very likely that children will grow up and have the same attitudes as their parents. Children raised in such environment may not see their own verbal attacks as discriminating, they may even think that their behaviour is normal and acceptable. As school age approaches, they will bring these sexist/racist attitudes to school and cause

difficulty for other children, teachers and themselves. Most of all, they will place themselves in an awkward position as not to be able to communicate or effectively work with other people and suffer the loneliness.

Parents and teachers are role models for children. As responsible adults, we need to provide time, support and strategies. There are usually reasons for behaviour that are not appreciated by society and those reasons need to be found.

Parents and teachers need to create a harmonious atmosphere at home and within the classroom for children to live happily and function to their full potential. Children need to be educated in such a way that they are liberated from negative views and fixed behaviour patterns; heading on the right path help children to develop themselves and contribute their share for the common good. Development needs harmony and cooperation, in order to achieve this harmony and cooperation human beings need to be free of fear.

Injustice will not go away if people remain passive. If we strive to end discrimination, we need to participate in activities of resistance movements. Psychologically, we need to understand who we are by examining our own thoughts and feelings for people whom we think are different from ourselves, listen carefully to what they say, try to understand and put ourselves in their place to feel what it is like to be them (Phillips, 2003).

Martin Luther King once said:

“Morality can not be legislated but behaviour can be regulated. Judicial decrees may not change the heart, but they can restrain the heartless”.

2.6 Sexism

Sexism is another form of prejudice and discrimination. It can be seen throughout every country in the world as it discriminates against people on the grounds of their gender. Sexism is reinforced by culture. Followed are some examples of proverbs relating to sexism (Calm, 1990), (Phillips, 1993) and (Ferguson, 1983: 184):

The best way to keep a woman is barefoot in the winter and pregnant in the summer. (American proverb)

There are only two places for a woman, the house and the grave. (Pakistani proverb)

The thoughts of a woman are afterthoughts. (Asian proverb)

Women and sparrows twitter in company. (Japanese proverb)

Never trust a woman, even if she has borne you seven children. (Japanese proverb)

Saying 'No' to a woman shakes her head lengthwise. (Japanese proverb. 'Lengthwise' here implies up and down. In other words, a woman nods assent as she says 'No')

Three women, three geese, and three frogs make a market. (German proverb)

Bringing up a daughter is like manuring and watering a plant for someone else's courtyard. (Teluga proverb)

Foxes are all tail and women are all tongue. (England- Cheshire)

Ou Femme y a, silence n'y a. (France)

Women are nothing but machines for producing children. Napoleon Bonaparte, French Emperor 1804-1815. (Phillips, 1993: 16)

Women should learn in silence and all humility. I do not allow them to teach or have authority over men. They must keep quiet. From Paul's Epistle to Timothy in the New Testament of the Bible. (Phillips, 1993)

People who possess sexually prejudiced attitudes are people who have a “set of preconceived assumptions” about the ‘proper’ or ‘correct’ roles, attitudes and characteristics - particularly physical characteristics - that men and women should have (Webster CD Rom, 1999).

Other popular and stereotypical views are “a woman place is in the home” and that “men are naturally aggressive”. (Lewis & Habeshaw, 1990: 27) Sexism can be seen through the way one behaves towards others, it is revealed in one’s use of language. Although both man and woman experience sexism, receive unfair treatment because of their gender, marital status or pregnancy (Healy, 1998: 40), there is more evidence of discrimination on the female side than the male side. Women are often regarded as less suitable than men are due to the fact that they are women. In terms of occupations, men are shown as employed in higher status jobs traditionally defined as male occupations such as lawyers, ministers, and doctors. Men are seen less in a home environment.

In almost every existing society, men dominate over women in politics, in the economy and social organisations. According to an assessment done by the United Nations based on a wide range of structures, women own less than one-hundredth of the world’s property and receive less than one-tenth of its income, women however, perform nearly two-thirds of the work hours. Since the assessment was not based on economic structures alone, this reveals male supremacy, which is a basic aspect of many societies (Lupton, 1992). Feminist writers referred to this male dominance as patriarchy; Weber first used this term in sociology to describe a system in which men through their positions as heads of households ruled societies. Walby as cited by Lupton (1992) says that patriarchy as a wider meaning because it defines “a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women”. The term patriarchy used in this sense denotes the ways in which social life is patterned and levels of relationships interlocked within this pattern. The social relations of individual men and women may be different but they are culturally interlocked in the patriarchal structures and values. Walby’s discussion of the patriarchal structures and values, where males exercise their power and dominance as quoted by Lupton (1992, p. 72):

“...Patriarchy is a system of social relations. This system is articulated with the (capitalist) economic structure of class, and with racist exploitation as well...It is composed of six structures: ‘the patriarchal mode of production, patriarchal relations in paid work, patriarchal relations in the state, male violence, patriarchal relations in sexuality, and patriarchal relations in cultural institution’”.

These structures are of inequality and each has effects on and relates to the others. Lupton (1992) explains further that patriarchal production relations in the family mean that women are responsible for the major share of housework and childcare. This is taken for granted and men benefit from this. Men’s lack of participation in domestic labour was because of a lack of time (Blood and Wolfe as cited by Baxter (1992), women have lower earnings in paid employment (Yeandle as quoted by Baxter (1992), men have more power in the family (Baxter, 1989, Ross, 1987). Sharpe quoted by Baxter (1992) argues that there is a lack of a “prescribed domestic role” for men and even in the household where men participate in housework, they only “tend to help rather than take responsibility for housework, thus reinforcing the view that it is ‘really’ women’s work”. In Sharpe’s view, men’s self-identity is reinforced by culture in such a way that they do not automatically participate in domestic activities. They do not internalise the sense of responsibility that girls have as they grow up. Homes are seen by men as places to return and relax in, a reward for their labour after long working hours in hard and monotonous job.

Furthermore, the ‘macho’ image of a man may prevent him from participating in house chores, Sharp cited by Baxter (1992) says that “in this context men who undertake housework or childcare may be risking their masculine image and be seen as slipping into a domestic trap”.

This household structure of private life is also operating at the level of public life. Lupton (1992) states that in public life different work experiences of men and women reflect social closure of the patriarchal system in which women are restricted and over represented as unskilled workers with insecure jobs.

Since childhood, boys and girls are treated differently. Although it is often assumed that "boys are boys and girls are girls" and boys and girls have their own characteristics, people enhance the differences between boys and girls by inventing norms that create a distance between male and female. For centuries girls have been taught to do certain work, encouraged to study certain subjects and act in certain ways.

In the past, education has mainly prepared males and females into their gender roles. This does not recognise students' ability and deprives students of the skills that they have a right to learn.

Through out the first half of the twentieth century, children at school were affected by sex discrimination. Girls and boys learnt different subjects, boys were taught useful work skills whereas girls learnt how to be good housewives, they were taught cookery, dressmaking and how to look after children. Research on language, gender and education also document differences and inequalities in the language behaviour of male and female students (Swann, 2003). They had different speaking styles, reading choices and wrote in different ways about different topics. According to the observation, male students had a speaking style that dominates the classroom interaction; this limits female students' opportunity to contribute.

Early educational texts, which support stereotypical view, and which are used as reading materials in the classroom can reinforce the prejudice view. Ideas expressed in textbooks have an influence on children because they are their first contact. In addition, teachers' attitudes play a part in enforcing the stereotypical roles of male and females as they stereotype students into categories by assuming what types of skills or knowledge each gender needs.

Swann (2003) reveals that books and other school resources consist of more male than female characters and examples. Male characters in stories had less restricted roles and were found more active than female characters. Information books neglected female experiences and their contribution to society. In particular, girls were highly successful in the literacy area and yet, there were arguments that girls' success in school did not help them but hindered them from performing well outside school in certain aspects such as gaining high status careers.

According to Lovatt (1992), teachers often pay more attention to male students than female students do; about two-thirds of the time. Some teachers still think that male education is more important than female's. Studies (cited in Lovatt, 1992) have shown that male students tend to leave school early because they lose interest in their studies, teachers assume that male students need more encouragement and attention so to develop an interest in learning. Work themes are more on the male side so to hold male interests and make it easier for teachers to handle the class. This shows that female students are not as important as male students are.

In 1972, there are only twenty-five per cent of Australian girls finished Year 12. Thirty years later the figure has increased around eighty-five per cent. This large increase in number of girls completing year 12 was largely due to the work of the education unions and women's groups with the departments of education. In the late 1960s and 1970s, the women's and education groups demanded that girls need to be encouraged to take traditionally male subjects such as Science, Maths and other technology based subjects such as technical drawing, woodwork, metal work etc.

To combat sexism in school children need to be educated in such a way that they are not restricted to any particular role but are capable to make achievements as they wish.

To counteract imbalances and inequalities, from 1970s there was a much wider choice of subjects for girls to choose from and they were encouraged to complete their education and prepare for a career rather than marriage and motherhood.

Furthermore, boys also enjoyed a wider range of subjects, they could study traditionally so-called female subjects such as, cooking, dancing, sewing etc., these subjects were previously discouraged or denied to boys. Equal opportunities initiatives have encouraged girls to contribute in class discussions and more collaborative talks between students. Under these initiatives, books and resources contained less stereotypical images were introduced; a wide range of reading was encouraged and carried out by both male and female students (Swann, 2003).

Even though there is some success in equality in the educational context and many Australian women have also achieved successes in their quest for equality in the early 1980s, women continued to be discriminated against in the workforce.

In the workplace, there are 'male' and 'female' jobs. There are more males in high management positions than females. Females often do passive work, whereas males' work involves more initiatives. According to Stearman and Van Der Gaag (1995: 39):

"Almost every job has a gender image attached to it. In general, the jobs we think of as being more active and interesting, more productive and creative, more concerned with planning and managing people, are seen as 'men's work'. The jobs, which are seen as more passive and routine, more detailed and inward looking, more concerned with people and their needs are considered 'women's work'".

Research reveals that in the industrialised world, Australia has "one of the most gender segregated workforces" (Tiddy, 2001). There are "jobs for men" and "jobs for women". About eighty-five per cent of women are employed in the five main industries such as community services, wholesale and retail trade, finance, property and business services. Large numbers of women work as schoolteachers, nurses, clerks, salespeople and service workers, whereas men dominate the ranks of engineering, building, science and trade fields.

Qualities sought regarding jobs for men and jobs for women are very different. With "jobs for men", qualities such as experience, ambition, ability to 'control' staff were often required. Opportunities for advancement and good salary are also offered. Whereas, qualities often sought for women jobs are typing ability, pleasant personality, poise, high standard of grooming, and alertness, possessing initiative. Offers for job advancement or good wages are rare and ambition is hardly required (Tiddy, 2001).

According to Cass (1995) cited by Tiddy (2001), there are two themes hidden in the ingrained habits and prejudices concerning employment practices. The first theme is the ideology of 'natural' order or 'naturalness', it has divided and

specified distinctly who has the responsibility and obligation to work at home and who has the responsibility to work outside the home.

The second theme is the ideology of 'difference', this has become interwoven with the ideology of 'naturalness', together they shape certain images of men and women, stereotype men and women's personal characteristics, skills, abilities and aptitudes and determine fixed forms of work for them.

Sex stereotype is unjust and untrue, female and male images are shaped in certain ways. It does not take into account individual abilities but "set a standard which few men and women escape being measured" (Mackinnon, 1979: 122 cited by Tiddy, 2001).

2.7 Conclusion

Human beings may be poor in many respects. They can possess prejudice and discrimination at an early age across social and cultural backgrounds. Human beings need to cultivate fearlessness by dispelling all negative feelings and lead a free life:

"Today's psychology separates human feeling into two basic elements: compassion and fear. Lack of compassion is fear. All the negative emotions, the causes of all human sufferings: greed, hatred, ignorance, arrogance, doubt, evil thoughts spring from fear"...(C.T Nguyen, 1998: 102).

Despite differences, human beings, the dictate of reason need to find an incentive to live together in mutual appreciation and friendship. Perhaps when we let go of our worldly attachment and contemplate in compassion, we may see each other as equals.

Chapter Three

Language and culture: a base for discriminatory sexist language

3.1 Introduction

Any discussion of discriminatory and sexist language needs to examine the relationship between language and culture. This is because language deeply reflects cultural aspects such as cultural norms, values, and cultural expectations. Some historical understandings of gender as well as language told us that the natural inclinations of men are needed to give language variety and vigour, while the natural inclinations for women are to keep it within the bounds of propriety required in a civilised society. This chapter will first examine the relationship between language and culture; secondly discusses language and gender and then the concept of 'discriminatory language'.

3.2 Language and culture

As many studies have illustrated that language and culture are intertwined with each other, one can not separate a language from its culture as language is not just a means of communication but acts as a "storehouse of meanings" of that particular culture. It is not merely an inventory of the present meanings but 'a record, imperfectly preserved, of the past meanings of a culture' though its past usages and meanings can be slightly different according to the course of history (Kress, 1988).

The way in which language is used influence people's perceptions of messages. If an individual describes something and exaggerates its qualities, it can lead to an unrealistic impression being formed (Lovatt, 1987). This type of language misuse causes disillusionment in communication.

The theme of linguistic relativity is used to indicate the intricate relationship between language and knowledge. Language is the product of knowledge; the development of language comes along with the advancement of knowledge. Research findings have shown that many subjects have new terminology, expressions and mode of presentation. Language and knowledge are inseparable. To gain knowledge we need to understand the ideas and the concepts and to present these concepts the use of language must be applied.

Within the theme of culture, language and knowledge are inseparable. We require language to transmit knowledge to others; we also require language to receive the knowledge from others. Language and knowledge are complementary as knowledge cannot be 'shown' and shared with others if we don't have the language to represent it. At times we can not express in language what we actually know, we then tend to search for words that represent our knowledge. Research finding also proves that language is culturally determined, it is in fact the product of culture because it reflects cultural knowledge and values. Since language and knowledge are not separable, language creates meanings and develops connections with others.

However to a certain extent, language and knowledge can be independent from each other. For example; in some cases, we gain an overall understanding of a subject before exploring the language, which clarifies and reinforces the knowledge. According to Vo (1994), language is not related to the intellectual level of a society, it is formed before people reach a high cultural level. Vo claims that language is not merely used to display feelings and thinking but a people's special way of feeling and thinking already encoded in the language itself, a language system has been built up through their experiences and activities. It is a reflection of the material and spiritual life of a people revealed in sentence structures, elements of speech and could also be found in pronunciation. Vo argues that the soul of a people can be found in their language, as through a people's language, one comes to understand people's emotion, nature and life perception on humanity and the universe (Vo, 1994, 94-109)

The western point of view on the use of the language is similar. It is not simply a means to display feeling and thinking but "reflects and encodes the values, beliefs and prejudices of the culture or society to which we belong", is a "cultural filter through which we see or construct and reinforce what to us is 'real' or 'normal'". (IRef. 8)

There are two different senses in which the term 'culture' is used. In the broad sense, culture is used to refer to a way of life evolving through generations and centuries. Its meaning does not only include literature and other forms of art of

a people but it also comprises of the most mundane and crudest habits of that people whether they are conscious or unconscious of it. It is their everyday thinking and living. According to Tan (1985), culture in this sense is said to “grow from the soil”. In another sense, the term ‘culture’ acquires a narrower usage; it refers to the artistic and intellectual endeavours of a people such as, music, literature, drama, art, philosophy etc.

Language and culture can not be separated; language is a part of people’s life. People are influenced by their culture and their value system consists of cultural and personal values. The personal values are strongly influenced by their culture. By examining the ingredients in the people’s language one can often detect the way people live and in the broad sense, a people’s language is their culture (Tan, 1985). In the latter sense, language is used imaginatively in the fields of art. In the technical sense of the word, language functions as a means of communication.

In the process of socialisation, people’s values and attitudes are reinforced. They put great weight on certain sets of values that their culture has taught them to value most and ignore others. This leads to misunderstanding of messages from people of different cultures as messages are distorted and communication breaks down (Goodacre, 1987).

While communicating, people’s sets of attitudes such as what is right and wrong, good or bad, what should be or should not be are expressed strongly in their use of language. The way people view themselves and others is an important element in the communication process, if people see themselves as superior human beings, they tend to talk down to other communicators. In order to acquire success at intercultural communication, one has to be prepared to see others as individuals (Goodacre, 1987).

When we consider cultural differences, we are aware that such differences include ways of living, religion, social setting, linguistic variations, and artistic and intellectual achievements. According to Tan (1985), different ways of living do not necessarily cause discrimination in society, but if a group of people’s certain habits and customs affect others in society, in certain ways, then these cultural differences can become grounds for discrimination. Discrimination may not be against the whole culture of a group of people, but

may be against a particular habit - not because of its difference but because it may cause harmful consequences.

Tan (1985) stresses that differences in languages and linguistic habits do not say anything about people's qualities but the quality of their language usage reveals their way of life and how it has been developed. However, he further explains that a person who comes from a less developed cultural background may also have the same potential as a person who comes from a more sophisticated cultural background. Therefore, linguistic differences may not be necessarily related with differences in qualities of people. Linguistic differences may make inter-communal relationship difficult but these differences are not relevant grounds for discrimination if one have respect for others and accept their interests as an essential part of social living, only differences in human quality may become grounds for discrimination.

In recent years sociolinguists and linguistic anthropologists have examined the term 'language ideologies' referred to sets of representation through which language is inspired with cultural meanings for a community. While the terms 'attitude' and 'belief' are used to denote mental constructs of the individuals, ideologies are referred to as social constructs and "they are ways of understanding the world that emerge from interaction with particular (public) representations of it" (Cameron, 2003). Texts and practices that represent languages are examined in such ways that not only spoken but also written about. Cameron (2003:448) explains further that language users learn how linguistic phenomena are understood in their culture from these representations and that "they internalise a particular understanding as set of fixed beliefs: representation is also a means for contesting current understandings of language and creating new alternatives". Women were the prime targets for the ideological discourse labelled as 'verbal hygiene' by Cameron and which has the aim of turning language use into some idealised representation. The symbolic dimension of language ideologies was not neglected; Raymond Williams quoted by Kathryn Woolard notes "a representation of language is always a representation of human beings in the world." Susan Gal cited by Cameron (2003: 449) reveals that ideas about language are always

“systematically related to other areas of cultural discourse such as the nature of persons, of power and of a desirable moral order”.

Cameron (2003) argues that the underlying subject of these representations is gender itself because when we make statements about men’s and women’s language, we tend to instruct language users in what counts as gender appropriate behaviours. Cameron cites an example of the mainstream of societal views on proper femininity expressed by Otto Jespersen: “women exercise a great and universal influence on linguistic development through their instinctive shrinking from coarse and vulgar expressions and their preference for refined and (in certain spheres) veiled and indirect expressions” (2003: 449). This linguistic refinement for women is not merely a gender representation but is part of the discourse on the supposed nature of language.

Language ideologies and gender vary between cultures and historical periods, social characteristics such as class and ethnicity may inflect them. What is constant, in Cameron’s view is the “insistence that in any social group, women and men are different” (p. 452). Gender differences are represented in ways that is “whatever men’s language is, women’s language is not”. In the actual circumstances there may be little or contrasting evidence about how men and women speakers conduct themselves from the expected norms.

3.3 Language and Gender

The analysing of linguistic variation began in the 1960s (Chamber, 1995) when sociolinguistics was introduced. An interesting topic in sociolinguistics is the topic of gender in language, a topic of wide scope and involves issues concerning the assumptions and prejudices of masculinity and femininity in modern society and cross-cultural issues of language education. The range and variety of issues covered are gender, interactions, feminine and masculine talks, politeness and impoliteness, the concept of patriarchy, dominance, interrupting, social moves and social class, the interplay of biology and sociology, the influence of entrenched stereotypes upon language use and the roles of language users.

According to Bergvall, Bing and Freed (1996), there was a strong stereotypical assumption on the male and female dichotomy, which is said to have consequences, in questions concerning language and gender research.

Freed (1992, cited in Bergvall et al., 1996) indicates that the behaviours of male and female in language usage are based on an overlapping continuum rather than separated into two distinct categories. They affirm that questions asked in relation to language and gender topic contained assumed ideas about language and gender. For example (James, 1996) women are said to use more prestige forms of language presuppose that women always do use such forms of language and ignore that men may also use them. According to the researchers, the question about whether men and women speak differently does not imply that gender roles are socially constructed. If it were socially constructed, then the focus of the question would be about the way men and women are taught to speak. As Bergvall et al., (1996: 16) put it "...the issue is not difference but gender polarization", the problem is not about difference, but it is about oversimplification and stereotyping. Sherzer (1987) as cited in Cameron (2003) indicates that the normal linguistic behaviour of men and women in any community is represented in a manner corresponding to that community's expectation of the essential natures of the two groups. This is called a generalisation. For example, if women are said to be 'naturally' modest, then their speech will be represented in such a way, which shows that modesty. Because of this generalisation, community may interpret that women don't like to speak in public. In reality, the evidence may be contradictory. Or women may indeed behave 'modestly' only because they try to conform to prevailing ideals of feminine behaviour, have to follow the force of a norm enforced in various ways, eg. denying women speak in public. If women behave in a way, which is different from the general community's expectation, it is considered not to be 'natural'.

Penelope Eckert and Sally McConnell-Ginet (2003: 5) emphasise that language and gender are "... fundamentally embedded in social practice, deriving their meaning from the human activities in which they figure". The authors say that the sorts of linguistic resources people use to identify themselves as certain kinds of men or women emerge, rather than just considerations of different ways men and women speak. In fact, these linguistic resources are used in

families, schools, and work place groups, sports groups etc., and are considered as “...face-to-face communities of practise.” Eckert et al., (2003) state that language and its usage are inseparable, what people say and do with language can not be separated. It is influenced by gender practise through social life interact. Kiesling (2003) says that in interactional discourse gender studies summarised in Tannen’s work, 1990, different linguistic features carry different social meanings for men and women. Malts and Borker as cited by Kiesling (2003) say that in conversations, questions play different roles for men and women and if groups share social action norms, they still may value norms differently. Norms are commonly described as either descriptive or prescriptive. Descriptive norms are used to describe a group by means of statistic, eg. “the average height of men”. In contrast, prescriptive norms are used to denote values that people are expected to adhere to, eg. “Men should be tall”. According to Kiesling, prescriptive norms often affect descriptive norms in language and gender research. Although in practice the two norms often get confused, prescriptive norms, such as “women should be more polite” (cited in Lakoff, 1975) could turn out to be descriptively accurate as according to Holmes, (1995) cited by Kiesling as “Women are more (positively) polite”. Kiesling (2003) argues that the interaction of the two norms can be complex as they influence each other. For example, men on the average are taller than women in most societies; this however led to a gender dichotomy that assumes all men are expected to be taller than women. This prescriptive assumption makes life difficult for short men and tall women. From the above-mentioned example of height, we can see that a descriptively average difference has been turned into a prescriptively categorical difference, such that “men should not be like women and women should not be like men” (P511).

Representations of gender and language in accordance with social norms maintain gender distinctions and naturalise the notion of the sexes as ‘opposite’ with different aptitudes and social responsibilities, in cases they also help to naturalise gender hierarchies (Talbot, cited in Cameron, 2003).

According to Lakoff (1975: 3), “Language uses us as much as we use language”. We often say what are in our thought, express our feelings on how we perceive what happens in our social environment ‘as real’ or ‘not real’. The

way we have been brought up forms within us an individualistic perception about life. In a conversation the two speakers can have two completely different points of view on the same subject that they discuss.

In terms of language use in gender, Lakoff (1975) claims in the preface of *Language and Woman's Place* that language operates consciously and unconsciously in a speaker's mind:

“Often, as psychoanalysis has shown in such details, we say things without knowing their significance, but the fact that we have said them shows that there is more going on in our minds than we are consciously take credit for. By looking at the way we customarily talk if we are women, or talk about women whoever we are, we can gain insight into the way we feel- about ourselves, about women”...(P. 87).

Aside to the fact that language operates consciously and unconsciously in the speaker's mind, it reflects and reinforces the survival of the stereotype.

Lakoff (2003: 162) illustrates this point of view by citing a few examples showing lexical differences in the way people talk about men with power, women with power and presupposing the inappropriateness of that attitude. People use different words to describe similar behaviours of men and women, such as ‘shrewd’ and ‘bitch’, whereas there is no equivalent for men.

For men who do not control ‘their’ women, there are negative words presupposing that they are ‘henpecked’ and ‘pussy-whipped’, while there is no female equivalent.

In terms of how language and gender are conceived and how they are inter-related, Swann (2003) notes that research has tended to prioritize differences among women/girls and among men/boys rather than seeing gender as a ‘binary’ distinction. It has regarded gender as something that is ‘done’ in context rather than as a social attribute and language was seen as context dependent. It has also focused on uncertainty and ambiguity in relation to the meanings of what the speakers say and do.

Like other languages, English has fairy tales about women's silence and obedience as a path to success and for male, verbal assertion leads to success (Lakoff, 2003). The stories of "Seven at a Blow" and "The Seven Swans" are practical examples of such moral lessons for women, in which, silence and obedience are considered as a woman's success:

"...The brave little tailor, having killed seven flies with one swat, embroiders himself a belt to that effect and wears it out into the world. He gets into trouble but eventually triumphs. The lesson: verbal assertion brings a man's success.... In 'The Seven Swans', a girl's seven brothers are changed into swans. She can transform them back into men only by sitting in a tree for seven years sewing them shirts out of daisies. If she utters one word during this period, she will fail. She succeeds, despite terrible obstacles. The moral: silence and obedience are the path to success for a woman" (Lakoff, 2003: 162).

Pauwels (2003) explores the role that language plays in maintaining gender distinctions, naturalising gender hierarchies. It is embodied in the ways women and men are perceived as language users. Men's speech is perceived as powerful while women's speech is regarded as wordy and much talking about trifles. This can be seen in proverbs such as, "Women are great talkers" or "Women will say anything". Women are seen as illiterate language users and men are seen as authoritative language users. These popular stereotypes attained some achievement when they were acknowledged and confirmed in the academic and scientific literature as "this 'scientific' validation led to the desire for the codification and regulation of women's speech and of women as speakers" (Pauwels, 2003: 550). Women's language behaviour was controlled and codified by rules, codes and guides in the past centuries. Men's status as norm makers, language regulators and language planners were reinforced. Men's language authority was made known through their involvement in language planning activities, in the dictionary making process, in normative grammar writings and in the establishments of language institutions.

Pauwels (2003) recognises that although women were more influenced by linguistic regulation than men, women had some authority in language regulation as norm enforcers through their roles as mothers and as school

teachers, particularly in primary schools. This was to ensure that children used the language in accordance with the prescribed norms.

It was not until 1970s that male dominance in language planning and regulation was challenged by the linguistic activism associated with the women's movements across the Western world. During this period of time women from all walks of life revealed the biased portrayal of the male and female images in language use. This biased portrayal is more discriminatory and damaging to women than men. The sociolinguistic approach of the feminist movement and language reform was to achieve greater equality, equity and access.

Amy Sheldon as cited by Swann (2003) in her study using a dichotomous model of gender, in which, female groups and female conversations are characterised as cooperative and egalitarian. Male groups and conversations as competitive and hierarchical notes that girls will do competitive and oppositional talk. But the way it is done will vary between cultures and contexts. In her study with US Mid-western school children, she points out two types of conflict styles that are 'double-voice discourse' and 'single-voice discourse':

"In double-voice discourse, "the voice of mitigation and social sensitivity is bound up with the 'voice' of self-interest and egocentricity"; in single-voice discourse, "[I]nteractants have the single orientation of pursuing their own self-interest without orienting to the perspective of the partner or tempering their self-interest with mitigation" (Swann, 2003: 627).

In Sheldon's study, both girls and boys are engaged in conflict talk and used double-voice discourse to manage this. However, girls used double-voice discourse more, and at times, were engaged in highly elaborate negotiations. Although Sheldon illustrates gender difference in children's interactional strategies, she tends to down play this difference and focus more on the importance of culture, context and children's goal (Swann, 2003).

3.3.1 The influence of early social conditioning

Although each individual is unique and has their own way of thinking it is unavoidable to some extent that we all are influenced directly or indirectly by our surrounding circumstances. It takes a lot of courage to be different or do the right things, as it seems that we are so strongly swirled by the social mechanism.

It happens in the early social conditioning of an individual. Since childhood boys and girls are taught two different ways of talking. Girls have to “talk like a lady”, whereas, ‘boys are always boys’. The expectations that our society has for boys or girls are shown in the ways, in which, we raise our children. Girls are taught what is thought appropriate for girls and boys are taught in the way appropriate for being a boy. From the time a male child is old enough to understand words, he hears things such as “Big boys don’t cry, only girls do” or “That scraped knee doesn’t really hurt a boy like you, does it?”. In various ways, boys are shown that they must avoid becoming female. When they reach manhood, many believe firmly that females must be inferior to males.

As a result people act in certain ways due to the conditioning they have learnt since they were young. It has been imposed on us from the outside through the force of our own culture. It is not of our own making and yet, too often we behave as though we were born with it. We form habits because of cultural cliches such as supposed-tos, supposed-not-tos, ought-tos, ought-not-tos, musts and must-nots that surround us and we practise these habits for so long that we come to think of them as immutable part of ourselves:

“The roots from which a human creature arises are many and entangled. And while his growth is unfolding, a man does not even notice how and whence comes the wholeness of his personality. The component parts become lost in it. He is desired from various strands, but he also forms himself, re-arranging impressions from the outside world, inherited traits and accepted habits, and thus himself having an effect on life about him... Man does not leave behind the world he found. Though he arose from it, he, himself, has changed it, while also becoming changed with it..” Milovan Djilas cited by Tisay (1985:75).

This can be seen in the earliest stage when a mother delivers a child at the hospital, different colours would be used to note the different sex of the infant. Blue would be appropriate for boys and pink would be chosen for girls. In shopping markets baby clothes are designed in separate colours - blue and pink. This reflects an unquestioned acceptance on the part of society. Szirom (1988: 12) has claimed that this is only the beginning of:

“A long, slow process which teaches girls to be passive, dependent, and submissive and boys to be active, independent and dominant. Through a subtle system of rewards and punishments, girls learn that they receive more attention when they are coy and cute and when they behave like “little ladies”. They learn to take up less space, to make less noise and demand less than boys do”.

While girls are taught to behave “like a lady” in their adolescence, the early image of masculinity for adolescent boys can be seen on television cartoons, movies and in the persona of the comic book superhero.

In these articles, we see heroes play in forming the image of masculinity and femininity through their roles of ‘superman’, ‘superboys’. These heroes in fact present a fundamentally patriarchal view of the world and in this world the good guys are predominantly middle class white males who set out to conquer the world by eliminating vigilantes and bring justice back to the world. While women and people of colour either appear invisible or are consigned to traditional roles (Pecora as noted by Craig, 1992).

Tavris (1992: 24) comments on the persistence of mismeasure of woman only reflect and serve society’s prejudices as “views on woman’s ‘natural’ differences from man justify a status quo that divides work, psychological qualities, and family responsibilities into ‘his’ and ‘hers’”. As a consequence, dominant individuals in their interest, strive to maintain their differences from others.... “attributing those differences to the “harsh dictates of nature”, and obscuring the unequal arrangements that benefit them”.

In the process of socialisation, individuals’ perceptions of things are different as they grow up differently, have different experiences during their lives and therefore, they don’t see things and interpret events in the same way. Individuals’ perceptions are influenced by expectations (Lovatt, 1987). If an

individual learns to expect something to occur, they will perceive only the information that tells them that something they expect have occurred and ignore information that says their expectation is wrong. Individuals' expectations lead them to look for familiarity, similarity and reject diversity. Trapped in their own values systems, messages of unfamiliar cues can be distorted and communication may break down.

Apart from cultural hidden assumptions, personal emotions have an impact on people's perceptions. Individuals raised in a happy and open environment perceive things differently from individuals lived in an unhappy and closed environment. Angry people misinterpret cues, this also leads to a breakdown in communication.

3.3.2 Gender issues

In the past twenty years, social scientists have come to recognise gender as one of the primary elements around which, social life is organised (Kimmel, 1992). While sex refers to the biological differences and this biological division varies little, gender refers to the cultural meanings attributed to biological differences and these cultural meanings vary enormously. Kimmel reveals that if gender is socially constructed, then the "definitions of masculinity and femininity as the products of the interplay among a variety of social forces". Craig (1992) argues that men and women are acculturated into their gender roles, as most behaviour associated with gender is learnt rather than innate. It was furthering discussed that any biological theories that see gender differences natural parts are themselves the product of these cultural distinctions.

Researches have shown that gender distinction is common to many societies, there are norms and guidelines, which limit a woman's ability, and her life is confined within the family's atmosphere. While masculinity also involves a set of attitudes and practices culturally deemed appropriate for men or what it is to be a man. Gender may vary from one culture to another, within any culture over historical time and through any person's course of life. In accordance with race, ethnicity, age, class, sexuality and region of the country, different groups of people in any culture define masculinity and femininity differently (Kimmel, 1992). In most (if not all) countries, traditional characteristics of

masculinity are made to seem so natural and correct that men regard domination and exploitation of women and other men as expected and perhaps demanded. Individuals, who are unable to fit in traditional patterns, find themselves castigated and alienated.

Followed are some examples of gender distinction in different societies and countries in the world:

A division of sexes exists in English-speaking societies, Lakoff (1975) explores the cultural mythology about women and femininity - that as we grow we learn how to behave in the appropriate way that our family and society expect from us. We abide by the rules of how a man or woman "should be" and generally follow this established patterns throughout our lives and pass them on to our siblings. When a girl grows into womanhood she is placed in an awkward position. If she learns her lesson well and "behaves like a lady", she is treated as being too feminine or even weak, can not voice herself, unable to make decision, too dependent. If she does not abide by the cultural rules, she is considered as lack of feminine qualities (Lakoff, 1975).

In Britain for hundreds of years, discrimination against women was strong. The law said that after a woman married all her money and possessions became the property of her husband. Until 1878, a woman in a violent marriage had no right in law to leave her husband (Phillips, 1993). When social conditions changed and women could join the workforce, there was the 'marriage bar' for women and this 'marriage bar' lasted until the Second World War:

"In Britain, almost all jobs had a 'marriage bar'. This meant that women were forced to leave work when they get married. Janet Young was one of the first women to work for the Bank of England. After the wedding she kept her marriage a secret for four years because she did not want to loose her job" (Philips, 1993: 16).

At the time of World War II, the lives of women were turned upside down; women were expected to work, when men were sent to the battlefield. Many women had their first chance to do interesting work, earn a good wage, learn new skills and have some independence. At the end of the war, the men came home and returned to their work, many women lost their jobs and were

expected to go back to being housewives. Many women were not given work because they were women. Until 1975, the British government passed the Sex Discrimination Act; it was against the law not to give a person a chance to work because of their sex. By the end of nineteenth century men could vote, whereas, women had no political rights.

In other parts of the world, the law in many Islam countries influenced by religion requires women to wear veils in public to hide themselves from the sight of men. The gender distinction has gone to the extreme particularly as in the case of Afghanistan. In one petition sent via e-mail on the Taliban's war on Women (IRef. 5), it has been written that after the Taliban took over the government in 1996, a war has been waged against women. Women did not have freedom as they did before 1996. Women had no control over their lives. They were treated as "subhuman in the name of right-wing fundamentalist Islam". The power of life and death rests in the hands of their husbands.

Women no longer have the right to work. Professional women have been forced to give up their jobs and stayed at home. They even can not go out on their own, but with the company of a male relative. In the street if a woman were caught wearing clothes that reveal some part of her flesh, she would be beaten or stoned to death. It was said that this is not part of their traditional culture because before 1996, women in Afghanistan had basic human freedoms such as they could work, dress, drive or travel alone.

To some critics, what happened in Afghanistan denotes that we can not always blame on the cultural tradition but it stems from human greed of power.

In China Confucianism was the ancient Chinese way of worship. Women were treated as the property of their male relatives and were subjected to the three obedience. They had rare opportunities to go through life with Confucianism.

Early in the twentieth century, it was still a custom for highborn women to have their feet bound, this was a sign of dependence, and it restricted a woman's movements and freedom (Phillips, 1993).

A recent report from the ABC network (31/05/04) questioned the Japanese attitude for women by broadcasting a phenomenon occurring in Japan. A group

of males formed the 'Superfree' club and attempted rapes on many women. A participant in an interview said that this phenomenon reveals an attitude that "if a man can dominate a woman, he's considered a real man". In an interview with the press, the artist who created the comic "Rapeman" (a series, in which a man working as a teacher during daytime turns into the 'rapeman' at night, his targets are women who are naughty and swindlers and most of them fall in love with him after the rape) expresses his view that after World War II, men had inferiority complex because women rose high above.

In Vietnam the traditional role of female is to be devoting, gentle and efficient domestically, to be submissive to parental and familial direction and on marriage to devote obedience to her husband. The role of Vietnamese male is defined by socio-economic status, by expectation of prowess and maintains family honour and prestige in society. The question of prestige is so vital to the males that most Vietnamese wives are required to defer to their husbands' wishes publicly as well as to his opinions at home. Gender is strongly characterised by a woman's should and should-nots. Although these roles are culturally enforced, education and urbanisation have modified them in some parts of Vietnam.

In the field of literature, Vo (1992) reveals that over the period of 1954-1975, on the plane of gender, even though there was an increase in the number of women writers compared with the pre-war period, there were still fewer female writers than male writers. There were seventeen percent of women among sixty-one writers including scholars and researchers:

"...Before there were only a few female poets and one woman novelist; in 54-75, in the South, woman novelists became much more numerous. Nevertheless, there is one field where woman is nowhere in sight: compilation and research. There have been essays and articles; often write with high, professional authority. But specialising in a particular subject, compiling into book form, there have been no woman authors. In that period we have seen women who are physician, attorneys, publishers, editors etc., but no woman scholar, no woman researcher" (P. 22- 23).

Vo emphasises that this does not mean that Vietnamese women were slow to advance but “At least in the said period, and in the particular field of literature, the women strode ahead faster than the men. In the minority of the outset, the women caught up quickly and soon became little by little the more active of the sexes” (P. 22-23). Ironically, this statement in fact, reveals that Vietnamese women in the period of 1954-1975 were slow to advance, even though the author states that there were more female writers in that period of time. This is considered as an achievement because women are only a ‘minority’ and became “little by little” the active of the sexes. This implies that Vietnamese society is patriarchal, men are dominant over women in many fields and women have strived hard to have their voice heard. Even so the number of female writers was still less than the number of male writers. The women’s advancement in the period of 1954-75 was considered as an achievement because, apart from their ‘minority’ if compared to the prewar period there were then only “a few female poets and one woman novelist”.

Nguyen Mong Giac as cited by Vo (1992) examined this phenomenon and concluded that for the years 1965 & 1966, the men were the “determining who in the field of literature.” But after 1966, there were new women writers, during this period of time women writers appeared in publications, magazines; collected some National Literature Awards and women’s books were best sellers. The reason for this phenomenon was that men had to bury themselves in study to obtain educational qualifications otherwise they had to go to the army’s training camps:

“Failing an exam, a young man could fail for life. So, studying to death, he dared not think of such luxuries as novels and poetry let alone dream of becoming a novelist or poet” (Vo, 1992: 23).

Which is true but it is also suggested that women writers had more chance to succeed during that period of time because of men’s absence in the literature field during wartime as men had to either study hard to succeed or go to war. The author also reveals that even then, Vietnamese women were still bound by

cultural norms and traditions they still could write because the war created a “freer social and moral climate” and as a result, in general, the attitude and prevailing opinions of people were more open. Vo (1992: 23) notes that there were male writers whose wives also wrote but women’s literary efforts were not encouraged in circumstances such as:

“Only when he could hold his pen, she could hold hers. When he could not then sooner or later she must let hers drop. The women needed their husbands’ support while the men went on writing no matter what their wives did for a living. This situation of course, had not been dictated by any law. It is only that society and families still were regulated by certain unspoken rules, customs, and these can not be said to encourage literary efforts by women”.

In 1955, Nguyen Manh Con wrote “Đêm Tâm Tình Viết Lịch Sử” commenting on political issues and this book was intended for “all of us men”. It was mentioned that fifteen years later, the author wrote “Tình Cao Thượng” and this was considered a move closer to female readers (Vo, 1992: 46). Vo mentions another author Mai Thao in the same year, wrote “Đêm Giã Từ Hà Nội” and it was “certainly not meant to be reading matter for young women”. And only fifteen years later, Mai Thao began to write novels for female readers, such as “Hạnh Phúc Đến về Đêm”; “Mười Đêm Ngà Ngọc”.

Vo also states that although it was a slow change but there was a small number of women writers who did not require material or moral support from their families.

Vietnamese women are subjected to conditions and requirements imposed culturally on them. Followed these conditions and requirements, their abilities are restricted. Because of the sexual asymmetry of male and female status in Vietnam, Vietnamese women find themselves in an awkward position; they live to sacrifice - a culturally reinforced view. Divorce was uncommon in Vietnam, it was sanctioned on both Buddhist and Catholic grounds, the economic and social dependence of Vietnamese women prevented them from divorce. Should there be marital problems, other family members often step in

to mediate. A study on Vietnamese Families by Hassan et al., (1985: 286) reveals that:

“...the traditional method of dealing with marital disputes was mediation by family members to achieve a resolution of the problem. It was pointed out that, traditionally, the burden of proof of misdemeanour lay with the offended party, and if this were the wife, the sexual asymmetry of male-female status in Vietnam effectively prevented the wife from obtaining and producing proof’.

Vietnamese society does not provide women with either legal or social status, if divorce were achieved and all properties were in the husband’s name, it would be up to the husband’s goodwill to distribute it (Hassan et al., 1985). There was not a social security system to provide women in need with a certain degree of economic independence. Women from intolerable marriage either accept it or leave with their children, they would flee to a place where they can not be found by their husband or come back to live with their parents for moral support.

In Australia the attitude that a woman’s place is in the home has been popular. Women are often described in accordance with their roles and not on the facts that they are individuals with their own rights in society and are capable of making achievement. The media presents a heavily stereotypical view of woman as wife and mother. Due to the biological fact of childbirth and lactation women’s tasks are confined to caring for children. The term ‘mother’ seems a “natural symbolic ascription for women, given discourses about biological destiny, the cult of motherhood and patriarchy” (Saco, 1992). Followed are some examples showing social expectation of women:

“A Brunswick mother of four has been appointed to the Board...”(TV news item) (IRef. 8).

“During the Commonwealth Games in 1990, the swimmer Lisa Curry was often referred to in the media as a ‘super mum’. It is highly unlikely that any male competitors would be described as ‘super dad’” (IRef. 8).

There have been gradual changes on the acceptance of the social role of women in the twentieth century. According to Helen Hughes (Centre for Independent Studies), Australia has a great tradition of equality for women. In comparison with some cultures, which are opposed to the rights of women and don’t give women equal rights, Australia is one of the first countries to have votes for women and has fought hard for the rights of women, eg. rights of women in Parliament and so on (Killing Multiculturalism, Insight, SBS, 1/06/04).

Sofia Dedes (‘Woglife’ Contributor) says that some other cultures might not have the same values upon women as Australia has, she further argues that is because they’re not based on culture, they’re based on religion. As part of western liberal democracy, religion and the State are separate whereas other places are not (Killing Multiculturalism, Insight, SBS, 1/06/04).

Although there were changes made and more women are working in skilled occupations, there are still many who work in low-pay occupations; their commitments at home and in the workforce are each limited by each other. Many women work casually or on a part-time basis to supplement their husbands’ incomes and concurrently struggle to balance between motherhood and wage work.

In households, where women contribute largely to the family income, housework is shared equally between the spouses. This suggests that if women’s incomes increase, not only are they able to assert control financially but household labour would be distributed more equally (Baxter, 1992). Feminists also suggest that if women don’t have equal access to financial resources within the family, this is regarded as gender inequalities (Edwards and Pahl, quoted by Baxter, 1992).

Women who do not earn an income manage the family finance only; they have little control over it. Baxter (1992) says that there is a distinction between the management and control of finances. Managing finance means to use money to

buy food, clothing and other household goods, pay bills, whereas controlling of finance involves with decisions how money is to be spent:

“Management of finance is akin to the implementation functions perform within any enterprise: the carrying out of decisions which have already been made elsewhere in the firm. The manager of family finance would handle family money and would make the actual payments... Control refers to the decision-making functions of any enterprise. The person(s) in control of family decision-making would have an influence overall but might make few minor purchasing decisions (Edwards quoted by Baxter, (1992).

Sex role research presents evidence of a heavily stereotypical view of what man and woman should be like in accordance with cultural assumptions. These stereotypes have a direct effect on an individual notion of his/her masculinity/femininity.

Craig (1992) reveals that masculinity and femininity are socially constructed. Masculinity and femininity can be examined as sets of social expectations that have been created and maintained in a patriarchal society. The construction of masculinity and femininity can be seen in the representations of ideal manhood and womanhood by the media, both concepts are what a culture expects of its men and women. They tell us who we are, who we should be and whom we should avoid. A wide variety of masculine and feminine images are portrayed by the media in such a way that it tells people what positive characteristics should be aspired and warns people of the negative facets of personality that should be avoided. We find the representations of manhood and womanhood in articles ranging from discussions on television, radio, in movies to books, commercials, and music videos. Dominant themes for masculinity are power and difference, whereas femininity has to do with beauty and affection.

Durkin as cited by Craig (1992: 1) states that “men and masculinity have been treated as the ‘norm’ and men’s portrayals in the media have often been seen as unproblematic or even exemplary”.

In the sphere of broadcasting, television is said to be a male-dominated medium with more portrayals of men than women (Butler & Paisley as noted

by Fejes, 1992). Men played more starring roles (Dominick, cited by Fejes, 1992) and it is more likely to find men in action/drama programming than in comedies and soap operas (Greenberg, Simmons, Hogan & Atkin, noted by Fejes, 1992).

Further research was done to show that on television, men are less likely to be shown as being married (Manes & Wheeler, cited by Fejes), generally shown as being older, less likely to be involved in a romantic relationship (Downing, Durkin, Signorielli, cited by Fejes, 1992). Men are shown as dominant figures, more likely to engage in violent acts (Gerbner, Potter & Ware, quoted by Fejes, 1992). Further examination shows that men give and receive responses more, they are also involved in the reinforcement or punishment of behaviour, this illustrates that men are possessors of power and status through their control of rewards and punishments (Down & Gowan, noted by Fejes, 1992).

Another study examining the visual portray of men on television says that commercial television programming is apt to portray men in close face shots as opposed to full body shots, while women are subject to full body shots (Copeland, noted by Fejes, 1992). Copeland suggests that this 'face-ism' may indicate the deeply rooted cultural myths of men "...pictorially represented by their faces, as intellect, and women, pictorially represented by their bodies, as heart or emotion" (Craig, 1992: 11). Furthermore, men are often seen to be involved in problem solving, making plans for themselves and others (Downs, Henderson, Greenberg, Richards & Henderson, quoted by Fejes, 1992).

A research compared the portrayal of men and women on non-commercial public television with commercial television reveals little difference on male representations. However, Matelski (noted by Fejes, 1992) suggests that there was one major difference in the equal distribution between men and women in action initiation. Based on these studies, the traditional patriarchal notion of men and masculinity is strongly maintained. Men are seen as powerful and successful figures, secure high-status positions, initiate actions, solve problems, act from the basis of rational mind and not from emotions. Men are found more in the outside world as opposed to family and relationships (Fejes, 1992).

The cultural belief of feminine qualities exclude women from full participation in the world of politics “not only in the most typical and specific sense of that world ‘the art or science of government or governing’; but also in the more general sense.... the way, in which power is allocated and that allocation justified, among members of a society” (Lakoff, 2003). There is a proverb warning of women’s danger “Women in state affairs are like monkeys in glass shops”. The traditional cultural view allows men to seek and hold power; it is right and natural for men to do so. It is more comfortable for men to hold power than women are. If a woman is interested in power, it makes her strange, unfeminine and dangerous (Lakoff, 2003). The public perception of women in power is ambivalent. They are sexualized, objectified and ridiculed:

“An item in the San Francisco Chronicle (Garchik, 2000) would be amusing if we didn’t consider the consequences. Garchik reports on South Korean Foreign Minister Lee Jung Bin’s response to US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright after her visit. “Albright and I are of the same age”, says Lee. “So we are both feeling intimate with each other....[Upon hugging her, I found she was] really buxom....” (Lakoff, 2003: 173).

Males in power can sometimes be seen as sex objects but Lakoff argues that sexual conquest only intensifies a man’s power while weakens a woman’s, as women would receive negative connotations, such as ‘stud’ and ‘slut’.

In addition, with regard to objectification, the public adopts a conventional view of women when commenting on a prominent woman’s appearance, the comments can be negative and disempowering compared to men’s. Men can be criticised for their looks but the negative remarks are less frequent and less noticeable than at women. These comments on looks are dangerous to women as “they reduce a woman to her traditional role of object, one who is seen rather than one who sees and acts” (Lakoff, 2003). As women have always been encouraged to view looks as an asset, tend to feel more hurtful than men do.

In educational settings, much research evidence on language and gender carried out since 1970s demonstrating differences and inequalities between girls and boys’ language behaviour. In these research findings, Swann (2003)

notes that girls had few opportunities to contribute in the classroom because boys' speaking style dominated the interaction. Books and other resources used in schools had more male characters than females'. In stories female characters had restricted roles than male characters, male characters were more active.

In 1980s despite the effort of concern educators and publishers who released non-sexist guidelines, there were more texts or stories recognising women's contribution in histories, the situation did not change significantly, inequality between the two sexes still exists as these stories have a tendency of adopting a 'biological determinism - a natural way of being male or female' (Gilbert & Rowe, 1989: 1994)

"Because our experiences within contemporary society constantly mark gender difference, we tend to find the gender-specific features of many language practices unremarkable; they have become naturalised within a culture that uses gender difference with such deliberateness" (Gilbert, 1994: 10).

According to Gilbert and Rowe, many children's reading materials are not a "legitimate reflection of the contemporary lifestyles" but depict a traditional picture of the family life and carry stereotypical messages:

"What passes for family life in storybooks is often not a legitimate reflection of contemporary lifestyles. In fact, the way these books picture children's lives represents a very traditional, Sam-and-Pam model from which all other possibilities must necessarily deviate, and become 'other' than the schoolbook norm" (Gilbert & Rowe, 1989: 32).

Data also reveals that at an early age primary children would seem to understand that there are different expectations held for girls and boys by family members, teachers and their peers. Most primary school children have clear notion of which jobs are for men and which jobs are for women:

"An Australian study of 8,000 primary school children in Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia and Queensland, carried out in the mid-1980s, demonstrated that if the researcher knew only a child's expressed

preference for school subjects, girls could be distinguished from boys with 80 per cent accuracy. If patterns of occupational interest only were known, girls could be identified or distinguished from boys with 85 per cent accuracy. If their actual occupational choice was known, the researcher's ability to guess their gender correctly rose to 90 per cent accuracy" (Funder quoted by Short, 1992, 20- 21).

As a result of another research carried out in schools in Victoria, Evans (cited by Short, (1992: 21) suggests that "the links between gender and children's nominated occupation were solid". This study revealed that young children would nominate their future jobs that were being done mostly by people of the same gender, older primary school children were more open in nominating their future occupations. However, girls would be prepared to do jobs conventionally designed for men whereas boys would not do jobs conventionally done by women.

3.3.3 Stereotyping

Stereotyping is rarely accurate. By stereotyping we actually limit ourselves and make incorrect judgement through the way we see others by assuming that a single fact represents the whole thing or community. Stereotyping derives from cultural shock, the experience of finding the unexpected may cause a person to misunderstand, have feelings of dissatisfaction and form strong, negative stereotypes of other people (Goodacre et al., 1987).

For example: Gina Chrisanthopoulos, a Hip-Hop Artist says that for years she denied her Aboriginal heritage because of people's stereotypes: "I'm not an indigenous person because I might get accused of being an alcoholic or sniffing petrol..." (Killing Multiculturalism, Insight, SBS, 1/06/04).

Brown (1994) says that in our own cultural bound world view filled with bias, we tend to describe other cultures in an oversimplified manner, cultural differences were categorised in an exaggerated way, we then see groups of people belong to a culture as having certain stereotypical traits. Some of these stereotypical traits are "Americans are all rich and overly friendly", "The English are polite and drink tea" and "Asians are reserved and inscrutable".

These bound us to the do's and don't's. Brown (1994) says that stereotypes form in this way, we allow our cultural environment shapes our world-view, we then see and understand the reality through our own cultural pattern. People who have different perception from the majority would be seen as false and strange. Cross cultural differences can only be sympathised by people who are willing to recognise and understand different world view. People who don't accept differences are those who maintained a stereotype. Brown (1994) defines stereotyping singles out an individual as possessing assumed characteristics shared by the whole community. Stereotyping may be accurate to describe the typical member of a culture but it is inaccurate when used to depict a particular individual. This is because every one is unique and their personal characteristics or behaviour can not be accurately predicted based on cultural norms.

Brown (1994) asserts that cultural stereotypes are not necessarily bad if we understand the positive effects of stereotyping as our existence is mutual and we all contribute our parts in organising our environment through systematic and meaningful storage.

Stereotyping is negative and destructive when all people of a culture are grouped into a rigid category and are degraded by insulting remarks. Judging an individual by the overall traits of that culture is prejudging and misjudging that individual (Brown, 1994).

The cultural assumption has stereotyped what a man, woman should be like, and this bias in gender existed in books and passed on to individuals since childhood. At school children begin to learn how to read and write. They absorb ideas through language about what is right, normal and natural and as they become adults the ideas and images that they have learnt in those early years shape and maintain their view on the world around them. According to Gilbert and Rowe (1989), when an individual begins to learn reading and writing, s/he also begins to learn sets of social practices. In her study she points out that language is a social meaning system and gender roles are constructed through language practices:

“Every time we communicate, we have to use the available social signifying system we all share. Not to use it requires a conscious act of resistance to the conventions and norms of language practices. As a result, when we write, and when we read, we enter into the dominant and accepted sets of social meanings” (Gilbert & Rowe, 1989: 16).

This bias has come under the language terms of sexism and androcentricism, male centred. Males are popularly portrayed as aggressive, constructively engaged in planning activities, display problem-solving ability and autonomy. A study on child characters shown on television found that boy characters were active, rational and engaged in traditional activities such as playing sports, going places and making mischief. Girls characters were shown talking on the telephone, read or do housework (Peirce noted by Fejes (1992). The behaviour of male characters on children’s educational television is of little difference if compared to adult programming.

The social pattern has been fully established in our culture. In the past twenty years many educational books have been examined closely on the topic of gender portrayal and as a result the portrayals of women and girls were limited and unrealistic. The society is a reflection of the patriarchal order. Spender (1980: 15) expressed her view with regard to patriarchy:

“I accept Kaplan’s concept of patriarchy as the order under which we live, an order characterised by male dominance and the means - both actual and symbolic - of perpetuating that dominance”.

As cited by Spender (1980: 76) on Edwin Ardener’s anthropological studies, in which Ardener reached a conclusion that men were the dominant group, whereas women were labelled as the muted group as forms of thoughts, its images and symbols are systematically expressed and confirmed in accordance with the male views:

“Ardener argues that the models - the meaning/theories/ structures -, which exist have been formulated by males and they have been validated by reference

to other males. Stating it simply, men have made up the meanings for society and then have checked with other men to see if those meanings are accurate”.

Spender agrees with Ardener’s view on the role of women as ‘mute’. As no matter what a woman strives to achieve, it is difficult for her to overcome the perceived bias of the patriarchal society. Women are mute because men are in control and the language, the meanings and the knowledge of women can not be accounted for outside that male control (Spender, 1980: 77). To further analyse the large degree of sex difference, Spender expressed her view on the assertiveness training programmes for women. Although women have the ability in public speaking, this does not necessarily means that they will be as successful as men do even if they learn to speak like men. Their sex is an important element that determines the degree of success:

“I have thought it perfectly feasible that women could learn to speak exactly like men and yet still be evaluated as less successful - even hesitant and tentative - precisely because it is not always the language which determines the evaluation, but the sex” (Spender, 1980: 79).

Most literature on language and gender issues assume women’s politeness and that women are necessarily always more polite than men. Sara Mills (2003) challenges this assumption by showing how issues of gender are related to this. In her attempt to prove whether politeness or impoliteness is by nature, she suggests that politeness and impoliteness are only judgements about people’s interventions when they interact. However, people as a whole can also be judged on politeness or impoliteness. Mills states that in several circumstances women will draw on stereotypes of femininity to guide the way they behave. Although women appear to behave in a more polite way than men do, there are many situations where women will behave as impolitely as men.

Spender (1980) emphasises that English language is sexist, although there are people who disagree or underestimate the problem. As children and adults, we are often exposed to such images either in our reading or television watching; these images maintain the idea of inequality and turn the individuals into

gradual acceptance. The dominant tradition of society turned individuals to believe in the “naturalness of language” (Gilbert & Rowe, 1989), from this naturalness that we accept as it is in our daily language lies an unconsciousness of the sexist and racial bias. According to a survey made among 54 Australian student teachers when they selected books for classroom study, the findings was similar, the result showed that there was an unconscious sexist and bias in their choice on the materials. The researchers claims that:

“Left to their own designs student teachers...tend to select...extremely traditional, if not outright sexist and racist, children’s stories...That a predominantly female group of student teachers would select male-authored and male-centred children’s literature” (Gilbert & Rowe, 1989: 18).

The gender bias is not only found in curriculum materials but in other cultural practices such as on television, in magazines and newspapers, in the advertising of goods. Television advertising shows a high degree of stereotype of gender roles, Fejes (1992: 13) notes that:

“Compared to gender portrayal on television, which tend to be affected by plot and character aspects, the portrayal of men and women in advertising tends to be far more blatant in its sexual stereotypes. This is due in large to the fact that the products advertised are aimed at target male and female audiences, thus resulting in a higher level of specificity in sex role portrayals”.

In a research finding on advertising in 1970s, men were shown as more autonomous than women were. Men had different occupations compared to women being shown mainly as mothers and housewives who make, serve or buy food. When cleaning products are advertised, women appeared wearing an apron and gloves cleaning in the kitchen or bathroom. Men advertised alcohol, vehicles, and business products while women appeared more in advertisements for domestic products. Men appeared in outdoors or business settings whereas

women were shown in domestic settings (Dominick & Rauch, Schneider noted by Fejes, 1992).

In a qualitative analysis of 40 beer commercials, Postman, noted by Fejes (1992: 14) suggests that there is a strong relationship between drinking and a stereotypical view of masculinity. It was said that beer drinking is “related to challenge, risk and mastery over nature... Strong emotions and displays of affections are eschewed while solidarity with other men is stressed”.

More studies suggest that most people have accepted without question that women are treated as sex objects, they are viewed principally as body and their primary duty is to attract male attention. Women appear in cosmetic advertisements as someone that groom themselves to be desirable. The exposure of pornographic films and magazines from the media contributes to the negativity in attitudes toward women. All these images mark a stereotyping of what women should be like.

As discrimination exists in the 1990s against women who are overweight, many young women are afraid of the stigmatisation of fatness and rush to achieve a slender body image by dieting. This fear of fatness is in fact more harmful to their health than obesity. Studies indicate that up to 70 percent of many adolescent girls have tried to limit their food intake by following a certain diet scheme, which can do harm to their health (Internet Ref. 4). Some even smoke cigarettes or induce vomiting in order to lose weight. In Britain studies indicate that one in two eleven and twelve years old girls are worried about their weight. The media through images of attractive and slender women and muscular men promotes female and male beauties. Studies indicate that images of thin, attractive and young women and muscular men that we see in magazines, on television can make ordinary people compare, feel unhappy about themselves and even have low self-esteem. Not only young women who go on a strict diet to lose weights, there are men who turn to drugs such as steroids for muscle strength, this can lead to health problem as eating disorder and the side-effect of drug taking is damaging. This prejudice against fatness has a great effect even among children as young as six. Girls enter adolescence with a clear impression of the unacceptability of being fat and then face a

future where female fatness is associated with a downward social spiral. To overcome this problem is to make young girls become aware of the natural stage of physical development that they undergo temporarily, in addition, good exercises and healthy choice of food help to maintain their well-being.

Even though the media promotes the ultra-thin image of female beauty and there is a strong prejudice against overweight women, it has been argued that the media at some level does not create but reflects what is socially and culturally accepted (Slender Chances, Iref. 4). It is also said that the media actively shape society and it is difficult to prove direct relationships of causes and effects (Tuchman et al., quoted in Barthel, 1992).

Regarding magazine advertisement, a study of computer ads in magazines revealed that men were over represented as managers, experts and technicians, appeared twice as often as women. Men were shown active here and accepting of new computer technology (Ware & Stuck, noted by Fejes, 1992). In Masse & Rosenblum's study of gender and body positioning in advertising (Quoted by Fejes, 1992), they analysed 564 ads from 1984 editions of three male-oriented and three female-oriented magazines. Their findings revealed that in male-oriented magazines, men were shown in a dominant stance; they smiled less, gazed full-faced at the viewer or an object; they were less likely to be shown as touching one another, themselves or objects. Whereas, in the female-oriented magazines, the portrayal was similar and the only difference was that men were more likely to touch and gaze at others. From these findings, the authors note that:

"The 'self' in men's magazines is a figure who does not defer. Unsmilingly, he touches objects rather than people, and he gazes outward at the viewer, apparently oblivious to those in the frame who gaze and touch him. With some qualification, this is the same man we will see in women's magazines" (Fejes, 1992:16).

Stereotypical differences in the portrayal of gender were shown in comic analysis. A research carried out on four popular family-oriented Sunday comic strip in 1984 revealed that there was minimal change over the decade in the sex

roles. Images of men were still depicted in a traditional manner. In another study on the relationship between comic characters and stereotypical masculine and feminine traits by Thaler (noted by Fejes, 1992), it was reported that masculine traits were most closely associated with traditionally defined heroic characters.

A comparative study on the portrayal of gender in advertising between countries such as America, Britain, Italy, Mexico and Australia shows similar results. In British television, males were typically portrayed as autonomous, having expertise and authority. Men were shown as objective and knowledgeable about the reasons as well as practical consequences of buying a product (Harris & Stobart; Livingstone & Green; Manstead & McCulloch quoted by Fejes (1992). However, it was pointed out that Australian commercials were less stereotyped on factors such as occupations, marital status, whether a man or woman acted as a spokesperson and their credibility for that role. While Mexican television commercials were the most stereotyped of all factors studied.

Cooper (1997) suggests that we subconsciously receive the hidden message everyday via advertising and that with time it builds up within us and has a strong influence on our attitudes, the way we look at other people and ourselves. Much of the power of advertising is indirect, at times it directly exerts an influence on people as we rush out and buy a product. It is argued that what we see and hear via the media produces a response in individuals, it plants an image of good life and how the products help to facilitate its achievement in our minds, it shows an attracting picture of the people we would like to be. Barthel (1992) says that these new roles models suggest new options and new choices of heroes. Another example of the negative effect of advertising related to unneeded products is that many children and teenagers are apt to choose brand products, such as Addidas, Nike, Reebok clothes or shoes. This has gone to the extent that wearing a popular and expensive brand "can give them a sense of security, reassuring them that they are "part of the group" (Cooper, 1997). In reality, these people are not distinctive or admirable because they wear brand products (Barthel, 1992), the true distinction does not come from material goods or money but from character and applications, from

people who create worthy selves in society (Simmel, 1978 quoted in Barthel, 1992).

Weber (1905 cited in Barthel, 1992) defines materialism as a cloak which should be worn lightly. But in this uncertain world, materials have become a security blanket; financial success and social status are used to compensate for devaluation or loss of other achievements.

Barthel (1992) suggests that it is the consumers' responsibility to righting the balance, cultural meanings in the messages need to be unravelled, consumers have to see that images are not used to promote individual identity but only corporate profits.

It is our responsibility to change these social stereotypes, to be able to make changes, we first need to develop a deep self-awareness and self-understanding. Ethics based on true understanding are stronger than the negative influence from society. We can learn to develop this awareness by looking at the intention, effect and act that will have upon ourselves and others. We need to understand social and cultural differences and recognise that people are all different. We can learn to understand those differences and show respect for all human beings.

3.3.4 Linguistic markers of sexist language

Language comes from our mind; biased words derive from a biased attitude. According to Kress and Hodge (1979) language reflects the structure of our society, which consists of a distribution of power among social classes and different racial groups.

Discriminatory language is the language that does not treat people on the basis of equality. It discriminates against people with different backgrounds, religions, and political beliefs. It does not treat men, women, or people with physical and intellectual impairment fairly and equitably. Not only that discriminatory values and social practices are expressed, but also maintained in our use of language (IRef. 8). The capacity of language is large, social differences are consolidated through the use of language. Kress (1989: 80) says that social differences such as gender, race, ethnicity are "reproduced in forms of language; and these forms of language are powerful forces in the constant reproduction of social difference".

We live in a patriarchal society constructed with a bias that favours males; our language practices mark a gender difference with deliberateness. There are words, which are often used and reflect an imbalance of the status of man and woman in society, for example; women are not 'he', 'him' or 'his' but the generic 'man' or 'he' is often used to include women.

As Szirom claims that:

"The issue is that woman's inferior status and even invisibility, is embedded in and perpetuated by the language. Statements such as 'Man is man because he...' exclude women by utilisation of the pronoun commonly understood to be male, even though females are supposedly included in the 'generic' terminology" (Szirom, 1988:18).

Furthermore, linguistically speaking, men and women are expected to conduct themselves differently (Lakoff, 2003). Men should be direct whereas 'proper' women should be indirect. This linguistic expectation is the "basic familiar double-bind" for women. Being indirect, a woman is regarded as 'manipulative' or 'fuzzy-minded'. If conducting herself directly, she is called 'shrew' or 'bitch'. To Lakoff, it is a political act to deny women's expressive power.

Social labelling practices contribute to the construction of identities of gender and social relations in social practice (McConnell-Ginet, 2003). The author reveals some labels used to sort people into kinds, they characterize and categorise people: "he is a real dork" alleges male social incompetence; "she is a total airhead" attributes female brainlessness; "you are a fierce faggot, and I love you" derogatorily applied but proudly joined to a modifier 'fierce'; "what a slut (s/he is)!" attributes sexual promiscuity.

As stated above, the women's activities in the 1970s uncovered the gender nature of some of the linguistic rules and norms. Bodine (1975) as cited by Pauwels (2003) exposed in his paper on 'Androcentrism in prescriptive grammar' that the generic pronoun 'he' with its dominant status was a result of

male regulation. Baron (1986) in his analysis of grammar, cited by Pauwels (2003) showed similar androcentric practices regarding gender.

Language regulation and exposure of bias are also found in the dictionary. Pauwels notes that, those scholars such as Kramarae (1992), Pusch (1984) and Yaguello (1978) displayed sexism in lexicography. In the older versions of dictionaries of English, German and French, most source material for dictionary definition of words derived from “the works of the ‘best’ male authors” while there was seldom any material from female authors or women’s publications included.

To react to this bias, some women became ‘norm breakers’ by subverting established norms, rules, and introducing the use of ‘she’ as sex-indefinite pronoun. In German, the word ‘Herrlein’ meaning ‘little man’ for a single man was included in language use to match the existing word ‘Fraulein’ meaning ‘little woman’ for Miss (Pauwels, 2003).

The feminist campaign to eliminate sexist bias from language first faced with difficulty, its feminist language reform was ignored by the ‘mainstream’ literature on language planning until Cooper’s (1989) work on social reform and language planning presented its studies in the American non-sexist campaign.

One of the steps in the language planning process is the fact-finding or documenting sexist language practice and studies reveal that there are commonalities on the representation of men and women in different cultures. The most striking feature is the asymmetrical treatment of women and men and of the female and male concepts and principles (Pauwels, 2003). Male was regarded as the prototype for human representation, in many languages the generic expressions using masculine forms reduce the female status to the ‘subsumed’. Women are made invisible in language when their linguistic construction is derived from man through grammatical processes (Pauwels, 2003). This asymmetry also affects the structure of the lexicon “male as norms” in many languages, as there is an absence of words denoting women in different roles, professions and occupations.

When we consider the reverse in the lexical matter, we find that there is an absence of male-specific nouns describing men in their new roles or

professions that are female dominant. In fact, the new male form would be created quickly to fill the lexical gap and even become the dominant form from which a new female form is derived (Pauwels, 2003).

For example, as a result of men entering the profession of mid-wife, the word 'midwife' in German is 'hebamme' is making way for the new word 'entlandungspfleger', 'birthing assistant'. The new word for female midwife is 'entbindungspflegerin' was created from 'entlandungspfleger'.

Societal perception of male and female values and status are expressed through this semantic asymmetry portraying men and women in language. The central issue from this asymmetry is that woman is regarded as "sexual being dependent on men, whereas man is simply defined as a human being whose existence does not need reference to woman" (Pauwels, 2003).

Szirom suggests that to be able to understand the issues that affect women, language needs to be demasculinised. The use of words that derived from the masculine form should be avoided as they give an impression that women are a part of men and not treated as an individual. They are words that have feminine suffixes such as hostess, actress etc. Assumption should also be avoided as in the case of the word "housewife" for it excludes men; although women do most of housework one should not assume that men do not do it. Women and men are human beings, women have maternal instinct and men equally have paternal instinct. The word "homemaker" has been suggested to use (IRef. 8).

Though, linguistic stereotyping of both male and female was seen as problematic, but for women, it reinforced their subordinate status. Schulz cited by Pauwels (2003, 553) says:

"A perfect innocent term designating a girl or a woman may begin with neutral or positive connotations, but that gradually it acquires negative implications, at first only slightly disparaging, but after a period of time becoming abusive and ending as a sexual slur".

Other view held by Spender (1980) is that sexism in the English Language is “well substantiated and generally accepted” although there are people who will question it or even “trivialise its existence”. The reaction of the community toward feminist analyses was mainly negative, the wisdom of existing language was accepted and linguistic sexism was strongly denied. Non-experts rejected the claim on etymological assumptions while some linguistic experts argued that the feminist analyses of the language system was basically inaccurate as they understood language and gender incorrectly, in particular, grammatical gender and sex (Pauwels, 2003).

The feminist linguistic analysts, in turn proved that these claims were wrong by uncovering documented practices of grammatical gender reassignment and revealing empirical work on people’s understanding of gender and sex in language.

In proverbs we find that the generic ‘man’, ‘he’, ‘him’, ‘his’ are often used. For instance:

No man is content with his lot.

Though stone were changed to gold, the heart of man would not be satisfied. (Chinese proverb)

Let every man be content with his own level.

This can be found in proverbs based on equality:

We are all Adam’s children.

In church, in an inn, and in a coffin, all men are equal.

Homo is a common name to all men.

Various definitions have been put forward and one criterion has been used is that “the English Language is sexist in so far as it relegates women to a subordinate position”. Some of the early research on sexism and language was of this order as inventories of words were compiled, which indicated that not only were there more words for males but that there were more positive words. Stanley (1973) pointed out there was no linguistic reason for this to be the case. Stanley also found that many of the words for women had sexual overtones and

despite the fact that there were more words for men, of the smaller sample assigned to women there were 220 words for a sexually promiscuous female and only 20 for a sexually promiscuous male (Stanley, 1973). This would seem to indicate that the “language - as a system - embodies sexual inequality and that it is not women who enjoy the advantage” (Spender, 1980, 15).

In texts especially in children’s literature, the animals are often predicted as a ‘he’ or ‘him’. Another term, which is often used, is ‘dear sir’ in letter writing. Sexist words, which are popular: postman, milkman, spaceman, handyman, man to man, man power, craftsman, forefathers, brotherhood of man, man-made, mankind. The planet has always been referred to as ‘mother earth’ but not ‘father earth’ and that people use the term ‘father Time’ but not ‘mother time’ to talk about the greatest enemy of human. In English “ship” often takes the feminine (Kress & Hodge, 1979), one would say “she is sailing tomorrow” but not “he is sailing tomorrow”.

It is argued that if we use ‘mankind’ and ‘he’ as generic terms, we tend to perceive the world as consisting of males only. In response to this implication, critics argue that this is not what really happens, the terms ‘mankind’ and ‘he’ are not used to denote that this is an all-male world but they do connote the dominance of men over women. The reason for this connotation is that ‘mankind’ and ‘he’ are used in a social context in which women as a category are excluded and denied.

There were attempts to modify sexist words such as, chairman, air hostess or air steward, policeman, policewoman, these words are fading away and more sex-neutral terms are used, chairman has been replaced by chairperson, air hostess and air steward have been replaced by flight attendants, policeman has become police officer.

Despite the creation of sex-neutral terms, Spender (1980) argues that:

“Sex-neutrality is not a meaningful category in our society and, while the world is obsessively divided into masculine and feminine, people have a genuine need to know, whether the chairperson or the police officer is a man or a woman: only then are they able to decide whether the appropriate classification is positive or negative. It is not idle curiosity which prompts them, but necessity, in a

patriarchal order, for if we are to make sense of the world we inhabit the distinction between masculine and feminine is a crucial one” (Spender, 1980: 30).

Spender suggests that it is not realistic to wait for the patriarchal order of the society to change in order to have the language change but believes that changes in the language and society are “equally important and neither will lead to success on its own” (p. 31).

There were different opinions and views between the feminist language activists and planners on how to change sexist language practices. There were factors that determine their strategies on change such as, motivation, understanding and view of language, nature and type of language to be changed. The Feminist language activists’ main concern was to expose patriarchal bias in language and aimed for a more balanced representation of women and men in language, planners who shared the same views that language change falls behind social change would have a different approach (Pauwels, 2003).

The use of words has a powerful impact on people’s thinking and enforce inequality in society. One may assume that people tend to think of the male image in mind when they hear of words such as spokesman, chairman, and mankind. This does not recognise the female existence only but also is an incorrect use of vocabulary for it misrepresents the female role.

There are terms, which irrelevantly define women. Women are not children and they are still referred to as ‘girls’, ‘dear’, ‘honey’, and ‘sweetie’ in public situations.

Following are examples of words that exist in the language system and have lesser meaning in the feminine form than the masculine form, they maintain the subordinate and inferior role of women:

Bachelor and Spinster both mean man and woman who are still single, however, the image of a spinster is not as positive as that of a bachelor. Spinster seems to relate to an “old and difficult maid”, who can not find herself

a partner, its usage can show pity or perhaps ridicule, whereas a bachelor sounds more desirable, that he has a choice to marry or not.

Master and Mistress: master seems authoritative, whereas mistress can also mean an indecent woman who steals another woman's husband; as stated in Spender (1980) "mistress is no longer associated with the person who accepted responsibility and exercised control over the varied and essential tasks of a household" (P. 18).

Courtier and Courtesan: the meaning of courtier is more straightforward than that of courtesan. It refers to a person who frequents royal court whereas courtesan can either mean court mistress or a high-class prostitute.

Governor and Governess: as governor has three meanings: one who governs or is invested with supreme authority in state; chief administrator of an institution or a representative of Crown in each Australian state; governor indicates a powerful position for men, whereas governess simply means a woman teacher, especially in the private household and indicates a lower status for women.

Sir is used as a title and to show respect, whereas *madam* is also used to refer to a woman who runs a brothel.

Many metaphors involve sexist language and were used long before attention was paid to the sexist language matter (Renton, 1990). Examples include "the man in the street", "a man size job", "soul brother", "to separate the men from the boys", "as every school boy knows", "he is your man" and "a man of straw". Some references in metaphors regarding females are 'witch hunt' and "it is not over till the fat lady sings".

As written by Spender (1980, 19) on Lakoff's study of metaphors and labels:

"Lakoff has noted that whereas metaphors and labels are more likely to have a wide frame of reference when applied to men, the same metaphors and labels are likely to narrow and assume sexual connotations when applied to women".

An example was given by Lakoff is the term 'professional', the meaning of 'professional' changes when the sex changes. Upon hearing the sentence "he is a professional" one would assume that he is either a doctor or a lawyer, he is experienced in his occupation, whereas in the case of "she is a professional", one is more likely to assume that she is a prostitute.

Women are not food but there are words such as, crumpet or tart relating women to food and are abusive.

Tart meant a small pie or pastry and its first metaphorical application was a term of affection and warmth. Not surprisingly in a society where women are evaluated as sexual objects, the meaning shifted to that of a young woman who was sexually desirable, and then of course to a woman of careless morals. Finally and currently it refers to women of the street (Spender, 1980: 22).

Other words such as honey, sugar, dish are likely to be used when the speaker treats someone like a child or uses jokingly or may even not have respect for the other person. Women and men are not pets but there are several words that link men and women with animals, the terms used for women are more negative than the terms for men (Gilbert & Rowe, 1989).

Words such as vixen, bitch, shrew, cat, cow, dragon are used for women and words such as fox, stag, buck, and wolf are used for men.

In addition, there are other offensive words indicating contempt for women. These words have sexual overtones. They are slut, whore, slag or hussy. There are words, which trivialise women such as, fluff, filly, floosie, and chick.

Other terms, which show imbalances: old man and old woman, the use of 'old woman' is an insult when applied to men, whereas if the term 'old man' is used to address a woman, it does not imply insult.

There are other terms such as 'wife-swapping', 'charwoman', a 'bachelor's' or a 'master's' degree, 'masters' copy. When addressing to a typical person, the term "the man in the street" is used.

Certain compliments can be misunderstood and the meanings are distorted, these are "you think just like a man", "you are pretty smart for a woman", "you are beautiful or handsome when you are angry" etc.

Furthermore, following are proverbs contained strong negativity towards women quoted in Ferguson (1983, 262-266), several of these proverbs compared women with objects, animals and evils:

About women's danger:

- Women are the snares of Satan.
- Women are the devil's nets.
- There is no devil so bad as a she-devil.
- Weal and women can not pan, but woe and women can ("pan" means "come together". The implication is that women are more often the source of sorrow than of good fortune) (Ferguson, 1983:184:8)
- Women and dogs set men together by the ears.
- No war without a woman.
- Women's counsel is cold ('Cold' here means 'dangerous')
- Women are like wasps in their anger.

About women's value:

- Woeful is the household that wants a woman.
- Women are necessary evils.

About women's capriciousness:

- A woman's mind and a winter wind change oft.
- Women are as wavering as the wind.

About women's impulsiveness:

- A woman either loves or hates in extremes.

About women's wilfulness:

- Women must have their wills while they live, because they make none when they die.
- Swine, women and bees can not be turned.

About women's dissimulation:

- Women naturally deceive, weep and spin.
- Women may blush to hear what they were not ashamed to do.
- Maiden should be meek till they be married.
- Women are saints in church, angels in the street, and devils at home.

About women's tears:

- Women laugh when they can, and weep when they will.
- It is no more pity to see a woman weep, than to see a goose go barefoot.
- Trust not a woman when she weeps.

About women's lack of wisdom/intelligence:

- When an ass climbs a ladder, we may find wisdom in women.
- Women have long hair and short brains.
- A woman cuts her wisdom teeth when she is dead.
- A woman's advice is no great thing, but he who won't take it is a fool.

About women's reasoning:

- Because is a woman's reason.
- Take the first advice of a woman and not the second.
(This implicates that the first advice is based on intuition and more reliable than the second advice believed to be based on inferior reasoning)
- Find a woman without an excuse, and find a hare without a meuse (a gap in a hedge).

About women's tongue:

- A woman's sword is her tongue, and she does not let it rust.
- A woman's strength is in her tongue.
- A woman's tongue wags like a lamb's tail.
- A woman's tongue is the last thing about her that dies.
- Women are great talkers.
- Women will say anything.
- Women will have the last word.

- Many women, many words; many geese, many turds.
- Where there are women and geese, there wants no noise.
- Three women make a market. (a reference to the noise generated by three women).
- Silence is a woman's best garment.
- Maiden must be mild and meek, swift to hear and slow to speak.
- Maiden should be seen, and not heard.
- The gist of a lady's letter is in the postscript (The implication is that a woman's written communication is as rambling as her speech).
- A sieve will hold water better than a woman's mouth a secret.
- A woman conceals what she knows not (This implies that the only secrets a woman can keep are those of which she has no knowledge).

About women's needs:

- Women, priests, and poultry, have never enough.
- A ship and a woman are ever repairing.
- Two daughters and a backdoor are three arrant thieves (This implies the expense of bringing up daughters. The 'backdoor' is the means by which dishonest servants dispose of goods stolen from their masters).

About women's duties:

- A woman's place is in the home.
- Women and hens are lost by gadding.
- House goes mad when women gad.
- A woman's work is never done.

About handling women:

- Dally not with women or money.
- A woman and a glass are ever in danger.
- Who has a woman has an eel by the tail.
- From the evil woman guard yourself, and the good one never trust.
- A woman, a dog, and a walnut-tree, the more you beat them the better they be.

- All women may be won.
- Tell a woman she is fair, and she will soon turn fool.
- Women resist in order to be conquered.

Following are proverbs about Man and Woman. Several of these proverbs tend to show positivity towards men and trivialisation towards women:

- Man is the head, but woman turns it.
- Woman is the confusion of man.
- Men get wealth and women keep it.
- A clever man will build a city, a clever woman will lay it low (Chinese proverb).
- A woman is the weaker vessel.
- A man of straw is worth a woman of gold.
- A bad woman is worse than a bad man.
- The female of the species is more deadly than the male (Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936 The Female of the Species)).
- Deeds are male, and words are females.
- A man is as old as he feels, and a woman as old as she looks.
- When a man gets up to speak, people listen then look. When a woman gets up, people look; then, if they like what they see, they listen (Frederick, quoted by Wylie, 1994)

Following are quotations contained strong negativity towards men by women (Wylie, 1994):

Boys will be boys:

- Men choose the self and women choose others (Belenky, Clinchy et al, 1994)
- Two angels decide how humans should reproduce: “if the females have the babies, the men will feel really inferior- we’ll give them enormous egos to make up for it (Cathy & Mo quoted by Barreca).
- I like men to behave like men- strong and childish (Francoise Sagan).

Vulnerability:

-Boys don't cry

-Men cease weeping when it became unfashionable (Simone de Beauvoir)

-A man is two people, himself and his cock. A man always takes his friend to the party. Of the two, the friend is nice, being more able to show his feelings.

(Beryl Bainbridge)

Students of English as a foreign language have been taught that it is incorrect to use the adjective 'beautiful' to describe male beauty. They are taught to use the adjective 'handsome' to describe good-looking males. If they substitute the word 'handsome' for the word 'beautiful' when referring to a male, it is a linguistic sign of wrong understanding. It is even demeaning a male for their looks. Germain Greer (2003) in the *Vision of Youth* argues that "handsomeness is not an aesthetic quality so much as a moral quality; handsome is as handsome does". She continues that:

"The feminist campaign against the failure of the phallocracy to appreciate women for anything else has even rendered more difficult the acknowledgment that many males are beautiful, at least for a part of their lives, and that some are staggeringly even supernaturally beautiful" (p. 12).

Studies by Grazian (IRef. 4) claim that a switch in the use of adjectives or a change in verbs by people can either irritate or flatter others. Some examples are, 'slender' should be used instead of 'skinny', a person has plenty of 'courage' instead of having a lot of 'nerve'. The verb 'compliment' sounds better than 'flatter' and it is more appropriate to use 'gloss over' than 'sugar coat' a problem. Grazian suggests that although language needs to be used in a cautious manner to protect people from unpleasantness, it should not mislead or distort the truth. It is more appropriate to use the term 'pass away' instead of 'die' in our condolences to some one in mourning, the term 'body' is used instead of 'corpse' and 'casket' is used instead of 'coffin'.

However, if the murder of hundreds of people in Bosnia means 'ethnic cleansing', the truth is not only obscured but transcended into evilness.

Before 1985, the national anthem "Advance Australia Fair" has words as such 'Australian sons' and the federal government has legislated to change these words into 'Australians'. Although the government has made changes to the legislation and there has been a promotion of the equal opportunity policy, this does not eradicate discrimination in society (Calm, 1990).

Despite changes, sex role stereotype is still maintained in western societies. Women are expected to have traditional characteristics of passivity, dependence and nurturance, these characteristics are considered as "signs of a mentally healthy female and that assertiveness in female is a sign of neuroticism" (Szirom, 1988, 16).

Lakoff (1975) demonstrates that "women experience linguistic discrimination in two ways: in the way they are taught to use language and in the way general language use treats them." (P. 4). These two ways "relegate women to certain subservient functions: that of sex object, or servant; and therefore certain lexical items means one thing applied to men, another to women..." (p 4).

In the article "Right stuff wrong sex" (Graham, 1999), Graham told a story of thirteen women who were judged as Nasa's top astronauts. They were denied a chance to fly into space in 1961 despite the test results of a vigorous training determining that they were more suitable than the male astronauts to go into space. The women were capable but could not be part of the space race, as Graham has put it "they were the right stuff but the wrong sex".

Dr. Kilgore, one of the Nasa doctors testing the women's ability for the task has expressed his point of view on the women's motivation and on the test's result:

"These women showed they could take the stresses of space flight better than the men. The one thing that sticks in my mind from testing them, was just how highly motivated they were: they all wanted to be astronauts, they all believed they could do it. "None of them was cut from the mould of ordinary people: they were different. They were all hero material; the word 'achiever' comes to mind, but it's not generous enough. They were without exception, good enough for space flight. I remember the 13 who passed the tests were exceptionally good and were considered at least on a par with the seven men who were

selected for Mercury. In truth, they generally outdid the men. It is my judgement that they would have at least been the equals of the men and, in some circumstances, better. As doctors, we believed they were made of the right stuff. Nasa said they were not ready for women in space. It led to us all feeling very frustrated with a degree of consternation at the level of sexism” (Graham, 1999, 15).

The wall of bias remained solid. In another report in which a Nasa spokesman told the congressional hearing that “The thought of a US space woman makes me sick to my stomach. I’d prefer to send a monkey into space then a bunch of women.” (Graham, 1999, 11-17).

3.3.5 Language of racial discrimination

The term ‘race’ has initially been used to identify and label groups of people; people are sort into certain categories and assigned certain characteristics.

Individuals classified within certain racial groups are assumed to have separate distinguishing characteristics and exhibit those characteristics. It has gradually become a concept (far more than just a scientific construct), which was used to explain human culture and cultural inferiority and superiority, justify oppression, deny human rights and humanity (McConnochie et al, 1988).

Racism is the belief that racial groups display physical and behavioural differences. Followed this belief is the idea that these differences are inferior and undesirable (Camm, Camm & Gordon, 1990). In the racist mind, people are not assessed as individuals with their own potential as human beings; they are assessed as deficient human beings on account of their race and culture. Joe Wakim (Insight, SBS, Killing Multiculturalism 1/06/04) argues that one of the problems led to the ‘ism’, which is racism is lack of education about the diversity around the world. In terms of education, we have only learnt about the history and things happening before and in the last 200 years.

In society, we often hear of the terms ‘better-off’ and ‘less well-off’; these terms show an inequality between the social classes.

Members of the majority are represented as individuals, whereas members of the minority groups are described in terms of their community characteristics.

In Australia the Indigenous people are not represented fairly for years. They are still referred as 'primitive' people who "cling to ancient traditions and cultures that reinforce their inferior status" (IRef. 8). Following are a quote from a textbook that displays an extreme linguistic and social discrimination for the indigenous people:

"It is however, difficult to assimilate numbers of a backward race who tend to cling tenaciously to past habits...They were lazy individuals, apparently devoid of morals, and always prepared to lie, cheat or steal" (IRef. 8).

People who racially prejudice assume that they know what other individuals are like just because the other individuals belong to a different group that have a different language, skin colour or religion. According to Camm & Gordon (1990) a group is "treated as a minority because its culture is seen as different and inferior".

Stereotyping narrows one's mind as it "reduces whole group of people to one characteristics" (Grunsell, 1990) and racial attitude results in the use of languages such as "I don't like to play with Africans" or "he's Chinese, don't help him", "they are all lazy or stupid", "you can't trust them". Name calling as 'niggers', 'dagoes', "micks and spics" is not only abusive but "beyond lies a more complex world, that of the racial and national stereotype".

The newly arrived migrants are usually a target for discrimination. Local people treat them as inferiors because of their refugee status. In cases they are looked down as 'uncultured' or 'ignorant' for the fact that they are new to a country's customs and habits, this prejudgement of people is based on oversimplified and overgeneralised beliefs. Social stereotypes are used with prejudiced attitudes, they are simplified and biased opinions based on certain group's characteristics that are seen as undesirable, negative and bad. People's opinions of social stereotypes are rigid and resistant to change even though contrary evidence is presented (Camm & Gordon, 1990).

This also relates to ethnocentrism, a belief in the superiority of one's own culture. Minority groups in the pluralist society are relatively powerless,

stereotyped, discriminated against and exploited. Below are some examples of the racial issues and language use in terms of race in Australia:

In 1996 Pauline Hanson turned up saying, "We're in danger of being swamped by Asians." Pauline Hanson's One Nation party emerged and Hanson was at her height and there was an increase of vilification against Asians. Hanson's comments seemed to give people's permission to be rightfully racist whereas before it might have been considered as politically incorrect or not the right thing to do. Even though it's a subset of the community and most people do not fall into the categories that the broader community was talking about, there was a racial element involved. The behaviours of a number of individuals in the Vietnamese community are described as the whole community characteristics. Discriminatory language was used to brand the Vietnamese community as 'cheats', 'liars', 'dole bludgers', 'drug dealers'. It is incorrect to condemn the whole community based on the deeds of a number of individuals. In fact, this is a subset of deeply disturbed human beings, who in the public vision are labelled by their culture.

In reality, there are many families who after enduring a lot of sufferings under the communist regime left the country for freedom and the sake of their children's future. They have worked to provide their children with a good education and contribute their share to the commonwealth of Australia.

Other case was the gang rape committed in Bankstown by a group of Lebanese youth. There was also a racial element here, Andrew Jakubowicz (Insight, SBS, Killing Multiculturalism, 1/06/04) says that the vast majority of the Lebanese people do not commit rapes, do not go mad, do not turn into crazy jihadists and don't become extremely Orthodox Jews. Most people operate effectively between cultures.

Andrew Jakubowicz (Insight, SBS. Killing Multiculturalism, 1/06/04) took a different example about a sex scandal in rugby leagues and to some extent in Australia Football that rocked Australia in recent months:

“In the case of the Sydney Bulldogs team, all of whom were under suspicion for behaving in grossly sexist ways, most of whom were not Muslim - in fact, all except one were not Muslim - the only person who was deemed to be totally without any suspicion was the Muslim member. He was the one that the police recognised from the outset was unlikely to engage in rape, unlikely to get drunk, unlikely to behave in socially unacceptable ways. The people who were likely to behave in ways that Australian community would be offended by were Anglo Australian boys, young men coming out of the core culture. Now, I don't think we're talking about integration into that culture. I don't think anyone wants to see the next generation of Australians turn into those sorts of louts that behave in those sorts of ways” (TV program).

Greg Noble (Insight, SBS, Killing Multiculturalism, 1/06/04) says that most migrants and their children who come to Australia say that Australia is a very tolerant place. However, there is a paradox about this for when he did some research on experiences of Arab-speaking and Muslim-background people and their daily experiences of social incivility, these groups of people say that they constantly experience, on almost a daily basis high levels of harassment on the streets, name calling, hijab-tugging and so on and so forth. This intolerance does not come from the people of their own community who are supposed to be sexist, but from largely Anglo men.

April Pham (Vietnamese Women's Association) in response to Jenny Brockie's questions about, whether Muslims are having a more difficult time or if Australians are reacting differently to Muslim and other migrant groups in the community, says that it would be foolish to think that racism is not in existence in Australia. Pham stresses that, it is in fact high on the agenda and that there have been politicians, who manipulate race to win elections. In terms of the Muslim community's experience, in particular with the Muslim women, because of their visibility, as a sign of difference, they have been bearing the brunt of the racial vilification that's happening on streets on a daily basis. And as a community, Pham suggests that we need to reconsider how accepting we are to allow that to happen.

Brian Galligan (Killing Multiculturalism, Insight, SBS, 1/6/04) states that one need to keep a sense of history in perspective. In the postwar years Italian and Greek immigrants who arrived in Australia were vilified in all sorts of unreasonable ways. They were considered more dangerous to use knives and so on. Galligan says further that even though there was some Government commissioned research showing that they were not and that they were more law-abiding. But that's unfortunately, an aspect of every wave of generation of migrants - if they're different, they will get that. Galligan disagrees that one should not take the behaviour examples of the rugby league team to relate it back to culture because it is rugby league culture, it is not necessarily an Anglo or a non-Arab thing. But some argue that rugby league is at the heart of Australian culture. Jenny Brockie comments that football is at the heart of Australian culture.

Racial discrimination is stirred up also because of the current climate surrounding terrorism, fears of cultural and religious difference, fears of conflict and so on. Words such as 'rats' or 'mice' are used to dehumanise other people. Stereotyped remarks as such "all Jews are mean", "I don't like Britons because they are always complaining and lazy" or "people of your religion don't belong here" or "why don't they all go back where they came from?" "They are a weird mob" are discriminating. Some expressions even become part of everyday vocabulary; we often hear people mention in their conversations 'going Dutch', 'German measles' or "the luck of Irish" (IRef. 8).

Following are some of the quotes from Camm and Gordon (1990: 189):

"There are many humorous things in the world, among them the white man's notion that he is less savage than the other savages" (Mark Twain).

"We are the first race in the world, and the more of the world we inherit the better it is for the human race" (Cecil Rhodes).

“No democracy can survive long which does not accept as fundamental to its very existence the recognition of the rights of minorities” (Franklin D. Roosevelt).

3.4 Conclusion

Discriminatory language exists in many forms and serves some functions in any society and culture. The socio-cultural context can reveal a great deal about the attitudes of people towards others and they are strongly encoded in the language. The next two chapters will give further details about this relationship.

Chapter Four

Discriminatory Sexist language in the Vietnamese culture

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter examined the relationship between language and culture, particularly how this link is revealed in discriminatory/sexist language. In Vietnamese language, prejudice and discrimination are shown in proverbs, jokes, folksongs and fairy tales. While prejudice is expressed in personal views and attitudes for others, discrimination is the action resulted as a consequence of prejudice (Le, 1997). According to Le, there was a lack of interest and action in dealing with discriminatory/sexist language in Vietnamese. There was an assumption that discriminatory/sexist does not exist in Vietnamese. There are a number of factors for this, Vietnamese people do not take discriminatory/sexist language seriously, and communication is too serious to be taken seriously when there are other problems that Vietnam as a developing nation has to resolve. Vietnamese culture is based on Confucianism and individuals are positioned in a hierarchy of power, it is impossible to challenge language use without challenging the culture. Language, itself, has become a tool to reinforce the institutionalisation of prejudice views.

This chapter will focus on this link from the Vietnamese perspective. Does discriminatory/sexist language exist in Vietnamese? What role does the Vietnamese culture play in shaping discriminatory/sexist language in Vietnamese?

4.2 An overview of the Vietnamese history, culture and language

4.2.1 Ancient history

Vietnam has 4000 years of civilisation and undergone three cultural and political influences. Research reveals that before the Han dynasty conquered Vietnam in 111BC, there existed an indigenous culture strengthened by a spirit

religious system. The Hồng Việt culture was based on human love, made by peace loving people who had high morality and respected right (Nguyen, 1988).

Studies have shown different hypotheses constructed on the origin of the Vietnamese people. It was believed that the Vietnamese belonged to one hundred clans of Việt (Bách Việt) spreading from the delta of the Yang-tse kiang river to the south of China nowadays. Among the one hundred clans, there was the Lạc Việt clan. It was said that people from this clan practised fishing. They travelled the sea when the north wind blew south each year. During their journeys, they made a swan called 'Lạc' their totem. The name 'Lạc Việt' has derived from this choice. In 333BC, when the Chinese occupied the south of the Yang-tse river, the Lạc Việt clan migrated to the south where Melanesians were living and built up Vietnam (IRef.20).

According to another legend, there lived in the region of Lĩnh Nam a noble leader called Lộc Tục, also known as Kinh Dương Vương who was a man of great physical power. He met the Dragon King's daughter called Long Nữ at Lake Động Đình. They were married and had a son called Sùng Lãm who also had the same unequalled strength as his father. When Kinh Dương Vương died Sùng Lãm became lord of the region and was known as Lạc Long Quân. At that time when the earth was young, there were dense forests, wild animals roamed at will, land was uncultivated and disasters afflicted the people. Lạc Long Quân travelled far and wide to rid the land of devils and brought peace and order to chaotic regions. Lạc Long Quân taught people how to grow rice instead of using turtles and roots of plants as food, build houses on high stilts to protect them from wild animals and make tools, other life skills such as organising families and governing the community. The spirit of mutuality is enhanced in his saying to people when they part that if disasters strike, call him and he will come immediately.

At that time, a lord from the north called Đế Lai came to Lĩnh Nam with his daughter known by the name of Âu Cơ. Seeing Lĩnh Nam region peacefully covered with fertile land, green forests and landscape, lord Đế Lai decided to settle there. He set up camps and houses, forced local people to work for him in misery. The People called to Lạc Long Quân in the Eastern Sea to return and save them. Lạc Long Quân came to Đế Lai's and was captivated by Âu

Cơ's beauty, while his intelligence, talents and handsome appearance also captivated Âu Cơ. They lived together and had one hundred sons. Legend says that Âu Cơ did not give birth to a child but bore a small sac with one hundred eggs and after seven days from each egg hatched a boy (Vo & Lawson, 2001). Since Âu Cơ was the descendant of a fairy and suited to live in the mountains, whereas King Lạc Long was the descendant of a dragon and suited to live in the coastal plains. They parted and the children were divided equally between Lạc Long Quân and Âu Cơ. From the extended family to separation for the purpose of country development, fifty sons went with their father to a kingdom in the South Sea, fifty sons followed their mother into the mountains and settled in the region of Việt Trì, Bạch Hạc in north Viet Nam.

Through historical development, scholars claim that the division of the children is the symbol of shared responsibilities helping each other to fulfil their duties, which are to develop lands, forests, seas to make the nation prosper for the next generations. As expressed in the Vietnamese proverb "rừng vàng bạc biển" (forest of gold, sea of silver) meaning rich country.

It is also because in the early stage of historical development, in order to avoid the enemies' threats the nation had to be divided in order to survive. These enemies' threats could be foreign occupation as human beings prefer similarities and dislike differences, natural catastrophes such as earthquakes, or epidemics. Separation is to protect the Vietnamese stream. Separation also means to forever being with each other. In this sense, the sons were spread everywhere over the land and on separation mutual respect was shown as they promised to call on the others to come to their aid in time of crisis. The one hundred sons spread to places and became ancestors of Bách Việt people. The eldest son stayed in Phong Châu region and became king of the Văn Lang nation, he was known as king Hùng Vương. In Vietnamese history there were eighteen monarchs called Hùng Vương. The king's sons were called Quan Lang and daughters were given the title Mỹ Nương.

From this legend, Vietnamese people call themselves "con Rồng cháu Tiên" in the belief that they are descendants of a dragon and fairy.

The legend of Nữ Oa in the Vietnamese history shows women played the dominant role in the earliest Vietnamese society. Woman was portrayed as

strong and capable as man. The legend tells the story of Nữ Oa who challenged her suitor Tù Trương to compete with her in building a mountain when he proposed marriage to her. Nữ Oa built a higher mountain than Tù Trương did. According to archaeological findings, there was a widespread worship of mother images in the primitive Vietnamese society. It was a matriarchal society in which woman and man were treated equally.

Social structures in ancient society

Studies have shown that the early Vietnamese society was matrilineal and was not divided by class. The kinship relation bound people together under the extended family system, which has been maintained over centuries. Family members address to each other by their role, this custom applied even with people who did not belong to the same line of blood (IRef.17).

The spirit of unity and mutuality was enhanced through the system of communal autonomy in the ancient society. The efficient organisation of this system gave it a broad base of popular support. The village was an important unit of social organisation. In the village, a Council of Notables was elected by the villagers to handle the administration of the village. Land was divided equally among peasants as means of subsistence and there was no marked division of social classes, but only an equal share of responsibilities among people (Thai, 1997). While the spirit of unity is expressed in the proverb “phép vua thua lệ làng” (the customs of the village take precedence over the King’s laws). Mutuality is expressed in the proverb “lá lành đùm lá rách” (the good leaves cover up the bad) or in the folklore “bầu ơi thương lấy bí cùng” (people of the same country should love one another).

Nguyen (1988) stresses that Vietnamese culture was preserved and developed in ‘đình làng’ (the village temple). ‘Đình làng’ is the basic unit that helps Vietnamese people to maintain their identity. Without it, people can not lead a happy life.

But according to a contrasting source, ‘đình làng’ was a symbol of feudalism, it was a place where, out of date customs were maintained.

4.2.2 Cultural and political changes

Nguyen (1988) suggests that there was a cultural mixture in Vietnamese culture. Customs and norms became rationalised when The Hồng Việt culture mixed with the Chinese culture. During the early centuries AD, Indian culture was brought into Vietnam by means of Buddhism. In the 17th century, western culture was brought into Vietnam by European Catholic priests who catechised Christianity and in the form of science and technology.

Other researchers, such as QuayLe, Henderson, Buttinger, Fitzgerald, Rambo and Jamieson as quoted by Hassan (1985) say that the Han dynasty introduced the precepts of Confucianism and social order into Vietnam. The Han dynasty ruled Vietnam for 1000 years.

Vietnam regained its independence in AD 934 but still maintained the Confucian and Buddhist cultural influences together with the Han's socio-religious systems. Grant, as cited by Hassan et al., (1985, 69):

“This history of rejection of China while at the same time drawing from deepest resources of Chinese culture and paying appropriate homage to Peking, fostered the historical ideal that has sustained Vietnamese nationalism until today: that a united Vietnam has always existed, that its antecedents are as venerable as China's and that its internal harmony can only be managed by a single ruler”.

The second cultural political domination was from the French with its Christian influence introduced by missionaries in the sixteenth century. In the seventeenth century, North and South Vietnam began to adopt different political and cultural patterns and this intensified conflict between the two regions. The French bishop in Vietnam persuaded the southern emperor who was in difficulties to seek French assistance to re-establish himself, this paved the way for French colonisation as Saigon was taken over by French in 1861-1862. After French colonisation was achieved, not only was Christianity legalised and protected, a writing system based on French linguistic principles and new laws concerning sex roles were also introduced.

Throughout the twentieth century, there was resistance against French rule and this succeeded in 1954 when the French was defeated at Điện Biên Phủ. After

the Geneva Conference in 1954 that granted the communist authority to the North, thousands of Christians fled to the South. This was the first mass migration of refugees in Vietnam.

The influence of communism was the third cultural and political change followed by American intervention in the country until 1974. The internal war of different ideologies between the communist North and republic South both seeking hegemony lasted for 30 years. The American troops withdrew from Vietnam in 1974 and the communists took over South Vietnam in April, 1975 resulting in the second great mass migration of southerners fleeing the country. The third mass migration was after 1975 when thousands of refugees from both the North and South fled the country. Many had succeeded but thousands died in the sea. In those eventful years, the common image of Vietnam in the world is connected with war and refugees.

According to Hassan et al., (1985), ethnic Vietnamese make up about eighty percent of the population of Vietnam. Ethnic groups include the Montagnards or tribesmen of the Central Highlands, the Chinese and the Khmer of the south. Among ethnic groups, the Chinese was the largest and most important group due to their economic contribution to the country. Research reveals that in the early history of Vietnam, Chinese immigration was only small. The number of Chinese immigrants entering Vietnam had increased after the establishment of French control. There were two reasons for this immigration, the first reason was that the Manchu edict of 1712 banning Chinese emigration was relaxed after 1893. The second reason was that there was an extreme economic depression and political instability in China during that period of time causing large numbers of Chinese to migrate into South East Asia, particularly, into Vietnam where the majority of Chinese concentrated in Cho Lon and Saigon. Chinese immigrants were attracted to Saigon due to its rapid economic growth, in particular, the developments of rice trade and transportation system.

The period of upheaval in China coincided with the period of European colonial expansion in South- East Asia.

The rhythm of life in Vietnam in those early days was largely agricultural and the village remained a basic but important unit of social organisation. Until the

twentieth century, cities began to grow as a result of French colonial rule and migration of people from rural areas, particularly from the war zones.

4.2.3 Culture

According to historian Olow T. Janse (cited in IRef. 27), Vietnamese culture was a composite of cultural elements such as, the Chinese culture with the influence of Confucianism and Taoism, the Indian/ Chinese Buddhism, the western thought and Christianity. Historical accounts also reveal that the empire of Champa in 192 AD exerted an influence on the Vietnamese. In 1471, the Chams were assimilated by the Vietnamese. From these cultural influences, the Vietnamese eliminated the impropriety and created their own originality (IRef. 27).

4.2.3.1 The notion of equality in Vietnamese culture

In contrast to the popular belief that Vietnam was under the influence of Chinese culture and Confucianism, a number of scholars and researchers argue that Vietnam has its own unique culture. Vietnam has always strived to maintain its cultural characteristics despite of being placed under foreign rules at some period of time in history.

In the early period of Vietnamese history, the notion of equality and mutuality was exalted in the legend of the Dragon and Fairy.

The notion of equality existed in this legend shows that from the very early period of history the Vietnamese has adopted an ideology of equality between husband and wife. The ideology of male and female equality is manifested naturally and simply, the belief in a woman's ability and resourcefulness is not a question of concern. (Xuan-Loc, 2000). If Lạc Long Quân could lead fifty children to the plains and rule over the high seas, Âu Cơ equally has the force to manage other fifty children to deforest and level the mountain. The country development and expansion of territory are equally shared work between husband and wife.

From such beautiful beginning, the image of Vietnamese woman was portrayed as capable and responsible heroine. It is completely in contrast with Confucian teachings brought by the Chinese invaders stressing on the need of female obedience.

A contrasting interpretation of the notion of equality from this legend was that if sex roles were equally respected since the beginning, why the legend reveals there were only sons in the sac and no daughters?

Historians reveal that it was difficult for Dragon and Fairy to live together and they had to return to their roots. Xuan-Loc (2000) argues that if this was true, why could Dragon and Fairy share life together in the beginning and had one hundred children? Why Vietnam remained a unified country and maintained territory and identity after chaos?

4.2.3.2 The meaning of the number one hundred in the Vietnamese culture

The notion of equality is clearly evident by the symbol of “one hundred children” and that it is the symbol of equality. It is believed that the numeral ‘one hundred’ was chosen because it is a symbol of fullness, fulfilment and perfection. It is equivalent to the maximal number of “one hundred percent”.

In occasions like Tết (Vietnamese New Year), the younger generation always wishes their grandparents, parents, and older relatives to live long lives to one hundred years. No one would wish for his or her relatives to live to only sixty, seventy years of age etc. In Vietnamese weddings, guests often wish the bride and groom to have “one hundred years of happiness” this is due to the lifespan of human beings that lasts about one hundred years. No one would wish for the couple to have fifty or sixty years of happiness...

In reality the contradiction between interpretations simply reflects the Vietnamese family system at certain period of times in Vietnamese history. And yet, if the symbol of one hundred children in the sac was a symbol of equality, why was it often mentioned that there were only sons?

4.2.3.3 Cultural values

Vietnamese people follow their intuition and instinct in life events whether peaceful or chaotic, they endure and overcome obstacles and trials. Their perception of life and nature as a whole has permeated in life activities and literature. This perception can not be expressed in abstract rational systems (Vo, 1994). Vietnamese people like to use proverbs and folklores in

conversations, when stories are told they would quote some proverbs or folklores to strengthen their points of view and distinguish right from wrong.

In Vietnamese culture, the interest of an individual is conceptualised inside the framework of the family. The Vietnamese is not an individualist in accordance with cultural norms and whatever they do, they are required to have consideration for the welfare of the immediate as well as extended families (IRef. 26).

One of the cultural values is politeness. It is an essential mechanism to preserve harmony and good will among people. The Vietnamese sense of community is strong and their solving of problems is often based on feeling and emotion. They would help strangers in need without expectation of reward. This is called real politeness: “thương người như thể thương thân” (love your neighbour as yourself).

The question of prestige is an underlying trait of Vietnamese culture. Appearances and power are more important than what is left unsaid. It concerns not only the individual but also their entire family. Honour followed by respect is based on two sets of criteria, the first criteria is for the male, he needs to have the ability to cater economically and socially for his family, the second criteria is for the female, she needs to be a good wife.

Honour is even related to the matter of moderation in food and drink. This is not simply for the reason of health but also a moral imperative to reserve one's dignity as in “ăn một miếng tiếng để đời”, “miếng ăn là miếng nhục” (take a mouthful, make yourself unfavourably known for life). Moderation is also required in speech. A person who talks excessively is regarded as “thùng rỗng kêu to” (an empty vessel makes the loudest noise).

Vietnamese are taught at a young age to use words cautiously as expressed in the proverb influenced by Chinese elements “một lời nói ra, bảy ngựa đuổi không kịp” (once uttered, words can not be taken back even with the race of seven horses), “ăn có nhai, nói có nghĩ” (think today, speak tomorrow). Hasty words create discord and animosity (IRef. 26).

A person who talks a lot is believed to be a shallow person (con người rỗng tuếch). It is commonly believed that people who make great achievement (người làm việc lớn) or a person of vast intellect don't use words carelessly. They speak when they need to:

Chim khôn hót tiếng rảnh rang

Người khôn nói tiếng dịu dàng dễ nghe.

(A clever bird twitters in a leisurely manner, a wise person's manner of speech is pleasant and tactful)

A person who talks excessively is ridiculed for talking nonsense (nói sáo) or telling fibs (nói dóc) or bragging without shame (nói khoác mà không biết hổ thẹn). People's dislike for this kind of attitude is found in the saying "biết thì thưa thớt, không biết thì dựa cột mà nghe" (speak when you are spoken to; answer only when you really know about something). Huynh (IRef. 26) adds that "because of this cultural predisposition, the Vietnamese often appear to be reserved, non-responsive or non- assertive"...

In the Vietnamese view, a refined and well-mannered person is the person who possesses moderation, modesty, morals and self-control (IRef. 26). Without modesty and overwhelmed by greediness, a person would experience "trèo cao té đầu" (the higher you climb, the heavier you fall), "thuyền to thì sóng lớn" (the larger the boat, the greater the wave).

The concept of having a good name is strongly enforced as... "To the Vietnamese, a good name is better than any material possession in this world" (IRef. 26). A poor man with moral probity is still well respected while a rich man with moral downfall is treated with contempt. It is believed that a good reputation does not last a lifetime only, but resounds after one's death. It is the only moral value that a person can leave behind and is well remembered for after their death. This is expressed in the saying "cọp chết để da, người ta chết để tiếng" (a tiger sheds behind its skin upon death, a man leaves his reputation) and "chết vinh hơn sống nhục" (better a glorious death than a shameful life).

The concept of prestige is related to loyalty. Primary students in Vietnam have learnt a famous saying from the Trần Bình Trọng's story when he was captured by the Chinese: "thà làm quỷ nước Nam còn hơn làm vương đất Bắc" (I would rather die for Vietnam than surrender to China).

Diligence is one of the cultural characteristics of the Vietnamese as in "tay làm hàm nhai" (we must work to live), "nhất nghệ tinh, nhất thân vinh" (learn the skill, gain considerable profit).

Like any other culture, family is where the heart is. In the Vietnamese family, the obligation of filial piety and family honour is strongly enforced. If a person misconducts, not only do they bring dishonour to themselves but to their own family and relatives. Their family and even the clan name will be tarnished as in “một con sâu làm rầu nồi canh” (one scabby sheep is enough to spoil the whole flock). The blames are not only on themselves but are also on their parents, siblings, relatives and ancestors. If a person well behaves and makes achievement, they bring honour to their family and clan. This is found in the saying “Tiếng lành đồn xa, tiếng dữ cũng đồn xa” (rumour rides fast). At an early age, a Vietnamese child is taught to live up to his/her family’s honour (sống xứng với danh dự của gia đình) and forget him/herself for the sake of others (vì người quên mình). Whatever happens, the person has to be a person of honour (một người trọng danh dự) and needs to come out of a difficult situation with credit (ra khỏi tình huống một cách danh dự).

An ideal man is required to live up to the four Confucian qualities of nhân (humanness), nghĩa (righteousness), lễ (civility), trí (wisdom) and tín (faithfulness). An ideal woman needs to possess the four Confucian virtues of công (proper work), dung (decent appearance), ngôn (proper speech) and hạnh (good conduct). A woman will be satirised at if she is to romanticise life (lãng mạn) even if this only means to rise above social expectations by means of writings and poetry, let alone daring to live as a unique individual. The question of chastity is important for girls in the Vietnamese culture. It is a popular belief that “cái nết đánh chết cái đẹp” (beauty is skin-deep). If a girl has many male friends socially, she won’t be tolerated by the community, she will be judged as “hư thân mất nết” (a depraved person).

In terms of love between man and woman, no matter how passionate it can be, it has to be reserved and gentle and not to be shown publicly by hugs and kisses.

It is noteworthy that “môn đăng hộ đối” (similarity of social background) in marriage was another aspect of Vietnamese culture. Families of the same social rank prefer to marry their son/daughter to one another.

Children who follow their parents' wish in this case are praised as 'con ngoan' (good children), whereas, those who follow their heart are regarded as 'con bất hiếu' (disrespectful) towards their parents. Vietnamese parents when encountered such difference in opinion would consider themselves as 'bất hạnh' (unfortunate) to have disobedient children.

In marital and social relationships, a person is advised to refrain from making remarks to maintain peace and harmony as expressed in "một câu nhin chín câu lành" (better a lean peace than a fat victory), or "chín bỏ làm mười" (sink differences, have tolerance) or in the folklore "lời nói không mất tiền mua, lựa lời mà nói cho vừa lòng nhau" (words have no price, be cautious with words) or "dĩ hòa vi quý" (a bad compromise is better than a law suit) and "có qua có lại, mới toại lòng nhau" (scratch my back, I'll scratch yours). Self-control is also expressed in the proverbs "cười người hôm trước hôm sau người cười" (he laughs best who laughs last) or "không thể uốn câu cho vừa miệng cá" (it is impossible to please everyone).

Another aspect of the Vietnamese culture is the Vietnamese people's love for knowledge and learning. Knowledge and learning are regarded as a person's valuable assets. Educated people are looked upon with respect and admiration in the Vietnamese society. In traditional society, "vinh quy bái tổ" (return home to pay thanks to ancestors after making academic achievement) is a scholar's greatest honour.

Learning is so important that if a wealthy person is not properly educated, s/he is still looked down by others (IRef. 26). The importance of learning and having knowledge can be seen in the expression implicating that "Người thì ra người, của thì ra của" (s/he has wealth, but not knowledge). In other words, s/he is rich but ignorant. This is, in fact, a discriminatory attitude of the Vietnamese. People who, for some reasons, unable to obtain education tend to feel inferior to learned people. Though learning is more important than material possession, in reality, the love of learning also stems from an individual want for high social positions, respect, money and power.

Respect is one of the essential values of the Vietnamese people. It requires reciprocity that flows both ways. To earn respect one has to lead a life filled with responsibilities for oneself and others. A person is required to have respect not only for their parents, older sibling and relatives within the family. Socially, a person needs to show respect for the aged, teachers and people in higher social status.

Though, respect is believed to be a reciprocal process, in reality, respect appears to be a one-way behaviour between parents and children, older siblings and relatives. At home, parents expect children to show them respect and rarely show respect to their children even if their children have reached adulthood. It appears that respect and filial piety mean complete obedience. With older siblings and relatives, it appears that younger siblings and relatives are those who have to show them respect. It is rare that older siblings think of respect for the younger ones. Likewise, older relatives expect reverence from the young ones. It is assumed that because they are older they must be wiser. The question of learning is relevant here, since wisdom has to do with a person's willingness to learn a lesson. No matter how senior a person is, if a lesson is not learnt properly, wisdom is not attained.

The notion of maintaining and preserving gratitude and loyalty is important in the Vietnamese way of living since everything must have a beginning.

This gratitude is expressed in the following folklores:

Cây có gốc mới đâm cành nảy ngọn
Nước có nguồn mới biển cả sông sâu.

(With strong roots, a tree will grow buds and branches. From an inexhaustible spring, the water will form Great Ocean and Deep River).

Ăn trái nhớ kẻ trồng cây
(Eat the fruit, meet the tree-grower).

Uống nước nhớ người đào giếng
(Drink the water, think of the well digger).

Uống nước nhớ nguồn
(Drink the water, think of its source)

Ăn cây nào rào cây nấy
(Don't bite the hand that feeds you)

As mentioned above, honour is an underlying trait in the Vietnamese society, even among the poor. Children are taught at an early age by their parents, relatives and teachers that one might be poor but one's life should be stainless and pure (thanh bạch):

Nghèo cho sạch, rách cho thơm
(In need but clean, in tatters but fragrant)

Giấy rách phải giữ lấy lề
(Even crumbled paper sticks to its stub)

In another folklore, the question of prestige is enhanced through the symbol of the white lotus or 'hoa sen':

Trong đầm gì đẹp bằng sen
Lá xanh bông trắng lại chen nhị vàng
Nhị vàng bông trắng lá xanh
Gần bùn mà chẳng hôi tanh mùi bùn

In this lake, what is as pretty as a lotus?
It has green leaves, white flower and yellow centre
Yellow centre, white flower, green leaves
It is near the mud and yet it does not smell of mud.

The image of lotus is carefully selected to cast an air of purity upon the setting. Lotus has a significant role in the Vietnamese culture and Buddhism. It is a

noble representation of Buddhism and purity. Lotus grows from marsh, the more putrid the marsh is, the purer the lotus becomes. As marsh is regarded as life delusion, from marsh, lotus, which symbolises purity and wisdom, grows. Buddhist teaching has come into existence as a salvation for helpless lives, it is taught in the saying “Phật pháp bất ly thế gian pháp” (Buddhism can not be detached from life).

Aside from proverb and folklore, Vietnamese people have an interest in poetry. It can be said that reciting poetry is popular among almost all inhabitants in the country. Poetry can be seen as a wonderful release for emotions. People use poetic words to define their lives. Thai (1997) says that the Vietnamese have the ability to compose verse on the spur of the moment “xuất khẩu thành chương”. Poetry is recited to praise a beauty, convey feelings of love, describe nature, some try to confine the experiences of birth, life and death within only a few lines of inspirational verse. Some poems are created in the midst of joy, or conversely while the person experiences painful or inner turmoil. Poetry can also be used to mock, satirise or even curse political struggles, a government and a regime. It was said that there were people reciting poetry while facing the guillotine, Vo (1994) reveals that almost all papers published in Vietnam have a poetry corner and this represents a tendency towards concreteness because poetic language is descriptive, full of images and contains suggestive melodies.

4.2.4 Religious beliefs

There are a number of religions in Vietnam. They are Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Christianity and two indigenous sects, Cao Dai and Hoa Hao.

4.2.4.1 Buddhism

Hassan et al., (1985) says Mahayana Buddhism strongly influenced by Confucianism is practised in Vietnam and two-thirds of the Southerners are Buddhists. According to Huynh (IRef. 18), Buddhism was introduced into Vietnam under the Chinese occupation in the second century B.C., by the Chinese immigrants and Indians preachers who entered Vietnam by sea. Under the Ly dynasty (1010-1214), Buddhism became the country religion and several Buddhist monks became the king's counsellors. During the Tran's dynasty

(1225-1440), Buddhism no longer was the national religion, however, it remained the dominant religion in Vietnam.

Buddhism is known as the wisdom of compassion and awakening. The three basic principles of Buddhism are morality (giới), mental culture and stillness (định) and wisdom (huệ).

History tells us that about three thousand years ago, Buddha Shakyamuni, the founder of Buddhism, was born in northern India. He lived seventy-nine years and dedicated forty- nine years of his life to dharma teaching. Buddha is a Sanskrit word. In essence, Buddha means wisdom and in application, Buddha means enlightenment. It is said that there are three levels of wisdom. The first wisdom is the knowledge of general aspects of all existence – it is also known as the wisdom of Theravada sages. The second wisdom is the comprehension of all infinite phenomena of the cosmos and discriminative aspects of all existence. The last wisdom is known as the wisdom of Buddhas. This wisdom contains the perfect perception and understanding of the truth of life and the cosmos without having the slightest doubt (Chin Kung, 2003).

It is said that Buddha Shakyamuni possessed all three levels of wisdom.

Enlightenment is the application of wisdom and there are three classifications of enlightenment. The first enlightenment is self-enlightenment. This is a state, in which, the person possesses right thoughts, views, speech and behaviour. The second enlightenment is the enlightenment of self and others. This is a state, in which the enlightened person helps others to reach enlightenment. The third enlightenment is called the perfect and complete enlightenment. This is the highest state of enlightenment, in which, the person reaches perfection in self-enlightenment and in assisting others to reach enlightenment.

According to the Buddhist dharma, every person possesses the perfect wisdom and virtue. These qualities are, in fact, innate to all beings. It is known in the popular Buddhist saying "tất cả chúng sanh đều là Phật" (all sentient beings can attain Buddhahood). But human beings allow discriminative and wandering thoughts as well as worldly attachment to take control over them (Chon Quang, 2004). These are the root cause of sufferings and disasters. As a result, the person loses his/her virtuous nature and continues to being born in the endless cycle of birth and death.

Buddhist doctrines also reflect the four fundamental truths, birth, old age, sickness and death. Life is full of sorrow because people indulge in worldly desires and let greed take control over their mind, anger takes control when greed can not be satisfied leading to obscurity of mind. In order to abstain from worldly desire, one needs to discipline moral conducts and this is done by meditative contemplation. With persistent self-cultivation, one will perfect oneself eventually and achieve salvation finally.

The law of Karma governs the whole process, Karma can be explained in the simplest language as good deed brings reward whereas bad deed brings disaster. A person reaps what they sow; a person who sows to please their sinful nature will reap destruction from this nature within the cycle of birth and death. Though one continues to do well and will be born into happy planes of existence, this is not the ultimate aim of Buddhism. According to Buddhism, that nothing remains permanent in this world, everything that exists is only a combination of elements and energies and will disintegrate and disappear one day. True Buddhists need to practise Dharma in a way that their mind is purified and wisdom is developed. By means of self-cultivation, one will come to understand why suffering exists and then see an end to all physical and mental suffering. Reincarnation marks each stage of self-cultivation before individual reaches Nirvana. This cycle of individual endeavour is expressed via the prayer wheel (Chin Kung, 2003).

Under the Buddhist influence, Vietnamese people are prone to pray to Heaven/God and Buddha, “cầu Trời khấn Phật” for almost everything in daily life. In the Vietnamese view, God has created all things in the cosmos. God protects people as in “Trời che đất chở, Trời dưỡng đất nuôi, “Trời sinh voi sinh cỏ” (God creates elephants, he also creates enough grass to provide for elephants). Whatever the person does, they need to consider the consequences because they are afraid of being punished by God (bị Trời hại) or “Trời gieo tai giáng họa” (God plagues human beings/the world with calamity) or “Trời tru đất diệt” (punished by both heaven and earth) or “Trời không dung đất không tha” (unforgivable by heaven and earth). Their actions can damage the lineage’s and community’s reputation (Thai, 1997). There are proverbs such as “đời cha ăn mặn, đời con khát nước” can be understood either as miserly father, spend thrift son or if a father does not cultivate virtue and moral probity

in his life, misfortunes strike his children's lives, “ác giả ác báo”, reap as one has sown. Proverbs and folklore are regarded as moral codes of Vietnamese customs, they are not advice merely, but forewarn people that every action has its reaction, the misfortunes we experience in this world are due to the good and bad actions, words or deeds we have committed.

Nguyen (1994, p.53) says:

“...whether a Vietnamese is Buddhist, Taoist, Confucian or Christian, the teaching of Buddha, Confucius and Lao tsu constitutes a source of wisdom which dictates behaviour in general and communicative style in particular”.

According to the venerable master Chin Kung, Buddhism is not a religion but an education of the wisdom and understanding of life and the cosmos. While the teaching of the Buddha covers infinite lifetime, the teaching of Confucius concerns one lifetime.

4.2.4.2 Confucianism

Confucianism has always had a profound influence in Vietnam and among the Vietnamese community abroad. Confucianism also emphasises on self-cultivation but has little concern on the spiritual plane of birth and death. While the principle of Buddhism is to break through delusions and eliminate sufferings to attain happiness, enlightenment and serenity, Confucianism focuses on the improvement of the moral self. Human beings are believed to be born with good nature as in “nhân chi sơ tánh bản thiện”, but have gradually become corrupted in their social contact (IRef. 18).

To return to the original self-nature, it is believed that the person needs to cultivate him/herself by practising virtues. The five cardinal virtues for a Confucian man are humanness, righteousness, civility, wisdom and faithfulness. A man is also required to observe the three bonds between the king and subject, father and son, and husband and wife. On the family level, filial piety has to be observed and one of filial piety's aspects is the ancestor worship (IRef. 18). For a Confucian woman, the three codes of obedience and the four virtues are to be observed. The three codes of obedience are obedience

to her father until she is married, obedience to her husband upon marriage and obedience to her eldest son should she become widowed. The four virtues that a model woman must possess are skillful work, agreeable appearance, proper speech and exemplary conduct (Tran et. al., 1967).

The profound influence of Confucianism on the social structure of the country can be seen via the establishment of a “Văn Miếu” (Temple of Literature) since 1070 under the reign of King Lý Thánh Tông to worship Confucius. In 1076, a National Academy ‘Hàn Lâm Viện’ was constructed, it was known as the highest educational institution in ancient Vietnam, royal princes came here to attend lectures on literary works. Later on, it was said that scholars from ordinary families were also admitted to study at the Academy (Bui, 2000).

The Vietnamese continued to practise the Confucian traditions long after Vietnam regained independence (Tran et. al., 1967).

4.2.4.3 Taoism

According to Huynh (IRef. 18), Taoism is another religious philosophy that has left a profound impression on the Vietnamese way of life. Taoism was introduced into Vietnam during the period of Chinese occupation.

Lao Tse (600 – 500 B.C.) was the founder of Taoism. ‘Tao’ refers to ‘Path’, is a power which, surrounds, covers and flows through living and non-living things. This power regulates natural processes and nourishes balance in the universe. It is believed the first cause of everything. In Taoism, ‘yin’ (dark side) and ‘yang’ (light side) embody the harmony of opposites which, can be seen in the universe. Yin and yang symbolize opposites such as good and evil, love and hate, light and dark, male and female (IRef. 20).

Taoism focuses on nature. To become one with ‘Tao’, the person needs to develop virtue, learn compassion, moderation and humility. Lao Tsu’s principle is to promote harmony among people and harmony between people and nature. It is for the pursuit of harmony that people should try to avoid all forms of confrontation (IRef 18). For this reason, an action needs to be planned in advance and achieved with minimal action. People are believed to be good by nature and should be kind to one another because this is a reciprocal process. Taoists present that reason and knowledge can not lead

people to the right path. They emphasise on the virtues of simplicity, self-contentment and patience.

Taoists search for answers to life problems by means of meditation and observation. In Taoist belief, people can only return to their true serenity if they know how to control themselves in conflicts and control their desires. When self-control is achieved, the person can attain harmony and perfection within him/herself and with other people and the cosmos.

Following is a quotation from the “Tao- Tee King” (IRef. 20):

“He who lives in Tao, and Tao in him, is a good man: He keeps in good terms with men, takes things easy, loves the world as he does his own person; he is simple like an infant, cautious, modest, yielding. He is humble, and this he remains entire. He is subtle, penetrating and profound; avoids excess, extravagance and indulgence. He makes the self of the people his self....he acts to the good or to the bad with goodness and to the faithful or the faithless with faith. He returns love for great hatred”....

When Vietnam regained independence, Taoism has become one of the religious beliefs of the Vietnamese people. Its profound influence can be seen in the essay writings of the “three religions” in the recruitment of officials’ examination under King Lý Nhân Tôn’s dynasty (1072- 1127). It provides a source of inspiration for writers and poets but by the end of the Tran dynasty, it has turned into a belief in many gods. This powerful aspect of mysticism has moved the feelings of the common people of the country for Taoism (IRef. 18).

It is said that Lao- Tzu left no church, priests, rituals or services (IRef.20). Huynh (Iref.18) reveals that the Taoists later transformed the philosophy into a religion.

Research shows that Taoism was demeaned by the practice of polytheism, witchcraft, spiritism, demonology, spirit spells.

There are priests heading the rituals in the temple and using an incense burner to perform magic rite and exorcism. Some priests claim that they can cure illness and foresee future (IRef. 18). There is a medium who allows a spirit to

occupy his/her body in trance. It is believed that this spirit can communicate with the ancestors and make divination (IRef.20).

4.2.4.4 Christianity

Christianity was introduced into Vietnam in the sixteenth century by missionaries from France, Spain and Portugal (Hassan et al., 1985). Before 1975, there were 2,000,000 Catholics in South Vietnam. Huynh (IRef. 18) presents that the jesuits arrived in Vietnam in the first half of the seventeenth century. They founded the Cochinchina's mission in Hoi An. In 1650, Alexandre de Rhodes, the head of the Jesuit mission published a catechism in Latin and Vietnamese. In 1651, the first dictionary in Vietnamese, Portuguese and Latin was published and the influence of Christianity became far-reaching. Christianity is the way to live in Christ and Christ in us. It is believed that all people are selfish. We are prone to love ourselves and this love of oneself is the opposite of the real love. If we believed in Jesus and let him into our lives, then we would feed the hungry, help the sick or people in need...and this is not us but is Christ living in us (Gal. 2: 20 as cited in IRef. 20). Christians believe that the person does not become a robot when Christ is in him/her. Although Christ is in every person, s/he is still responsible for his/her actions. The person has to try to live his/her life in accordance with faith in Jesus. It is believed that the greatest sin a Christian commits is to do things without faith in Christ, trusts in money and power instead of trust in Christ (Rom. 14: 23, cited from IRef.20).

Huynh (IRef. 18) says that preaching of Christianity was banned in Vietnam in the middle of the seventeenth century. However missionaries continued with their work in Vietnam. Historical accounts reveal that Christians were persecuted under the Nguyen dynasty and the French used it as a pretext to gain victory over Vietnam in the second half of the nineteenth century (IRef. 18). Under Ngo Dinh Diem's regime, Catholics held many important positions in the government, army and police force. According to Huynh (IRef. 18), there are about three million Christians in Vietnam today.

4.2.4.5 Caodaism

After Christianity and Buddhism, Caodaism claims to be the third largest religion in Vietnam. 'Cao' means 'high' and 'Dai' means 'palace'. 'Caodai' is a

symbolic name for God. 'Caodai' is the supreme palace where God reigns. Research reveals that within Caodaism, there are elements of other religions such as Buddhism, Confucianism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Taoism and Geniism –an indigeneous religion in Vietnam (IRef. 23).

The largest Caodai center is located in Tay Ninh. It is about 100 kilometers northwest of Saigon. There are about seven to eight million Caodaists in Vietnam and about thirty thousand Caodaists living in Asia, Australia, Canada, Europe and America.

Caodaists believe that God is formless, nameless, unchangeable and powerful. God has created the universe and the spirit of God is in all life. Besides the physical bodies of humans and animals, there is an invisible spirit or conscience. It is known as part of God's spirit. Emotions and personality are shown in the soul or perispirit.

Caodaists also believe in reincarnation and the law of Karma. A person can break free from the reincarnation cycle by self-cultivation and by returning to God in oneself. A person's life is largely affected by his/her positive/negative karma. If negative karma is accumulated, the person will be reincarnated to live on a dark, cold and miserable planet. If the person has led a spiritual life or a life full of responsibilities, s/he may either reincarnate to live a happier life on earth or enter Nivarna (IRef. 23).

Like most religions, Caodai followers are required to have a high sense of responsibility to themselves, their families, society and humankind. They should not be attached to material possession, wealth and luxury. Not only do Caodaists worship God, they also venerate superior spirits and ancestors.

There are two different sects within Caodaism. Members who follow exoterism conduct normal family life. Not only must they practise kind-heartedness towards all living things, they should in all circumstances conform to the three Confucian sets of social interaction called 'tam cương' and the five cardinal virtues of 'ngũ thường'. The three duties are between ruler and subject (quân thần), father and child (phụ tử) and husband and wife (phu phụ). Whereas, 'ngũ thường' are the five virtues of humanness, righteousness, civility, wisdom and faithfulness.

The Chieu Minh Vo Vi is the second sect. Followers of this sect practise esotism. Meditation is required to eliminate the inferior self and develop divine elements. They worship the Divine Eye or God, Shakyamuni (Buddhism), Lao Tsu (Taoism), Jesus Christ (Christianity), Confucius (Confucianism), Khuong Thai Cong (Geniism). They also worship the deities of the earth, Li Tai Pe (Taoism), QuanYin Boddhisattva, Quan Thanh (Confucianism). Killing, dishonesty, adultery, words of deceit and self-indulgence in drinking should be avoided (IRef. 23).

4.2.4.6 Hoa Hao Buddhism

Hoa Hao Buddhism is another religious belief in Vietnam. There are about two millions Hoa Hao Buddhists. The religion was introduced in 1939 by Lord Huỳnh Phú Sổ in Hoa Hao village of the Châu Đốc province. Lord Huynh's teaching is written in the 'Oracles' consisting between 600 to 900 verses and evolves around Buddhism and Confucianism. Religious practitioners are encouraged to observe the four Great Debts of Gratitude (Tứ Ân), debt to parents and ancestors, to mankind and compatriots, to their homeland and to the Buddha and his disciples. Having repaid the four debts, the person is said to be able to liberate oneself fully (IRef. 25).

4.3 The Vietnamese Family

Originally, the Vietnamese family is not the traditional nuclear household of a man, his wife and their children but the Vietnamese adopt an extended family system.

The extended family is the dominant family structure that includes three or even four generations. It consists of grandparents, father and mother, children and grandchildren living under the same roof. It may include uncles, aunts and cousins. The males in the family in order of descent accept responsibility for that family and younger members need to seek and respect advice from the elders.

4.3.1 The male status in the family

The concept of patriarchy, a form of household in which the eldest male dominates all other family members, is widely applied in the Vietnamese families. In the traditional families, grandparents had great influence and the

oldest son was the most important child because he would carry out the duty of honouring the ancestors. Members of the family live under the oldest male's authority. Tran (IRef. 27) believes that a man does things only out of family consideration, he does not plan things for himself as an individual. Because of this traditionally patriarchal aspect, great social respect is given to men, especially to older men:

“The head of every family is manager of all things in his family. He supplies food and clothes for all members, plan the economic system, runs farming, business, handicraft and public relations with the world outside of his family. Only the head of family is the speaker of everything concerning his family. He gives instructions to his wife about farm projects, business plans and policy concerning public relations” (IRef. 27).

4.3.2 The female status in the family

Tran (IRef. 27) also stresses that Vietnamese women hold a vital role in the family and are well respected because she is the minister of the interior affairs:

“She is also very indispensable for the head of family, regarding financial problem. She controls all expenses and suggests whether things are necessary to buy or not. She discusses details of all matters with her husband. She is in charge of teaching all her daughters about the things that girls should do, know, take care and stay away from, according to a typical Confucian educated family. She also runs internal family affairs such as cooking, sewing, baby care, farmwork and managing workers in the family”.

Furthermore, it is said that Vietnamese women are noteworthy for their gentleness and deferring to men... “ So, they control their men, the home, and the economic power of their community. But even while retaining traditional ways she may be very independent. Vietnam has a history of almost constant war. The women have become accustomed to being alone, perhaps taking over the family business and household, while the men are in the military” (IRef. 27).

Townsend as cited in Hassan (1985) says that it was the female in the family who showed moral and physical endurance as well as initiative.

Decisions are made within the family, there is no interference from government authorities. Nowadays members of the lineage may extend over different dwellings and may be independent economically, their function in many ways is still that of an extended family.

4.3.3 Family rank

In the family relationship, there are different forms of address. There are terms showing blood relationships and stressing the paternal/maternal sides of the family such as, grandfather, grandmother, father, mother, brother, sister, aunt, uncle. In addition, there are social forms of address such as, ‘ông’, mr; ‘bà’, mrs; ‘cô’, miss; ‘cậu’, master; ‘anh’, young man who is older than oneself; ‘chị’, young woman who is older than oneself; ‘em’, younger man/woman. Clark (1988) observes the Vietnamese relationship functioned in two dimensions: vertical or hierarchical and horizontal. The former implicates age and rank whereas the latter implicates social distance. Though, age and rank reflect Confucian values, Clark (1988) believes that Vietnamese in general have a degree of respect for higher rank and this is recognised in speech between ‘unequal’ persons.

Tran (1988) reveals that the Vietnamese system is a reminder of family rank that guarantees awareness and acceptance of family duties and responsibilities among its members. Since seniority is related to high status, children are taught to respect unconditionally the elders because they have lived their lives, have extensive experience and deserve reverence. There is a popular saying in Vietnamese “kính lão đắc thọ” (respect your elders and live to old age).

Tran (1988) also notes that within the Vietnamese relationship, institutions such as nursing homes or retirement villages do not exist because children and grandchildren would care for their parents or grandparents in the old age. It is a shock to many Vietnamese migrants who are new to western way of living to see that the aged here seek companionship in domestic pets such as dog and cat.

4.3.4 Kinship

Kinship ties are important in the Vietnamese society as members of the same household live together, work together and gather together for Tet-the lunar New Year celebration, rituals marking the anniversary of an ancestor's death, marriages and funerals. Within the extended family, the activities of a multitude of relatives strongly exert an influence on a family member's life. In times of personal crisis, family members look to older family members for counselling. When a family member makes either personal or household decisions, they first need to consider the interests of the whole family.

In the kinship system, the bond between members of the patrilineal descent group is strong. Male and female members of the group have an equal share in inheritance. The feelings of solidarity, loyalty and continuity of kin relationship are also expressed through family land, tombs located either in or near the village.

4.3.5 Cult of ancestors

One of the most important aspects of the Vietnamese family is the cult of the ancestors. Veneration means having respect for one's ancestors because it is believed that if there is no past, there won't be a present and if there is no present, there won't be a future. The family spirit is embodied in the family cult that is also regarded as a means through which an individual assures their immortality. Phung as quoted by Hassan et al (1985) says that the traditional Vietnamese society rests on the family structure bound by the relationship between the living and the deceased. The Vietnamese family consists not only of the living members, but also of the ancestors' spirits and of those not yet born.

It is believed that after death, not only do the spirits of ancestors continue to be with the living, they also influence the world of the living. The souls of the departed become restless and exert an unfavourable influence on the living if they were not worshipped in a respected manner.

On the anniversary of an ancestor's death, family members of the extended family gather together before the altar at the ancestral home or the home of the eldest son of direct descent traditionally assuming major responsibility. He oversees preparations for the ceremonies. A representative of each family in the lineage is expected to be present. Families who live some distance away still

maintain close ties with the ancestral home and return there for major ceremonies. Members of the kin group pray and make sacrificial offerings to the ancestors and God of the house. Through sacrificial offerings, family members inform their ancestors of all family events such as a wedding, a funeral, an anniversary, births, an engagement, success in an examination, a promotion, etc. Family members also pray to their ancestors for salvation should misfortunes fall upon the household. It is believed that if all members venerate their ancestors with strict adherence to prescribed ritual, the souls of the ancestors could receive proper spiritual nourishment.

Not only does the custom of ancestor worship strengthen a strong sense of filial responsibility to the aged and deceased, it also expresses the offspring's gratitude for the older generations. Although they no longer exist, their effort of maintaining and protecting their families and country continue to be recognised and would not be forgotten. Ceremonies are not only religious but also convey a social meaning of the wealth and social status of the family.

The spirit of the family is so strong that it might have been mistaken for nepotism but it is not a form of nepotism, in fact it only illustrates a "strong, very tight relationship that even binds both the living and the dead." (Nguyen, 1996).

According to research by Hassan (1987), Christian families also retain the precepts of respect for the elderly relatives, the deceased and the father as head of the family.

And even though the role of woman is subordinate in the family, it is also powerful and influential. The woman manages the family finance "but publicly she deferred to the wishes of her husband, as other women in the family deferred to the males of the family" (Hassan et al, 1987: 269). In the countryside, women worked in the paddy fields or in the markets holding a share of the transactions.

4.3.6 Children and filial piety

4.3.6.1 Spirit of the family

The traditional Vietnamese families were large. Vietnamese parents believe that "đông con hơn nhiều của" (it is far better to have more children than material possession). This enhances the parents' love for their children. The romantic Vietnamese even say that "nhà đông con như vườn nhiều chim" (a household with children is as lively as a garden with birds).

The number of children could vary from five to thirteen approximately and boy children were often more preferred than girl children. Hassan's studies (1985) state that "families were large because children had economic and social value". From a very early age, children are taught to appreciate the family sacrifices and make personal sacrifices. If there is chance for children to go to school, they are taught to study hard, find a good job and help the family.

In many Vietnamese traditional families, although there is a bond between father and children, the father is often aloof to his children. The image of 'ng nghiêm phụ', strict father is strongly maintained in many families in the belief that if the father does not appear strict, he won't earn respect from his children. Children's independence is often discouraged and parents expect obedience (IRef. 27). When the children grow up, they are expected to care for their elders. Should the parents become ill or die, the oldest child is responsible for their brothers/sisters' maintenance.

According to Tran (IRef. 27), in the olden days, the head of the family would be responsible for educating the children in moral probity, religion and behaviour. Family education was based on Confucianism. Boys were expected to learn how to become the head of the family in the future. Rich families would invite a scholar for tuition, the scholar might live in with the family until he stopped teaching.

Sibling relationship is important in Vietnamese family. This spirit of unity is illustrated in the popular proverbs such as "chị ngã em nâng" (when a sister falls, other sisters have to help her up), "anh em như tay chân" (brothers/sisters are like parts of the body); "một con ngựa đau cả tàu không ăn cỏ" (When a horse is ill, the whole stable refuses to eat the grass).

4.3.6.2 The role of daughters

Vietnamese girls from an early age are inculcated to feel dignity and pride in their roles as wives and mothers. The role of elder sister in the Vietnamese family is important in such manner that she often takes on major responsibility, she is like a 'little mother' to her siblings, she looks after them when their parents are at work and does most house chores. In the old days, Vietnamese girls' education

was limited. With changes over time, girls have obtained more education but social expectations for them remain unchanged.

4.3.6.3 The role of sons

According to Van Ngan (IRef. 27), the role of the oldest son is a sacred concept in the Vietnamese family life. The oldest son is treated with reverence as in “quyền huynh thế phụ.” (the eldest son has the same authority as the father). In South Vietnam, he is addressed as ‘anh hai’ and in North Vietnam, he is addressed as ‘anh cả’- both mean oldest brother. The oldest son accords more privileges from the family and has great responsibility on him. When the parents pass away, not only is he responsible for maintaining the family’s name, altar and tombs, but his siblings’ upbringing. The oldest son inherits most of the estate because of this responsibility. If the parents are poor, the son’s burden is greater for he has to decide on which brothers/sisters to continue with schooling or help providing for the family (Van Ngan, IRef. 27). Research has shown that the younger son is also responsible for the wellbeing of the family. During the period of war, traditional values have eroded for the oldest son has to go to the battlefield. In many families, younger sons or daughters would take on the responsibility and take care of the family.

4.3.6.4 The significance of filial piety in the Vietnamese family

There is a clearly marked reciprocal relationship, the parents owe their children sustenance, education and marital arrangements, the children in turn are obliged to show obedience, respect and support in life and death. Tran (1988) reveals that in Vietnamese family, parents believe in creating merit for their children (tạo đức cho con) by living an honest life, as this would have an impact on their children’s lives years later.

Filial piety or Đạo Hiếu is of great importance in the Vietnamese family.

Children are required to obey their parents absolutely, this is due to the belief that parents have years of experience, represent wisdom (Nguyen, 1996). In a popular folklore known by everyone since early childhood, the father’s kindness is comparable to the Thai mountain and the kindness of the mother is comparable to a perennial spring. The pious child is to venerate his/her parent with great fervour.

This moral principle was rooted in Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism. Children have to use proper forms of address, are expected to be polite and show respect to their parents and older people through good manners:

“....đạo hiếu or filial piety, which outlines the requirements of the moral code of children towards their parents. Pious children are required to obey absolutely their parents, to look after them when they are getting old and by every means, to protect the pride and honour of the family” (Nguyen, 1994, 73- 80).

After the parents pass away, it is obligatory for the children to honour their parents' memory through maintenance of the ancestors' cult.

A child who objects to the parents' decisions would be considered as an ungrateful child and this was unacceptable, as parents would lose face to society. As expressed in the popular folksong:

Cá không ăn muối cá ươn

Con cãi cha mẹ trăm đường con hư

(Unmarinated fish will go stale; disobedient child will go spoilt)

Piety means obeying and pleasing the parents. Nguyen (1996) claims that in the olden days the Vietnamese people have a strong belief that an ungrateful child can not be a grateful servant for the society and that being ungrateful will lead to failure in life and bring harm to the child's family.

A good child is the one who brings honours to his/her family. If a person behaves in an improper manner, not only the person suffers a bad reputation for himself/herself but bring shame to his/her family. Huynh (IRef. 26) points out the term of criticism “đồ mất dạy” (how illbred they are) that Vietnamese fear most. This is not only an attack on personal ego but family prestige. A person with inappropriate manner brings shame to his/her family because when people criticise his/her behaviours, they actually criticise the person's parents' behaviours. This is an attack on the person's filial piety because the person lets others put him/her down and hence his/her parents.

Đạo Hiếu is enhanced in “Truyện Kiều” or the Tale of Kieu written by Nguyễn Du, it is the country's famous literary work, Nguyễn Du told the story of Kiều, a

beautiful young woman engaged to be married when misfortune befalls her family. Kiều's family was in financial ruin, to help her father and fulfill her filial piety Kiều worked as a prostitute to save her family from misfortune:

“Hỏi nàng nàng đã bán mình chuộc cha” (Kiều)

(She had sold herself to ransom her father)

Filial duty also means that parental approval of the children's marriage is a necessity.

Parental approval seems irrelevant because it is the parents who manage all aspects of the arrangement. Decision-making maintains parental power and authority. Marriage was a question of prestige and regarded as a social contract, parents arranged marriages through intermediaries, and girls did not have much chance of preferences. Parents chose suitable partners for them and were usually able to enforce the choice. Very few marriages were made without parents' interference (Mitchell, as cited by Hassan et. al, 1985), young people who ran away together would be disowned by their parents. After a woman is married, she becomes the property of her husband and his family's (Hoàng Đạo cited in Nhất Linh's *Lạnh Lùng*).

Công việc vợ chồng phải chờ lệnh mẹ cha

(Children have to wait for the parents' decision in marriage matter).

Cha mẹ đặt đâu con ngồi đó

(Children must do as the parents say. Parents did not ask what children thought but told children what they would be expected to do).

As mentioned earlier, honour is an underlying trait of Vietnamese culture. It concerns not only the individual but, their entire family. A family's prestige was considered more important than personal love. The parents made considerations affecting more on the welfare of the lineage than their children's preferences. There was usually a set of criteria for the selection of spouses, the girl's parents seek for their daughter a husband who either comes from a family with honourable lineage or has a prestigious position in terms of education and

occupation. This is to maintain family good name. The male's parents on the other side are assessing not only the girl's beauty as there is a popular saying "trai tài gái sắc"- a man is respected for his talents whereas a girl is admired for her beauty, but also her virtue, family inheritance and prestige.

Another reason for parents to intervene in their children's marriage is that parents believe that their children are still young, inexperienced. In an important matter such as marriage, parents should intervene to help them with a better choice. Before marriage the woman was expected to be a virgin, after marriage she was expected to be faithful to her husband. Otherwise she would have brought shame upon the family.

In a paper on Vietnamese Families in Cultural Transition presented at the conference of Vietnamese Women's federation, Thom Bui (2002), a Vietnamese parent living in Sydney says:

"Vietnamese parents always think that if "children are better than parents which mean that family has a good fortune" (con hơn cha nhà có phúc), and if "children do not obey parents, they will always be harmed", it could be compare to "if the fish does not absorb salt, that fish will be tainted".

The idea of sacrifice is also of importance in the Vietnamese family. Parents sacrifice for their children, brothers or sisters should act as role models sacrificing for one another when necessary. The Vietnamese believe that this makes family relationship stronger and closer.

In the twentieth century, there were changes in the traditional family system, the moral authority of the father was challenged by western values which encouraged individuality as well as self-expression; urbanization encouraged young people to move into the cities (Hassan, 1985). Under the French influence, young married couples in cities preferred the nuclear family style, law on property was changed requiring both signatures of husband and wife before it could be sold. Education was more open, there were more women in public positions. However, these changes were said to affect only the women and middle class in the cities; in the rural areas, Confucian influence was still

strongly felt in families, women who lived in the rural areas were still bound by the Confucian values.

In the North, after 1954 when Communist was given authority, the communes replaced the traditional family organisation and the good of the state took priority over the individual and family obligations. White as cited by Hassan (1985) says that in circumstances, families were allowed to function as individual units.

4.3. 6.5 Vietnamese families after 1975

After 1975, a large number of Vietnamese migrated to western countries. This vast transition has changed old family patterns and the shaping of the individual. Vietnamese family has gone through cultural transition and faced with challenges and problems as western system of education and family are more open than the Vietnamese system of education. Information is freely distributed and children have choices. The parents from older generation find it hard to understand and accept the new cultural values. Parents feel that their roles are undermined, their guidance in the traditional way is not recognised:

“Even though we have problems which make us sad, the biggest one, which we parents think about all the time, is that our Vietnamese customs of right and wrong and traditional behaviour are more and more influenced by the life here too quickly and here it is too free for our people.” (Hassan et al., 1985, p.277 quoted from VICRA’s paper).

The idea of independence and individualism is mistaken for uncaring and selfishness, this makes it hard for children to voice themselves. The younger generation feels torn between the two cultures, at schools Australian teachers complained that Vietnamese students are too timid and passive; at home if the children show that they have learn new behaviour patterns, then conflicts with parental values and expectations arise. If parents are not listening, exercise too much control and put a lot of pressure on the children, they may rebel against parents. Cross cultural conflicts make Vietnamese parents hurt if they do not know how to adjust to change (Bui, 2002).

Apart from inter-generational problems between grandparents, parents and children are marital problems. Vietnamese male feels insecure, his role is undermined due to the fact that he no longer has the absolute authority as the head of the family, in many families the father is not the sole support and he is often under-employed or unemployed. This creates emotional strain for the family if the father can not adjust to new ways of living and continue with old expectations. Followed is a quote from Hassan's study (1985. p. 278) on resettlement conflicts of Vietnamese families in Australia and that they did not have the same conflicts when they were in Vietnam:

"The wife goes to work and the husband is afraid she will meet another man and leave him. If she doesn't go to work she can learn English quicker than he can and he has an awful or dirty job, and is too tired to learn English. The husband may send money to his family in Vietnam, and the wife can't, or he sends more to his family, and so the wife sends some of her money. Before, all money was his."

A study on migrants by Krupinski quoted by Storer (1985) reveals generational conflicts with parents. This is also a problem occurred largely in the Vietnamese community. According to the study, the aged parents who have migrated to Australia under the framework of the family reunion, still believe that they would play a leading role in the household, they don't accept the loss of influence and power due to cultural change. They feel that they are in the position of unpaid home keepers in a different environment. On the other hand, the children also feel that the gap between them and their parents is unbridgeable after ten or 15 years of separation. In the children's memory, their parents were physically and mentally active. In reality, when they reunite with their parents, they see that their parents have often become feeble and demanding. The children want to remain independent, whereas, the elderly parents feel old and unwanted.

It can be said that this is a cultural difference. In Australian society, individuals need to learn to make decisions for themselves as individuals rather than as a

community. But in Vietnamese society, because of the links in the extended family networks, the traditional Vietnamese family tends to train its members to make decision as a community rather than as individuals.

The sense of community is strong with Vietnamese, according to a paper on parish resettlement in Melbourne, Wilkinson as cited by Hassan (1985) documents that apart from financial difficulty, families were reluctant to move into private accommodation within the parish. This reluctance led to the belief that migrants did not want to be dispersed throughout the Australian community. But in a new world friends and peers are their security and strongest influences.

As a result of migration, the Vietnamese family needs to learn to overcome sufferings such as loss of personal possessions, separation from loved ones, loneliness due to lack of extended family support, cultural shock and as time goes on looks forward to new and positive direction. With the break-up of the extended family system, some changes in family life, which represent a break in tradition take place. Grown-up children in Australia are responsible for their own decisions. Relations between husband and wife tend to be more equal than in the past. The Vietnamese families have undergone changes, the young people who were born and grown up in Australia tend to be more understanding and open-minded than the old generation that tied down with the past. In other words, the young people belong to a society, which is in rapid transition and values are no longer fixed. As a consequence, certain traditional values would appear to be confused or unacceptable to the young people.

No matter what changes have the Vietnamese families had, in families that treat their children with love and respect still exert considerable influence on their children.

4.4 Confucian ideology

According to historical accounts, Confucianism spread into Vietnam under the Chinese rule and was adapted as part of the Chinese cultural package. Confucianism was defined as an ethical system, a philosophical exploration of the cosmos, an education program and a complex of family and community rituals and became an active part in the lives of the Vietnamese over the

centuries. The kings and scholars of Vietnam imported Confucian texts as part of their appreciation of Chinese elite culture (Berthrong, 2000). All aspects of human life were a concern for the Confucians; they created worldviews, ways of life, cultural orientations and sensibilities that are still alive today. Confucianism played an important role in the Vietnamese culture. Vietnamese people and scholars in particular were inspired by the philosophical intricacies of Confucian thoughts and social morality; the range of Confucian thoughts was expanded and made use widely in society.

Confucius was born in 551BC into a family of lower aristocracy of the middle Zhou state of Lu. This was a time of violence and turmoil, struggles for power between individual states led to the wage of warfare, which was to say in the name of ancestral spirits (Williams, 1998). Having grown up in the Lu State seeing overwhelming conflicts, Confucius became a minor court official whose self-defined mission in life was to teach moderation and harmony. At the age of sixty, Confucius travelled to neighbouring cities carrying his ideas and searching for ways of control and returning his land to the moral age of the Zhou King some 500 years earlier.

Confucius's philosophy encompasses the conception of the universe, the conception of man and principles of government. The conception of the universe is abstract and can be understood as in the beginning, there is no God but inert ether laden with molecules called 'khí'. Within 'khí', there is the force of gravitation called 'ly', which transforms the inert ether (khí). As a result, matter is created. Living creatures in turn produce the periodic changeable world, at each transformation, molecules move freely into space. With the influence of 'ly', a sort of cosmic fermentation occurs, which, in turn produces the matter for the next period. In this process, lighter elements of molecules ascend to form the firmament whereas, the heavier elements descend to form the planets (Tran et. al., 1967).

Confucianism has not been defined as religion with initiation or membership, the only religious dimension of the Confucian Way (Dao) lies in family ritual and sacrifice.

Confucian teachings rested on the social framework, it was to cultivate and educate the person from cradle to grave. Like other creatures, human beings are subject to natural fluctuation of heaven and earth, but human beings are responsible for what we make of our persons and our communities. In brief, we take responsibility for the whole created order. The mind-heart is the center of the person and it needs to be broadened and deepened to be able to connect with heaven, family and the world (Berthrong, 2000). The connection task of the mind-heart is arduous. For this reason, Confucians taught that the true Way of humanity and humanness was long as well as the burden of true human culture was heavy. Confucians believed that once, one task was completed, another loomed up. This occurred because the world never stood still. Reality was constantly changing, growing, dying and transforming itself. This had vast influence on human beings living within its ceaselessly creative process, self-cultivation is achieved when balance to all these concerns are found, leading to harmony and peace (Berthrong, 2000).

4.4.1 Self-cultivation

Social orders are required to maintain the balance in society and reasons should be used to educate the people. As humans we all possess goodness within ourselves and this is the true human nature. Human beings need to preserve this natural goodness by correcting themselves, maintaining their intellect and virtues. If human beings neglect their intellect and indulge in worldly affairs, wants and greed would take control over them and obscure their lucidity. As a result society would end up in a chaotic state when its members have lost their insight and chase after the mirage of a material well being.

To maintain and develop this goodness, one need to use their logical mind to deeply observe and understand the existence of all things instead of acting on instinct. The four rules must be observed to achieve perfection (Tran et. al., 1967):

- To be interested in everything that exists
- To be able to penetrate the inner essence of things

- Clear thinking is required
- The purity of heart

The cultivation of the self (tu than) was an important step to deepen the humane person and imbue the mind-heart with basic human virtues. But the moral sensitivity of the person was not enough. The person must have a broader concern for the family, society, the state, the international community, the nature and the cosmos itself. The person's mind-heart needs to be developed and expanded into a life of humane concern and consciousness of the welfare of humanity and the entire world (Berthrong, 2000).

Before being able to help others, the first step is for the person to correct one's own conduct. If one can not rectify oneself, one can not rectify others. Wisdom may bring a person into power, but goodness is needed to secure that power. A person gains virtue by attacking the evil within oneself rather than the evil in others. Virtue can be gained by doing the work first before considering the reward.

Confucian tradition taught that human will and intentions are the most complex part of the practice of the virtue. Confusion of clever talk is believed to be one of the threats to virtue as well as small impatiences can ruin great projects. Courage must not take priority over justice, if this occurs an aristocrat would become an insurgent and a common person would become a thief. Wisdom is to recognise when one knows something and when one does not: "Whoever learns but does not think is lost; but whoever thinks but does not learn is in danger" (IRef.14).

If a person only tries to look the part of a virtuous person, then they are merely thieves of virtue. In this case, the name of virtue is stolen without the true substance (Berthrong, 2000). It is also emphasized that not only does a person do the good but will the good, there is little merit in doing what pleases oneself. And all of this has to be done for the right reasons.

Confucius taught that 'Dao' or the Way was something as close as the palm of the hand. He spoke of 'Dao' as - "in the morning hear the way, in the evening die content (IRef. 14). He believed that "it is the person that is able to broaden the Way (Dao), not the Way that broadens the person" (Ames and Rosemont, 1998 as quoted by Berthrong, 2000,p. 25). Confucius describes the stages towards 'Dao' itself:

“From fifteen, my mind-heart was set upon learning;
From thirty I took my stance;
From forty I was no longer doubtful;
From fifty I realised the propensities of 'tian' (heaven);
From sixty my ear was attuned;
From seventy I could give my mind-heart free rein without overstepping the boundaries”. (Ames and Rosemont, 1998 quoted by Berthrong (2000).

Confucius believes that virtue never dwells alone but will bring good neighbours. A gentleman should help the needy and not make the rich richer still. Creating a peaceful world is the Confucian goal. Ethical norms are needed to create such a world, ethics define how we live our lives together. Human beings need to expend great effort to cultivate ethical norms to be able to take part in civilised human society. Self-cultivation is described as a broadening and deepening of the person. To achieve full humanity, a person has an obligation to cultivate the self in order to be of service to oneself and others. To achieve this broadening, a human being only becomes fully human in relationship to other persons. From the intimate confines within our family, we then move toward complex social relationships, which have ethical character to them and which, help to define who we are. Ethical bonds hold people together in community from the confines of the family to the vast world beyond.

The deepening process is attained when a person reflects on the ethical dimensions of broadening. This is done through social interactions:

“A person thus realizes that there is a vertical dimension as well as a horizontal

dimension to life. The horizontal connects us to other people and society, whereas the vertical connects us to the 'Dao' itself. The whole process can be described as a journey that moves through six major stages. The first stage is the cultivation of the self, the second focuses on the life of the family. The third moves from the family out to the larger community. The fourth stage expands this social concern toward the country. The fifth stage moves from the country to the whole world. The sixth stage moves beyond even the world of human beings, the countries beyond China, onwards to a concern for the cosmos". (Berthrong, 2000, p.31- 32).

4.4.2 Family and filial piety

The second stage is about the family life. Filial piety is a complex virtue.

Like other traditions, the family is the primal aspect of human social being in the Confucian tradition. We begin and are formed as human beings in our family. It is in our family that we learn about tradition and practise our language. We are taught to have reverence for the family values of piety and respect for the elders. This needs to be understood thoroughly as we cultivate the way of virtue. Confucius wrote that "Filiality is the foundation of virtue and the root of civilisation" and "Thus, begun in the service of our parents, continued in service to the prince, filiality is completed in the building up of our character" (Makra, 1961 quoted in Berthrong, 2000, 58).

Although deference and respect were at the heart of filial piety, it does not mean blind obedience to family elders or people in authority. Blind reverence for family values of filial piety and respect for the elders could cause problems. To obey blindly is to misunderstand the reciprocal nature of filial piety, which is built on the foundation of affection and love:

"...The Confucians argue that, in an ideal sense, we love and revere our parents because they first loved us, as did their parents, and so forth. One of the things that a truly filial child owes his or her parents is honesty, without which no social or family relationship can grow" (Berthrong, 2000: 57).

An adult who is chronologically old does not merit reverence from the young. To earn respect, s/he must be a worthy adult as there is nothing good about an aged person without virtues:

“In a passage that some Confucians found hard to understand, the Master mocks an old man. What could be more out of kilter with the stereotype of rigid Confucian morality that demanded respect for family and the elders?” (Berthrong, 2000, p.27).

Likewise, there would be something wrong with a young person who lacks respect for a worthy elder. Filial piety should rest in the duties of reciprocity. Reciprocity needs to flow both ways in the concern for each person. It could be defined by empathy. It is difficult for human beings to be empathetic, as this requires a quality of ethical calmness from the person. The person needs to take the time to see why the other persons act or feel as they do. Without empathy one could do very little for other people.

However, filiality does not mean to only obey one's parents. Confucius taught that when there is a question of moral wrong, there should also be correction. But before the children can correct the parent, they themselves must know the difference between right and wrong, civility and impropriety. They first must have cultivated their own character and it must be done to the point of certainty about the moral principles involved. Children can reason with parents but civility is required of them when reasoning with parents or social superiors.

Ritual is important within the family, it helps people to deal with each other in a humane way. If righteousness is violated, then the filial child or the spouse has to present reasons in complaints with kin or the other spouse. Though, remonstrance should be used as a last resort, “it was a resort that was owed even to a mother or to a father in love and concern for their ultimate well-beings” (Berthrong, 2000).

“In serving his father and mother, a man may gently remonstrate with them. But if he sees that he has failed to change their opinion, he should resume an attitude

of deference and not thwart them; may feel discouraged, but not resentful” (IRef. 14).

In terms of love, it is interesting to note that Confucians believed that it was unrealistic to demand that we love everyone equally. This does not mean that Confucians are not interested in love. They simply believed that people could never learn to love everyone the same.

Under Confucianism, the patriarchal family was the basic social institution. People were framed by the three bonds called ‘Tam Cương’ in terms of duties and obligations of a ruler to his subject (quân thần), a family to a father, a child to a parent (phụ tử), a wife to a husband (phu phụ) and a younger brother to an older brother. The Confucianists believed that the interests of an individual member were not as important as the welfare and continuity of the family group that included not only living members but of ancestors and of those yet to be born.

Confucianism dictates moral perfection for man and woman through moral codes of “man of virtue” (người quân tử) for man and the three obedience and four virtues (tam tòng tứ đức) for woman. Confucians taught that male and female created and categorized from this cosmic force and that they come under the general laws that govern their behaviour. Confucius says that as man is the representative of Heaven and he is supreme over all things. Woman has to submit to his superior power, obeys to man’s instructions and helps to carry out his principles. A woman can not decide for herself and is subject to the three obediences. When a woman is young, she has to obey her father and elder brother. Upon marriage, she has to obey her husband and when she becomes a widow, she then has to obey her son (Williams, 1998).

4.4.3 From family to the larger community

The third stage is to move from family to the larger community, it is to move from the filial conduct to proper conduct in the society and country (the fourth stage).

On the plane of social interaction, Confucius taught that a person should treat people in lower status, as they would like to be treated by those above them. Likewise, a person should treat those above them just like they want their subordinate to treat them.

The five classic virtues (ngũ thường), which link a person to a family or social relation are:

(1) Humanness (nhân)- there would be no virtue without humanness, this is the virtue of humanness between parents and children.

(2) Righteousness (nghĩa) – the virtue of respect and deference between rulers and ministers.

(3) Civility (lễ) – the ability to behave in a proper fashion. This virtue is about mutual respect and balance between husband and wife, embedded in the saying “Tương kính như tân”- respect one another as newly-weds.

(4) Wisdom (trí) – is also understood as knowledge or discernment. This is the virtue of affection between older and younger siblings.

(5) Faithfulness (tín), which is shown in thought, words and deed. This is known as the virtue of friendship and reciprocity (Berthrong, 2000, 89). Nonetheless, faithfulness does not only apply to the social relationship of friendship but a person needs to be faithful to their family as well as the larger community. Faithfulness needs to be carried out in a humane and righteous manner.

4.4.4 The proper conduct in the country

Confucianism teaches that the country belongs to everyone and only the virtuous might govern with the Mandate of Heaven. The emperor is known as the “son of heaven” and held responsible for the people’s fortune and misfortune. In this manner, the link of family setting continues with the emperor because the emperor is linked to heaven as a son to a father. And since the people’s will is the will of Heaven – the ruler’s father- (ý dân là ý trời), the ruler has to show respect for the people’s wish: “He who loves his parents does not dare to hate others. He who reverences his parents does not dare to act contemptuously toward others”. The positive teaching for the ruler is that “By love and reverence being perfectly fulfilled in the service to his parents, his

moral influence is shed upon the people and he becomes a pattern for all the border nations (Makra, 1961 cited in Berthrong, 2000).

Thus, the true ruler must have love and reverence for parents and his people. Since he was a pattern for all the people, he is required perhaps to have a greater need of moral cultivation. Accepting the ruler as the son of heaven, common people have an obligation to follow the way of heaven. Though common people are not directly linked to the cosmos by ways of heaven

If the ruler lacks virtue and loses the mandate of heaven, he will be disposed of. Confucians believe that those in ruling have the obligation to serve the country as just and worthy rulers.

To the above view, critics maintain that Confucianism was easily seduced into the service of less than worthy rulers. Rulers would appeal to the Confucian sense of duty to overcome scruples about how the ruler has actually governed. It was said that Confucian men were prone to transfer the authoritarian aspects imperial rule to family life. This caused problems for the Confucian family where affection, respect, love, deference and compassion should be infused (Berthrong, 2000).

4.4.5 The Confucian image of women and emotions

For 2,500 years Confucian ideology has influenced the thought and behaviour of people in Asian countries such as China, Vietnam, Korea and Japan.

To many critics, Confucianism set certain rules that chained human beings to serve feudalistic rulers. It was a complicated pattern of human life and affected men and women differently. It is beleived that women have always been fighting for a way out of the Confucian shadows.

It is noteworthy that the early Chinese had no real commitment to women's subordination. Confucian teachings were expanded upon over time and was adopted as the government' state doctrine during the Han dynasty (206 B.C.E – 220 C.E). Until then, the Confucian thoughts became part of official education. Followed by later dynasties, neo-Confucians further reinforced male authority and patrilineal customs (IRef.13).

In the feminist analysis, Confucianism is hopelessly authoritarian and even tyrannical because it is modelled on the 'Strict Father' (George Lakoff cited in Berthrong, 2000), and many followed it to the negative ends. Others counter that despite the fact that people follow the 'Strict Father' to the very negative ends, there was the 'Nurturing Parent' (also from Lakoff) as a model in the tradition. Those countered prove their point about the Nurturing parents by quoting Mencius' condemnation of tyrants and the rights of people to resist when suasion and reform fail.

In the Confucian structure of society, women's positions at all levels were to be lower than men. Most Confucians accepted women's subservience to men as natural and proper. Women's honour and power as mother and mother-in-law were accorded within their family.

The Confucians believe that women were unable to use reason as well as men. Women were believed to be driven more by emotions and were therefore, incapable of taking part in life beyond their families. The neo-Confucian philosophers contend that a woman of virtue should not remarry. Governed by this philosophic opinion, many young women relegate to widowhood. Followed are quotes from Confucian inspired writings, morality texts and sayings interpreting the Confucian model of the family (IRef. 15):

"A husband can marry twice, but his wife must never remarry."

"A woman's duty is not to control or take charge."

"Woman's greatest duty is to produce a son."

"A woman ruler is like a hen crowing."

"The woman with no talent is the one who has merit."

"Disorder is not sent down by Heaven, it is produced by women."

"Those who cannot be taught, cannot be instructed. These are women and eunuchs."

"Man is honoured for strength; a woman is beautiful on account of her gentleness."

"There are three unfilial acts: the greatest of these is the failure to produce sons."

"Women are to be led and to follow others."

"We should not be too familiar with the lower orders or with women."

"A woman should look on her husband as if he were Heaven itself, and never weary of thinking how she may yield to him."

"Women's nature is passive."

According to research finding, there were women countering this male conceit against women being controlled more by emotions than reason. Women said that this was a male conceit to male advantage. As human beings, we all have feelings and emotions. Even the sage has feelings. This can be seen in the Confucian teaching about human nature, this teaching separates Confucians from Buddhists (emptiness) and Daoists (the void) who struggle to get rid of emotions. According to Buddhists and Daoists, the world is a complex place in which human beings are excessively drawn toward self-interest. Our mind-hearts are filled with the whole range of emotions. Immersed in self-indulgence, driven by love of the pleasant and dislike of what is painful, we can never be sure that emotions will not lead us astray. Therefore, it would be better to free ourselves from emotions or void our conflicting and selfish motives.

Confucians do not reject emotions. It was appropriate to have emotions and one of the proper forms of cultivation is to discipline emotions. Emotions need to be restrained in certain circumstances, but a person also needs to follow them when they need to be listened to. Emotions need to be timely and manifested in accordance with Confucian notions of virtue, character and conduct (Berthrong, 2000). Confucians believed that emotions could be good or misguided in accordance with circumstances. Instead of trying to completely eliminate feelings and emotions, human beings need to find the right way to engage the emotions. For example, in the Confucian view, it is appropriate to feel anger when the person confronts with social injustice because "to be indifferent to justice was to misunderstand the essential features of human nature in the Confucian reading of reality" (Berthrong, 2000, 155). Confucians argued that misguided emotions need to be restrained. But they denied that this meant that the world was empty or void.

If this were the case, women argued that there was nothing wrong with women having strong feelings. Women can use their strong links to the emotional life as the springboard towards positive self-cultivation. Women, themselves have something to teach father, husband and son. Women believe that males taunt women for being too emotional is to males' own advantage. If being too emotional means one's incapacity to handle things, then a question was raised for Confucians –how could a person be too emotional if s/he were a proper Confucian?

Women argued against some derogatory remarks made by male Confucian philosophers about women. In their eyes, it would be better for women to stay at home because women are too emotional. Women were confined within their homes, were not allowed to have lives beyond their homes except for some occasional visits to homes of friends and temples. But to women, “the attribution of excessive emotionality seems to be a cross-cultural theme used to exclude women from fulfilling important public roles and responsibilities” (P. 155).

Berthrong studies that though women admitted that they were concerned with emotions, this did not diminish women's intellectual capacities in the use of reason. Women could be the full intellectual equals of men if they were allowed and encouraged to become educated women (P. 156).

Furthermore, educated women would be able to help their families effectively. To be able to do this, women need to build up a better knowledge of themselves. Only when they know their own values, beliefs, strengths and weaknesses can they help their families, when, by the same token, they will also be helping themselves.

4.4.6 The Confucian image of men

In the Confucian view, there are ‘quân tử’ (gentleman) and ‘tiểu nhân’ (small man). The main concern for the gentleman is self-improvement, he is distressed at his own incapacity and not to recognise his merits at the failure of others. The gentleman should guard against lust when his physical powers are not settled, strife when they are vigorous and avarice when they decline (IRef. 14).

Furthermore, a gentleman is to see clearly, hear distinctly, be kind in appearance, have respectful manner, sincere words and be diligent. In doubt, he asks for information, in anger, he considers the consequences. If he sees a chance for gain, he considers whether the pursuit is right. A gentleman is cautious with words and diligent in action, he won't let his words outrun his deeds as in “quân tử nhất ngôn”.

The Confucians contrast the gentleman to the small man. While ‘người quân tử’ sets his heart on virtue, ‘tiểu nhân’ sets his heart on comfort and understands only profit. A gentleman calls attention to the goodness in others, a small person points out defects in others. While a gentleman demands on himself, a small person demands on others. A gentleman is not proud but dignified whereas, a small person is proud but not dignified.

4.5 Confucian influence in Vietnam

Vietnam was part of the Chinese Empire for hundreds of years. During the Chinese ruling, there were successful revolts by Vietnamese against the rulers. The Vietnamese attitudes towards the Chinese ruling was clear, they did not want Vietnam to be another province of China.

However this did not mean that the Vietnamese were not enthralled by the Chinese culture. During the Chinese ruling, Confucian thought was imported and developed in Vietnam. Research finding shows that the original texts in Chinese and Vietnamese still exist but they have not received much attention from Vietnamese and Western Scholars (Berthrong, 2000).

Historical research reveals that the early Vietnamese tradition was the tradition of equality. It is totally in contrast to Confucian teachings that the Chinese invaders had imposed on the Vietnamese society under their domination from 111 BC to 939 AD. Communalism and matriarchal life were destroyed. Economically the rulers took away all the nation's resources. Culturally, the rulers wanted to completely change the culture and society by propagating ideas, their own cultural quintessence in order to eliminate the quintessence of the ruled.

Despite effort made by some part of the community to maintain Viet Nam's authenticity and cultural heritage, it was unavoidable that after one thousand years of Chinese domination, many aspects of Vietnamese culture have been

influenced by the Confucian philosophy, perhaps more so than Christianity. Confucianism has permeated into the culture and become a way of living in the community. After the Chinese were expelled from the country, many Vietnamese kings, feudal lords and people continued to practise Confucian ways. Tran et al., (1967) presents that during the period of national independence from 939- 1407, the traditions of Confucianism were not abandoned. This is evident that the social structure of Vietnam is deeply influenced by the politico-philosophic structure of Confucianism.

There are different interpretations about Confucian influence in the Vietnamese society.

As Q. Le indicates in her paper of Science, Technology and Culture: a Vietnamese Perspective (1996), while the western world set their focus on scientific and technological development the Vietnamese “tend to play down the significance of this physical world”. This is because in the Vietnamese mind there are “other worlds are much more important for their immediate concerns”. The Vietnamese would find more satisfaction in a human world where morality and spiritual values are considered of primary importance:

“The Vietnamese mind is more easily attracted to a social philosophy than to physics and chemistry. Perhaps this is why Confucianism easily found its way into the Vietnamese culture as it offered an attractive solution to building a social stable environment, in which society is a highly structured network with well-defined roles and expectations assigned to an individual” (Q. Le.1996, 45).

4.5. 1 Cultural influence

Confucian ideals remain part of Vietnamese life to the extent that even though nowadays many Vietnamese who have migrated to western countries for nearly thirty years still live under the influence of the philosophy. Confucianism stresses the need of obedience to the emperor, superior, parents, husband, aged and reverence for the dead. It also stresses filial piety in children involving complete obedience to their parents. Tran Van Do as cited by the Hassan et al (1985, 266):

“Among the Vietnamese, the honest man is born amidst traditions and rites; as an adolescent he seeks to improve himself through culture and in maturity, he aims at wisdom through following the spiritual path. This pattern is not an abstract ideal, but a way of life which often leads to an attitude of tolerance and detachment. The bulk of Vietnamese people lived for centuries in this environment of ancestral beliefs and religious doctrines. The Vietnamese, as with a great number of others who have lived under Chinese influence,... [believe that]... man possesses three souls (hồn) and seven vital principles (phách). For this reason, woman is said to have nine vital principles instead of seven because of her supplementary responsibilities of childbearing”...

Clark (1988) suggests that one of the Confucian values in the Vietnamese society is the regard for ancestors. The worship of the ancestors has no connection with religious faith but exerts a profound influence on the daily life of the Vietnamese people:

“The recollection of the ancestors, the fear of offending them or soiling their reputations, coupled with the desire to please them, are sources of inspiration, which guide the actions of the descendants. Even for a hardened sinner, to lack respect for the ancestors is the worst offence imaginable” (Tran, 1967, quoted in Hassan et. al., 1985, p. 266).

According to Clark (1988), upward loyalty is another Confucian value for ranking in the Vietnamese society. First loyalty is to the King, second loyalty is to the teacher and the third loyalty is from son to father. Since age determines rank and is believed to associate with wisdom, all persons have to look to their elders with deference due to age difference. This belief is reflected in the saying “Bảy mươi còn học bảy một” (The seventy- year old can still learn from the seventy-one year old).

4.5.2 Gender division influence

One of the interpretations made is that the social divisions were marked only after Confucianism was introduced into Vietnam during the Chinese influence. The attitude of “trọng nam khinh nữ” (men are to be respected women are inferior to men) has sprung from this stage of history. Traditional values of Vietnamese lifestyle are deeply influenced by Confucian ethics. Individual accomplishments are not of primary importance but the person’s duty to their family and society is vital.

Le’s journal of Vietnamese Discriminatory Language: A Sociolinguistic Analysis, claims that in a society where social divisions are clearly marked, it is also a breeding ground for prejudice and discrimination. And because they are so deeply rooted in our thinking and feeling that we neglect unconsciously their existence and don’t realise their influence until we become a victim ourselves. According to Le and Le (1999, 50):

“How many of us would accept that we are sometimes prejudiced against others? The real problem is that we are not aware of their existence because prejudice and discrimination have been institutionalised and firmly entrenched in our society and culture that we tend not to question them unless we or our close ones become victims of prejudice and discrimination”.

In Le’s view, Confucianism maintains a distinction between male and female in society. It exerts influence on different male and female images and roles in families and a wider community. People tend to have certain expectation and attitude for male and female individuals.

For centuries in Vietnam, the traditional roles of man and woman either as an individual or as parents are affected by Confucian ethics. The traditional ideal of male superiority has been valued by Vietnamese (IRef.17). Man, as the father and husband, have absolute authority in the family, whether he is the sole provider for his family or has the support income of his wife. In the Vietnamese family, man is often not required to do work in the kitchen or cook. He seldom helps with other home duties. Though he might consult his wife, he often has the final say in family matters. Phung as quoted in Ton (Iref.

17) says that to deserve a respected position, the father is responsible for restraint and wisdom in running his family.

4.5.3 The female image in a Confucian society

Under Confucianism, the distinction between male and female is clearly marked. A woman has to conform to the three codes of obedience (tam to`ng) and accept her place as a subject to be ruled by her father, husband, eldest son and king (Eisen, 1984). ‘Tam Tòng’ reveals a woman’s life of dependence.

‘Tam Tòng’ includes ‘tòng phu.’, before marriage a woman has to obey her father;

“xuất giá tòng phu”, when a woman is married, she has to obey her husband.

“Phu tử tòng tử”, should a woman become widowed, a woman of respect was never to remarry (gái làm nên thủ tiết thờ chồng), she then had to obey her eldest son.

The three codes of obedience is a reflection of patriarchy in its strongest form.

Vicra as quoted in Hassan (1985) argues that this has been called the “three degrees of dependence rather than obedience”. Women were denied of their rights as individuals and devote their lives to serve men.

In reality, the third code is rarely applied in the Vietnamese society. In many families when the father passes away, the mother still deserves a lot of respect from the children. She does not obey the oldest son’s instruction, the oldest son consults his mother on important family decisions. She, in turn, respects him, as the oldest child and his decisions.

There were other restrictions on the women’s lives in accordance with their low status. Many Vietnamese families adhere to the rigid belief that “girls from birth were at a disadvantage”. Despite having some limited rights, a Vietnamese woman often takes a secondary place in the family. She is brought up with strict discipline, traditionally less educated and usually enters the job market outside her home (IRef. 17).

It was believed that a woman’s place is at home, women are difficult to educate and so must be bound and obedient to the men of their families for the rest of their lives. For many families, education was a waste on women and they were barred from learning. There is a Confucian saying:

A woman without talents is virtuous.

(Nữ tử vô tài tiên thị đức)

The more ignorant a woman is, the more easily controlled she is by man (Le, 1996), the codes of the three obedience and four virtues were designed simply for women to serve men and reinforce male domination.

There were also some parents who mistakenly believed that if girls knew how to write, they would only use their writing skill to write to their male friends (biết chữ để viết thư cho trai). In the decade of 1940s, most women were not provided with educational opportunities, they lived within the confined walls of their home and did house chores.

Other researches have shown that discrimination was not only a single factor that prevented women from schooling. Poverty was another major impediment to education. Education was a luxury for families with many children. Since the parents could not afford the price of education for all children, they selected sons to attend schools. This was with the belief that their sons would remain home looking after his family and ‘huong hỏa’ (private property), whereas, daughters would get married and live with their in-laws. Generally speaking, the poor- men or women did not have any chance to climb out of poverty because they could not afford the price of education (Huard and Durand, 1950).

Polygyny and the taking of concubines were widespread in both northern and central Vietnam. A household could include a wife of the first rank, a second and third wife with their children. The husband would need his first wife ‘s consent before this arrangement could be made. However, it was more often that the husband would establish additional wives in separate households; in several cases, additional wives were permitted to continue to live in their own homes or with parents.

Trai năm thê bảy thiếp,

Gái chính chuyên một chồng

(Man can have five wives and seven mistresses

A virtuous girl has only one husband.)

Under Confucian rule, men were permitted many wives while women were permitted only one. While men are admired for having many wives and mistresses, women are expected to serve her husband throughout her life. Women's roles were to serve men (Le, 1999).

In the Confucian culture, women's main role was to bear male children. It was imperative to produce a male heir to continue the family line. A woman would take great pride and gain respect from others if she gave birth to male children. A sense of power developed in woman as giving birth to the first male child. This would increase their influence in family affairs because the son was responsible for his parents' death rituals, the lineage would be perpetuated and the cult of ancestors would be maintained. A household that did not have a male heir was regarded as unfortunate and infertile women were scorned. Under traditional law, a husband could divorce his wife for not producing him a son. He could replace her with another wife:

“With such emphasis on ancestral worship and the continuation of the male line, the status of a wife immediately rose with the birth of a son, and her failure to so produce was grounds for a divorce, as was her jealousy of any additional wives or even her talkativeness” (Williams, 1998, p. 68).

While the Hong Duc code promulgated in 1483 supported the role of women, studies have also noted that there were successive dynasties issued harsh codes of conduct for women. Williams (1998) says that in the nineteenth century, the Gia Long code listed seven reasons for a man to reject his wife ranging from her failure to bear a son, not serving her parents-in-law properly, to gossip. Under the Gia Long code, a woman had no right to reject her husband, if she tried to run away from home, she could be punished by 100 strokes of the cane and put up for sale. It was said that if a woman committed adultery, the penalty for her was strangulation.

Nhat Thanh argues that in the narrow atmosphere of family life, a woman had many rights in accordance with the term ‘*nữ tướng*’ (domestic leader). But the Vietnamese traditional society as a whole characterised by a continuity over

thousands of years. There was little change in lifestyles for generations. Man dominated over politics, socio-cultural sphere while a woman in the traditional society almost had no social position (nam trọng nữ khinh- men are to be respected while women are inferior to men).

In reality, the wife hardly had any right *de jure* and on the moral aspect. Not only could a man repudiate his wife for her failure to bear a son, he could also reject her for being lazy (nhác), jealous (ghen tương) and having a fatal illness (ác tật).

Nhat Thanh reveals the three reasons (tam bất xuất) protecting a woman from being repudiated. A woman who was in deep mourning of her parents-in-law; a woman who contributed her effort and earning to build up the family and a woman who left the husband's home and had no one to turn to.

If cultures encourage men to view women as depreciative chattels, they will never regard women as human. If women are not regarded as human, then injustices are permissible against them. While man plays a positive and leading role, the role of woman is inclined to negativity. A Vietnamese woman has to accept cultural cliches of what her life is supposed to be. She has to be a good wife and companion to her husband, she is always at his beck and call. She needs to be a good mother who always places her children's wishes ahead of her own, a good daughter-in-law who uncomplainingly takes care of her husband's parents and a carer for her husband's siblings and relatives.

As a result of trying to obey those cultural pressures, the Vietnamese woman denies her own needs. By the time she finishes these roles, there is not much of her left as a person. It appears that the Vietnamese wife is obsessed by a vision of what she is supposed to do and be. If she fails that vision or walks away from the cultural path she is plagued with guilt.

Barnes (2001) remarks that the Vietnamese wife/mother has to appease everyone. Not only does the Vietnamese woman try to give her children attention to maintain a close relationship with them, she wears herself out as she strives to meet all of the expectations of the older generation for attention and respect. In accordance with her role, she is expected to bring harmony to the family. When

there is a matter needed to be resolved between the children and their father, she has to mediate. If this balancing act carried out by her is successful, family relationship may stay harmonious... “ not because the real issues have been dealt with but because the woman has become the ‘meat in the sandwich’- the buffer between family members who have conflicting views, and the one that everyone else blames if things go wrong...” (Barnes, 2001).

4.5.4 The Confucian image of man

The role of man is also stereotyped. The image of man is portrayed as “người quân tử”- a virtuous man/a man is not only a leader, but also a wise and honest man. In Vietnamese conversations, one sometimes hears of the expression “quân tử nhất ngôn” (a gentleman keeps his words). This is in contrast to the term ‘tiểu nhân’- a vulgar man who selfishly does things for his own advantage. To become ‘người quân tử’, apart from attaining the four qualities ‘tu thân’ (cultivating himself), ‘tề gia’ (managing his family), ‘trị quốc’ (governing the country) and ‘bình thiên hạ.’ (pacifying the world), a man needs to cultivate calmness and lives moderately. In the western view, this attitude is regarded as impassive, placid or even hypocritical (Tran et. al., 1967).

The man of virtue (người quân tử) should possess the five cardinal virtues (ngũ thường) included humanness (nhân), righteousness (nghĩa), civility (lễ), wisdom (tri) and honesty (tín).

The myth of masculinity is manifested in various forms of social interaction. Wine drinking is one such form reflecting pre-existing cultural conceptions of what it means to be male as presented by “Nam vô tửu như kỳ vô phong” (a man who does not drink is like a flag without the wind). The saying reflects the popular conception that drinking constitutes a guide for becoming a man, a manual for stereotyped masculinity. “Nam vô tửu như kỳ vô phong” provides a clear and consistent image of the masculine role.

Furthermore, drinking together is a sign of the group’s acceptance and friendship. It allows the group’s members to show their masculinity publicly. Men appear to value their group of friends over their female partners. While there are valuable features for masculinity such as facing challenges and taking risks, the

dimensionality of masculinity as presented by drinking is anachronistic and laughable.

4.5.5 Confucian marriage

As mentioned above, polygamy was popular in a Confucian society, one man could take more than one wife and it was common for the upper class and the wealthy to have several wives:

Trai năm thê bảy thiếp, gái chính chuyên một chồng

(A man can have five wives and seven mistresses, a virtuous woman has one husband).

While men are admired for having many wives and mistresses, women are expected to serve their husbands throughout their lives.

In the traditional society, though both boys and girls are under strict parents' supervision, girls are more strictly controlled. Courtship and romance were seen as inappropriate. Chastity is not a requisite for men but recommended for the ideal woman as expressed in a proverb:

Chữ trinh đáng giá ngàn vàng

(Her virginity is worth a thousand gold coins).

Virginity and chastity are mandatory for women.

Women's bodies are not their own, but the property of husbands.

Pregnancy out of wedlock is seen as a disgrace to the family (Muzny, quoted by Ton, IRef. 17), a daughter might be disowned by her family if she is to commit this mistake).

In several cases marriage was like an institution used to exploit women's labour. In wealthy families, men could afford to buy as many wives or concubines as they wished. This was for the belief that buying a wife or concubine proves to be cheaper than paying the wages of a servant for life" (Eisen, 1984). A woman worked to contribute to her husband's estate and in return she gained nothing for herself even the respect from her husband.

Apart from polygamy under which rich men frequently took many wives, this process could start by parents during their son's childhood. Arrangement of child marriage was permitted. Grown daughters of poor families were sold off to be married to rich little boys, they then became domestic helpers for their young husbands' family. The women would be cast aside when their husbands reached maturity and took another wife (Williams, 1998).

Other expressions which illustrate the construction of relationship of power are:

Chồng chúa vợ tôi

(Husband is the master and wife is the servant).

Women are expected to obey.

Phu xướng phụ tùy or

Chỉ rằng phu xướng phụ tùng

Làm thân con gái có chồng phải theo.

(Husband speaks wife listens).

Women are trained to fill their roles as obedient wives.

The concept of divorce was distant in the Vietnamese society. It was unlikely for divorced Vietnamese women and widows to remarry. It is considered a good and desirable act for a widow to remained unmarried (Hassan et. al., 1985).

4.6 Women and changes

With gradual social changes, the role of women has also changed. Vo as cited by Hassan (1985) says that there was a transition in the female role in Saigon in 1966 because 36 per cent of the workforce were females. More women are able to obtain education. Prior to 1975 although women occupied different professions but men still held the most prominent positions in the patriarch society. A man was the main breadwinner of the family or sometimes even the extended family. It was common for a man to support not only his wife and children but also his ageing parents and his siblings. Along with the earning power, man still had the utmost saying in the household and made major decisions.

When a woman worked, her credibility outside of the home was not viewed as good as that of a man except for jobs traditionally held by women like teachers, nurses, housemaids, and cooks. A woman had little choice; she could contribute to the family income but was expected to perform most household duties. Men were dominant and believed that it was only natural for them to make laws and rules to their favour.

As the society became more and more westernised, in our parents' generation monogamy became law, since more women entered the workforce, the gender gap lessened but was still very pronounced. It was difficult to defy long-held social and cultural conventions, a woman who did not conform to her defined role would be frowned upon if she decided not to marry and have a career. She would face open discrimination in the business world, she would not be as good as a man doing the same job especially if it was a traditionally man's job. Socially she would be pitied for not having a husband to care for her. An unmarried woman is referred to as an 'old maid' (gái già); she would be pitied for and could be an object of ridicule. Without a husband, she feels that she is incomplete, unworthy and fears of rejection in society. Spinsterhood relegates to a low status while marriage is the accepted goal for women. When the terms 'gái già' or 'góa' chồng' are used, they imply that spinsterhood and early widowhood are even seen as the result of 'bad karma'- a person's actions determine their position in the next plane of existence. A woman must have done something bad in her previous life to deserve a life of loneliness.

The status of women in Vietnamese Buddhism also remains one of subservience and ambivalence:

“Nuns followed arduous monastic regulations, which include strict dietary rules and highly structured daily schedules and have to conform to more policies than monks in similar capacities... Families generally express regret when an offspring joins the temple because of her lost earning ability and separation from the family. Yet they also feel pride that a daughter has decided to work for their religion”. (Topmiller, 2001. IRef.10).

Le Hang (2002, 56), a writer, expresses her view on the role of Vietnamese women:

“...đàn bà, phải banh da xẻ thịt, phải oan khiên đau khổ mới thực sự là đàn bà. Phải cực kỳ ngoan hiền để ngậm ngùi mang tiếng là chính chuyên. Phải nghiền răng chịu đựng để nuốt nghẹn hai chữ hạnh phúc vào ruột. Phải thế này thế nọ....phải cột chân, cột tay như những người phụ nữ A Phú Hãn mới vừa bụng chồng”....

(Women have to give birth and endure extreme sufferings to truly be a woman. She has to be extremely gentle and passive to bitterly gain a reputation of the virtuous. She bites her teeth in endurance and swallows her words of happiness. She must and must not, she is supposed to and supposed not...She is tied down like the Afghan women to please her husband).

Although living in Australia for a number of years, many Vietnamese families continue to be bound by the Confucian influence. Parents often put much more pressure on girls expecting them to keep up with the traditional female role such as cooking, cleaning, and caring for younger siblings while boys are not expected to do this work.

Tran, a solicitor working for Legal Aid in Sydney cited in Ho (2002, 27), comments on the role of her Vietnamese female clients:

“ Khi được hỏi đến sau thời gian tiếp xúc và làm việc với quý chị, Định có nhận xét hay suy tư gì về vai trò và thân phận của người phụ nữ Việt Nam ở Úc mình không? Đán đo giấy lát, Định trả lời “ thật ra em thấy người phụ nữ mình thiệt thòi quá! Quý chị mà em tiếp xúc không có tiếng nói trong gia đình mình và cả xã hội. Định cư và hội nhập là một tiến trình khó khăn cho cả một thế hệ mang trên đời người hai chữ tỵ nạn. Em không biết bao giờ quý chị mới qua hết giai đoạn này, em chỉ khuyến khích quý chị một điều là hãy ra ngoài với xã hội nhiều, một bước đi là một bước học hỏi, cho mình và gia đình mình.”

(When asked about her opinion on the role of Vietnamese women living in Australia after she has worked with them for some time. Dinh said, “ I think Vietnamese women are very disadvantageous! I have met many women who have no say in their own families and in society”. The process of settlement and integration is a difficult process for migrants. I don’t know when these women will surpass this period of transition, I encourage them to step out and interact socially. A step forward is a learning step for themselves and their family).

Despite social changes, Confucian heritage of female subservience remains. Recent study by Chalmers (IRef. 16) reveals that in rural areas, women’s workloads are increasing as more men migrate to cities to find employment. Women carry out about 60 percent of the agricultural workload. Women labour at work like men, but only earn about 72 per cent of the average male wage. On top of that, women have to undertake housework and bring up children at home.

Most women have low professional skills and are on low paying jobs because of a lack of training and limited education. Most perform manual and heavy work; this in turn increases their health problem. The study also indicates gender problems as there are only about five per cent of the high-ranking officials in the country were women.

4.7 Aspects of Vietnamese authenticity

There were arguments made to counter the notions of Confucian influence in Vietnamese society. It is believed that even though the Vietnamese society was influenced by Confucian teachings, Confucianism did not permeate all levels of Vietnamese life but influenced only certain dynasties and social classes such as the wealthy families and scholars. There has always been the mainstream of the Vietnamese authentic thinking and tradition that went side by side with Confucianism. Nguyen (1996) and Thai (1997) argue that although Vietnam was under the Chinese rule for one thousand years, the Vietnamese culture is not a “pale replica of Chinese culture”.

Research finding reveals that Vietnamese society was highly organised before Confucianism was introduced into Vietnam. This could be seen through the structural organisation of the village community where autonomy was adopted. Each village had its own rules, customs and there was a council of notables who managed the affairs of the village (Nguyen, 1996). The village was where the Vietnamese traditions were strongly reserved and protected. When communism entered Vietnam, the communists knew that the only way to break all traditions of Vietnamese society was to break the highly organised structure of the village.

The spirit of resistance against the ruler was strong; people preferred the Vietnamese way of living and strived to maintain the country's customs. Following are some of the examples reflecting this spirit:

- Linguistically, even though Vietnamese used a lot of Chinese terms, they have changed pronunciation and syntax to distinguish Vietnamese from Chinese language. In terms of written language, the Vietnamese created 'chữ nôm' combined with the Chinese language. Chữ nôm has had an important position in Vietnamese literature (Thai, 1997).
- Socially, the Chinese fashion of foot-binding for women began from the Tang Dynasty (618-907AD), women with small feet could not work outside the home and were unable to achieve economic independence. This reinforced male domination... "The tiny feet became a love fetish. Men were said to be sexually aroused by playing with them and women with bound feet were said to have tighter vaginas" (wrote Dr. Linda Koo, a medical anthropologist of the University of Hong Kong, quoted in Williams, 1998). It was said that foot binding was copied from the court and spread among both the upper and lower classes in the north and south of China. Bound feet were called 'golden lotuses' whereas natural feet were seen as 'duck feet'. This custom was nowhere to be seen in Vietnam during the Chinese strong influence.
- The Chinese had their hair braided whereas the Vietnamese preferred their hair in a bun (búi tóc), the Vietnamese wear the traditional costume of 'áo

dài' instead of the Chinese cheongsam. The Vietnamese used betel and areca nuts (trầu cau) as food and betrothal gifts, betel and areca nuts are also used in other formal ceremonies. There is a popular saying “miếng trầu làm đầu câu chuyện” (a quid of betel is the beginning of the story, a piece of betel helps to start a conversation) in Vietnamese custom whereas the Chinese and Japanese don't use betel and areca nuts (Thai, 1997). In terms of diet, the Chinese use a lot of fat and soy sauce whereas Vietnamese prefer more fish and vegetables and use fish sauce.

Throughout Vietnamese history, the heroic image of the Trung sisters (Hai Bà Trưng) was enhanced as the great cultural heroes of Viet Nam. Hai Bà Trưng successfully led a popular rebellion against Tô Định's aggression in 40 CE and ruled an independent Viet Nam for 3 years. When defeated by Tôn Sĩ Nghị's army, the Trung Sisters committed suicide rather than submit to the occupying army.

For many people, Hai Ba Trung was the personification of Vietnamese nationalism. They were the powerful symbol of bravery.

According to an interpretation, the woman's relegation to the role of housewife has to be seen in both the social and historical context. It does not followed as is frequently assumed that Vietnamese woman is the victim of a male-dominated system. Vietnam is a war-torn country, husbands and sons either have to go to the battlefield or labour in fields or other work places and when they return home, they are physically exhausted. The women may be subordinate to the male world but they exercise some control over the family. To describe Vietnamese women in negative terms means to underestimate their inner strengths and real power within the family:

“In the village, women assumed a great deal of responsibility for cultivation of the paddy fields, often working harder than men, and sometimes engaged in retail trade of all kinds. A few women owned agricultural estates, factories and other businesses, and both urban and rural women typically managed the family income” (IRef. 8- Data as of December 1987).

During the Viet Nam war, the position of Vietnamese women was enhanced as the proverb holds “Giặc đến nhà đàn bà phải đánh” (when war comes, even a woman must fight). This proverb illustrates the need for every Vietnamese to resist aggression.

In the times of war, women from both South and North Vietnam worked to determine the future of the country. In the South, women took on the role of a father as well as a mother; they worked and raised their children alone while their husbands went to war. In the north, women participated in the formation of the National Liberation Front (Mặt Trận Giải Phóng). According to Marry Dickson’s study quoted in Topmiller (IRef. 10), women fought in large numbers, historians estimated that they made up about 50 per cent of the Front.

Turner, quoted by Topmiller says, “over 1.5 million women worked in various combat roles throughout the hostilities” (IRef. 10). The burden was placed on these women, aside from supporting the soldiers in the field and tending businesses, they had to care for their own families.

In the south, despite the fact that women have traditionally accepted a subordinate position, many Buddhist women participated in demonstrations against war. The Buddhist movement against the war was popular in the decade of 1960s. There were Buddhist monks and nuns struggled for peace by immolating themselves to call attention to the plight of their country (Topmiller, IRef.10). The image of Buddhist nuns struggling for peace was in contrast with the common stereotypes of women as weak and helpless. Before and after 1975, there were women entering into the political realm of the country. This represented a significant departure from their normal roles.

In comparison with the Chinese custom of respecting men and despising women, the Vietnamese treat men and women equally (Thai, 1997), this is evident in the code of Hồng Đức allowing both sexes to have an equal share in family inheritance.

Huard and Durand (1950, p. 75) study the Hồng Đức Code (1470-1497) which was lost:

“Concerning the ‘huong hoa’, the private property, and particularly the woman status which is almost the equal of man, this code contains dispositions that

distinguish the Vietnamese from other Extreme-Oriental peoples and bestow upon them an undeniable superiority over their neighbours”.

Studies have also shown that in the Red River Delta, Vietnamese women could keep their names after marriage:

“Peasants in the Red River Delta, the cradle of Vietnamese civilization, practiced a rough form of egalitarianism due to the incessant labor demands of working small holdings in one of the most densely populated areas in the world.

Vietnamese women could inherit property and keep their names after marriage...”(Topmiller, IRef.10).

According to Topmiller, women could exercise some leadership in commercial and economic ventures because in the Confucian view, trade was regarded “as an activity not conducive to achieving social harmony. Males, on the other hand, dominated politics”.

In contrast with the stereotypical view of women in society, there was a list of distinguished women who rose above the ordinaries and had contributed to the writing of history and poetry. These well-known women were Thị Lộ, wife of Nguyễn Trãi, a patriot and Đoàn Thị Điểm who translated a well-known literary work *Chinh Phụ Ngâm Khúc* written by Đặng Trần Côn into ‘chữ nôm’. Hồ Xuân Hương, a poet, wellknown for using metaphor in poetry.

Tran (1988) provides a contrasting interpretation on the status of Vietnamese women. She agrees that women are expected to do most housework in the Vietnamese household, however women also have long had important rights derived from the Hong Duc code promulgated in 1483 and maintained until the end of the 18th century. Under this traditional law, women had an equal share with men in inheritance, possessed goods and chattels; a daughter would inherit family fortune if there were no male offspring. A woman could repudiate her husband if he abandoned her for a certain time. Tran stresses that this law gave Vietnamese women a high status compared to their Chinese counterparts. Tran also quotes a Vietnamese saying about the status of Vietnamese women, “Lệnh

ông không bằng công bà” (the master’s orders are in no way equal to madam’s handcuffs).

In Tran’s paper of *Some Aspects of the Vietnamese Family* (1988) Tran explores further on the role of daughter in the Vietnamese family. She says that Vietnamese family does not mind to have daughter and when a daughter gets married the groom’s family has to pay for the wedding. Tran states that this Vietnamese custom gave women a higher status than women in many other Asian countries and some western nations prior to the 20th century. This freedom of action impressed westerners visiting Vietnam in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries compared to the status of Chinese and Muslim women.

Tran (1988) reveals that women have gained in social position during wartime. Despite the cultural emphasis on obedience in women, women were not regarded as the weaker sex, but they were resilient and strong-willed. Their status was boosted in terms of economic activities of the family, as most men had to go to war, women controlled family finance and became legal owners of businesses.

Feudalism began to collapse in 1932-1945, the young generation of 1932-45 opposed to Confucianism and regarded it as a ‘cage’ where human beings are confined to all their lives and are shaped and forced to follow set rules (Nguyen, 1996).

4.8 Vietnamese Literature and linguistic features

4.8.1 Literature

According to Tran (IRef. 27), there are two main streams of foreign influences in Vietnamese literature. As the Chinese ruled Vietnam for a thousand years, Chinese thought and literature were widespread among the Vietnamese. It is believed that Vietnamese poets were strongly under the Chinese influence. This can be seen in the use of poetic rules similar to the Chinese verse forms’ rules. Both ideas and sentiments were also similar to the Chinese.

‘The Proclamation’ is known as one of the most ancient literary text. Among the famous Buddhist monks, Vô Ngại, Phụng Dinh, Duy Giem, Trương Ma Ni, Đặng Huyền Quang, there were Phạm Ngũ Lão (Tran dynasty) wellknown for his patriotic poems, Nguyễn Trãi (1380- 1442) under the Le dynasty,

wellknown for “Gia Huân Ca” and “Quốc Âm Thi Tập”. Nguyễn Trãi used Chinese ideograms in his “Proclamation of Victory over the Minh (1427). Under the Nguyen dynasty, “Kim Vân Kiều” (Nguyễn Du, 1765- 1820) was written in Vietnamese (IRef. 27).

It is noted that main themes from popular songs were drawn from agricultural life and examples of dedicated women who advised their husbands to study.

The second influence was from the West. Western thought and culture exerted a strong influence over Vietnam in the 19th century (IRef. 27). Western books were translated into Vietnamese for the first time by Trương Vĩnh Ký, Huỳnh Tịnh Của, Nguyễn Văn Vinh and Phạm Quỳnh. Research reveals that the first daily newspaper “Gia Đình Nhật Báo” was published in Vietnamese by Trương Vĩnh Ký (also known as Petrus Ky).

4.8.2 Linguistic features

The Vietnamese language contains a sense of flexibility and yet can be of ambiguity, an expression can be either positive or negative in meaning.

In addition, the use of metaphor is popular in Vietnamese literature, it is in fact the style of Vietnamese literature (văn phong). Metaphor is used to describe things and people, so the meaning can be either positive or negative, humorous or non humorous all depend on the context of the situations, speaker’s attitude and the tone of the speaker’s voice.

At the end of the eighteenth century a poet called Hồ Xuân Hương, well known for her daring thoughts and writing style, used obscene allusion to describe a reality. Followed are her descriptions of the jackfruit and the swing (Huard & Durand, 1950:330):

The Jack-fruit

“My body is similar to the jack-fruit on the jack-tree,
Its bark is rugged, its pulp thick,
My lord if you like it, why don’t you plant your quoin in it,
But, please, do not feel it, as its glue may lime your hands.”

The Swing

“ Cheers for he who so skilfully planted the eight posts;
 Some climb up to swing, others look amazed;
 The young man, pushing on his crane like knees, bends, bends his
 loins;
 The young girl, re-erecting her wasp-back, stretches, stretches out
 groin;
 Four legs wearing rosy pants that flap in the wind,
 Two pairs of knees-bends stiffen two by two,
 These spring games, have you ever known their pleasurable
 sensation?
 Once the posts are pulled up, empty holes are abandoned.”

Nói Lái (spoonerism) where sounds of words are transposed is also popular in Vietnamese folksongs such as “móng chuồng mọc giữa đồng chòi”. The literal meaning is “a rainbow rises above the hut in the rice field” whereas the figurative meaning is a girl who desperately wants a husband- when ‘móng chuồng’ (rainbow) becomes ‘muốn chồng’ (want a husband) and ‘đồng chòi’ (hut in the field) becomes ‘đòi chồng’ (a girl’s urge for a husband).

4.8.3 Linguistic features during the Chinese ruling

Researches have shown that the origin of the Vietnamese language is still a subject of debate by linguists.

According to the authors in Vietnamese Realities, Vietnamese language did not have its origin in Chinese language but China’s influence was so strong that thousands of Chinese words were incorporated into the Vietnamese language. There were many Chinese terms of philosophy, literature, religion, government and military found in Vietnamese. Although the words’ pronunciation has changed, one still could discern that these words originated from Chinese.

There were three systems of writing, the first system of writing was ‘chữ nho’(Chinese characters). During the Chinese occupation, Vietnam came under the Mandarin education system. The Vietnamese used ‘chữ nho’ in the 9th century as a means of writing communication. Chinese language was mainly taught and recognised as high language status functions in formal education and official

discourse in Vietnam (Bianco, 1994). Chinese literary examinations were held every three years, scholars who passed these examinations would be eligible for admission to civil and military posts. Tran et al., (1960) says that these literary competitions were held in 1070 and in 1075, a temple of literature dedicated to Confucius and 72 wise men was established. The first Vietnamese academy was founded in 1086, chaired by Mac Hien Tich known as the first Doctor of the country.

Chinese language had a special status in Vietnamese culture because it was identified with the ruling class of scholar-officials and was a language of officialdom, scholarship and literature during 1000 years of Chinese rule and for centuries afterwards. Scholars used 'chữ nho' to letter the banners and placards at weddings, funerals and festivals.

Under the Chinese influence, though knowledge of Chinese language was a prerequisite to obtain government positions and social advancement, native speakers did not use Chinese to communicate as a daily language, Vietnamese remained popular as a spoken language.

Chinese language was used for so long that it was mistakenly believed that Vietnamese language originated from it (IRef. 9).

The second system of writing is 'chữ nôm' (southern characters or southern writing).

During the 13th century, 'chữ nôm', a written form for the Vietnamese language was utilised, it was based on Chinese characters and combined of ideographs and phonetics and was used in most parts of the culture. Two Chinese characters were often used, one character indicated the meaning of the Vietnamese word whereas the other character indicated pronunciation. A study reveals that a Vietnamese poet of the 13th century, Nguyen Thuyen was believed to be responsible for spreading and popularizing 'chữ nôm.'

It was said that though Chinese language was still used in official matters, this literary form of 'chữ nôm' protected Vietnamese literature from the Chinese influence. Vietnamese writers used 'chữ nôm' to transcribe the national history and literature. Because of its complexity, 'chữ nôm' were used only in literature

and non-official document and it was not recognised as the official language (Tran et. al., 1960). Research shows that the chữ nôm system of writing could only be mastered by scholars who learnt Chinese characters, therefore its use was confined to the educated elite:

“Although chữ nôm was the medium for some of Vietnam’s vernacular literature, most notably the Story of Kiều, a classic 18th century work, it was unable to match the prestige of orthodox Chinese writing. It was only fleetingly successful in gaining official acceptance as Vietnam’s writing system. In the end, the Vietnamese abandoned both Chinese characters and chữ nôm (IRef. 29)”.

This division of the written systems lasted for 800 years and was abolished in 1918 by the French.

The third system of writing is the present Vietnamese language ‘quốc ngữ’. Quốc ngữ consists of roman characters with diacritic markers used to represent sound distinctions not covered by Roman or Latin alphabet. Diacritics denote a difference in tones and pronunciation. The ‘*Dictionarium Annamiticum Lusitanum et Latinum*’ was the earliest dictionary using ‘quốc ngữ’, it was published by Alexandre de Rhodes in 1651 (IRef. 29). In the beginning, quốc ngữ was not utilised widely. In the 19th century the French colonial government used quốc ngữ as a means to break up the grip of Chinese culture and foster western ways of thinking (IRef. 29). Quốc ngữ was finally chosen as the official Vietnamese script in the 20th century because of its simplicity and ease of use.

Vo (1994) states that since the Chinese ruled Vietnam for some ten centuries, it was unavoidable that Vietnamese language has borrowed extensively from the Chinese language and most of the borrowed terms are abstract words whereas the typical Vietnamese words denote concrete objects.

On the contrary, according to Phan (1988), though Vietnam was under the cultural influence of China, Vietnam still maintained the nation’s cultural characteristics and language.

Under the Chinese rule, Confucian education and culture were the only sure ways to move up the social scale. In general, the Vietnamese inherit a high respect for learning. Confucianism has always been linked to a classical education, a mandarin education in traditional Vietnam was the mark of elite culture. It was essential for admission to the ruling class of the scholar-officials. And the people who wanted to progress and succeed under the new regime had no choice but to accept this educational system and showed their venerability for it.

Traditional society of Vietnam was stratified into four educational and occupational groups of ‘sĩ’(scholar-officials), ‘nông’ (farmer), ‘công’ (artisans) and ‘thương’ (merchants). The emperor ruled with the mandate of heaven at the highest. Followed were the scholar- officials who passed rigorous civil examinations in Chinese classical literature and philosophy and were appointed to the imperial civil service. Gaining entry into the imperial civil service meant that one could secure power, status and wealth.

One study says that in theory, the scholar-officials were not a closed social group, the status of the scholar-officials could not be inherited and that commoners could participate in these examinations. Nevertheless, in reality, the scholar officials became a “self-perpetuating class” because of their wealth, their children could afford years of study preparing for the examinations. While many commoners were poor and could not afford years of academic preparation.

Affected by the Confucian teaching “a man without education is not a worthy man”, Vietnamese people place value on education and formal qualification.

Education is also a means to social upward mobility. Most Vietnamese parents would make sacrifice for their children’s education, it is a way for family advancement (Tran, 1988).

4. 8.4 Linguistic features under the French rule

When Vietnam came under the French rule (1864-1945), formal education was conducted in French. French was widely used in the cities and taught as the main language in schools whereas Vietnamese remained as a foreign language. This marked a linguistic division of society between French-speaking elites and the Vietnamese-speaking ordinary people (Bianco, 1994).

It was said that ordinary people also had some knowledge of French although their knowledge was limited to a form of pidgin French.

In the rural areas of Vietnam French language was less well known, a minority of people learnt its basics at school or during their service in the French army.

French authorities wanted to draw Vietnam closer to the western culture by popularizing the use of 'quoc ngu' (Vietnamese language) and eliminating the Chinese system of writing (Phan, 1988). 'Quốc Ngữ' consists of roman letters with diacritic markers above or below the letters. The diacritical marks are essential as they denote a difference in tones and pronunciation of vowels and consonants. Most single syllables function as meaningful words and the phonetic syllables can have various meanings.

In 1906, 'quốc ngữ' was introduced as a secondary subject in schools by the Council for Improvement of Education set up by the French. And in 1908 a Ministry of Education created by the Royal Court of Huế, introduced the new school curriculum in national language.

The national language was taught at schools since the second half of the 19th century and by the beginning of the 20th century many western books were translated into Vietnamese using quoc ngu. Two Vietnamese authors, Nguyen Van Vinh and Pham Quynh were well known for their contribution to enrich Vietnamese literature and diffuse western ideas in the country.

Some say that 'Quốc Ngữ' was introduced by a French priest, Alexander de Rhodes in the period of 1627 and 1638 and has been utilised from the seventeenth century, however another source says that this written system was the collective work of many people. Joseph Buttinger, (as cited by K. Nguyen, 1996: 325) an American historian states in his work of *The Smaller Dragon* that:

"Quoc Ngu was not invented by Alexander de Rhodes, as most authors say, but by Italian and Portuguese missionaries two of whom, Gaspar d'Amiral and Antonio de Barbosa were the authors of the first Portuguese Vietnamese dictionary...Alexander de Rhodes perfected their system of transcription. It was not easy work".

In contrast with Joseph Buttinger's findings, Tran et al., (1967. P. 85) provides a different version:

“Although an international and collective undertaking, the quoc ngu is generally said to have been invented by Alexander de Rhodes, a French Jesuit missionary whose Portugese-Latin-Vietnamese dictionary was published in 1651. Monsignor Pigneau de Behaine (18th century) and Monsignor Tabert (1838) later continued the works of Alexandre de Rhodes”.

Study by Viet Media shows that Vietnam has 5000 years of history and that the Vietnamese language that we are using today is only 100 years young. The country’s repeated wars and famines were one of the reasons that prevented Vietnamese language from improvement and growth (IRef. 9). In the beginning, Quoc ngu remained the device of Catholic priests for catechism, it was not widely accepted because the knowledge of the Chinese system of writing was a prerequisite to pass the triennial examinations. Despite the fact that Vietnamese alphabetical letters were brought about 400 years ago by missionaries, they were only used in seminaries for over 300 years. In 1867, they were used in public (IRef. 9).

Under the French rule, there were reform movements carried out by a group of writers called Tu Luc Van Doan (a group of independent writers who struggled for human rights and were against feudalism of the society. They expressed their views in their novels, against ideology that was applied in society. These writers opposed to the Confucian views, these views were regarded as ‘backward’ and a lack of humanitarianism. However some have gone to the extreme that was to launch a campaign for new ideas from the West and abolish all traditions of the Vietnamese mainstream.

In the nineteenth century, under the French rule, a French dominated governing class was established. The power and prestige of the emperor and the mandarins were declined. The number of people taking part in the triennial examinations had decreased from an average of 6,000 candidates in 1876 and 1879 to 1,330 in 1913.

With the introduction of the western education by the French in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the new Vietnamese intelligentsia

emerged and replaced the Confucian classics with achievement in modern subjects such as science, geography etc. During World War One, nearly 150,000 Vietnamese were recruited to work in French factories; impressed with western culture's achievements in Europe, the new elite proclaimed Vietnam's need to reform, the Confucian classics should be replaced with a modern and western educational focus.

Western educational influence was so strong that by 1920, wealthy families in the city of Hue known for its conservative and was the last Confucian outpost, only married their daughters to the men from distinguished scholar officials' families if they had acquired a modern, western-styled education. The traditional examinations were last held in 1919.

The teaching of Vietnamese and French was included in the curriculum of the traditional village schools that were accustomed to Chinese and Confucian teaching.

4.8.5 Vietnamese attitudes in classifiers

In Vietnamese, classifiers are not only grammatically significant but also sociolinguistically important as they denote speakers' attitudes towards others. Vietnamese is a monosyllabic language and has six tones. The tones include không dấu (no marker), mid level; sắc (high-rising), huyền (low falling); hỏi (falling-rising), constricted; ngã (highrising and broken) and nặng (low falling, short constricted). A Vietnamese word can have six different meanings in accordance with the tones. The word 'la' can have six different meanings using six different tones. 'La' (no marker) means cry, yell, 'lá' (high rising) means leaf, 'là' (low falling) means iron, 'lả' (falling- rising, constricted) means weak, 'lã' (high rising, broken) means fresh water, 'lạ' (low- falling, short and constricted) means strange. The tones and the use of words in speech are slightly different between the northern, central and southern dialects. Since Vietnamese language is flexible. There are many classifiers that whether or not they have a derogatory meaning would depend on the context of the situation and the tone of the speakers.

The classifier “đồ” implies an object, things, belongings or utensils:

‘Đồ bơi’- swimsuit; ‘đồ ăn’- food; ‘đồ cổ’- antiques; ‘đồ nữ trang’- jewellery; ‘đồ điện’-electrical goods.

“Đồ” can be used to imply inferiority in abusive context:

“Đồ khôn nạn”- what a rat!; “đồ chó đẻ?”- son of a bitch; ‘đồ đều’- rascal.

“Đồ con buôn” or “đồ gian thương” are terms of abuse, these terms implicate that traders are crafty. People seem to be biased against traders, as in general business seldom does what it does for the customers’ convenience, business people always want to make more profits for their trade and that they would do anything to attract large customers.

In the tale of Kiều, the image of merchant is low as Nguyen Du wrote “cành hoa đem bán cho thuyền lái buôn”, a flower sold to board a pedlar’s boat.

“Đồ thất học”- implicates an illiterate person. A harsh and discriminatory remark about a person, who does not have the chance to go to school, it is hurtful as there are people whose families are poor and education is a luxury.

“Đồ mất dạy” – an ill-bred person. This is a harsh blow to the person’s ego and to the honour of their family. It implicates that a person is not taught properly by their parents or even worse, their parents don’t know how to teach/educate them, hence, they behave like cads.

‘Đồ đĩ (whore). But ‘đĩ’ in “bố cu mẹ đĩ” is not abusive. ‘Mẹ đĩ’ here simply means- “ the mother of our little girl”, ‘mẹ đĩ’ also means ‘my wife’ (old woman).

The term ‘ăn mày (beggar) shows a flexibility in Vietnamese language use. Some use the pre-noun ‘đồ’ as in “đồ ăn mày” to show disrespect, however one also use the terms “ông lão ăn mày” or “bà lão ăn mày” (Mr or madam old beggar) to show respect for the destitute. Although the Vietnamese have contempt for people who live shamefully, they do not look down on people in misfortune. Since Buddhism has a wide influence in the Vietnamese society, many people believe in the law of karma or the law of cause and effect. One’s actions are the reason for one’s happiness or suffering. The outcome of one’s present life is either from the good or bad deeds that one has done in their previous lives.

‘Thất phu’ (single man), ‘Tha[^]t phụ’ (single woman) used by the wealthy class to address the common people; it shows their contempt for the common people.

Another classifier ‘con’ is used in various contexts, it can be used to describe people with a sense of contempt as in:

‘Con mụ.’ or “con mẹ đó” or ‘con đó’ (old woman/that woman) are derogatory terms. Used when one either is angry or treats someone with contempt.

But ‘mụ.’ as in ‘ba’ mụ’ has the meaning of Goddess of childbirth or midwife.

‘Con ở’ (house maid) shows inferiority.

‘Con’ is also a classifier for animals as in:

‘Con chó’ (dog), ‘con mèo’ (cat).

And also a classifier for inanimate things such as:

‘Con đường’ (road); ‘con sông’ (river), ‘con mắt’ (eyes), ‘con dấu’ (seal, stamp).

Used in figurative meaning such as:

‘con bạc’ (gambler); “con bé con bông” (have a lot of small children); “con cà con kê” (nonsense/gossip); “con ong cái kiến” (literally means bees and ants but figuratively means little people/the humble lot); “con ông cháu cha” (children from distinguished families); ‘con tạo’ (the Creator); “con Rồng cháu Tiên” (the Vietnamese people).

The flexibility can be seen in the word ‘Mẹ’ (mother) but when used with the classifier ‘con’ as in “con mẹ đó” (that woman) becomes derogatory.

Damnation related to the word mother or ‘mẹ’:

‘Mẹ nó’ (damn him); ‘mẹ kiếp’ (what a life; oh, hell).

Another classifier is ‘cái’, which has been used to denote things as well as the female gender but not offensive. In the rural areas of North Vietnam cái is often used to refer to mother or to address a girl:

‘Cái Lan (a girl called Lan). ‘Cái’ is used in a lively way to denote closeness here.

‘Cái’ is used for things such as:

‘cái hộp’ (box), ‘cái chén’ (bowl), ‘cái đĩa’ (dish).

‘Cái’ is used in the abstract sense such as:

‘cái chết’ (death), ‘cái đấm’ (a punch), ‘cái khó’ (necessity), ‘cái tôi’ (ego/ the I).

‘Cái’ is referred to as in the sense of time:

“Đề tôi suy nghĩ cái đã” (let me have a think).

The use of ‘cái’ is offensive as in “cái lão già ấy lải nhải gì mãi vậy?” (What is that old fellow gassing about?).

Thằng is a classifier for boys and inferiors. It is offensive if used to address a man in the lowest sense:

‘Thằng cha’ (that fellow), ‘cha’ (father) but when a man is referred to as ‘thằng cha’ conveys a sense of disrespect, “cha cũng chú kiết” (a nobody).

‘Thằng bồi’ (a male servant); ‘thằng’ here shows inferiority.

But ‘thằng’ as in “thằng cu tí/tí” (a little boy/my little one) conveys feeling of love. It is a form of address to male children. ‘Thằng bạn’ (my friend), used here to show friendliness and closeness.

4.9 Vietnamese sexist language

Gordon (1993, cited in Lê, 1999) says that women, as part of their subordination have traditionally been seen as linguistic conservatives. Men have been viewed as linguistic outlaws and innovators and granted license to violate the rules of conventional speech. Lakoff (1973, cited in Lê (1999) suggested that sexism in our society is often reflected in our language. When sex roles are stereotyped in language use, language becomes sexist (Pepitone-Arreola-Rockwell, 1981, cited in Lê, 1999) and is not related to inherent biological differences.

4.9.1 Confucian influence in Vietnamese proverbs and folklores

The Vietnamese people treasure the aspect of spirituality in life. Common sayings and proverbs are original and typically Vietnamese. It is believed that

life experiences and values are orally transmitted through folk songs and myths from generation to generation.

To understand Vietnamese customs, people's profound thoughts, feelings, sentiments, their ideals, one can not neglect the treasure of folk songs as they are part of the cultural heritage of the nation and have become woven into the people's lives. Folk songs and proverbs are not only philosophical but also a reflection of social values and a lifetime of experience. Some are satirical, some show irony and wit, some reveal the rule of patriarchy in its purest form, and some illustrate the application of Confucian principles.

Công (IRef. 19) says that some popular sayings imply the notion of women's inferiority and helplessness. This notion has deeply ingrained in the Vietnamese consciousness and deprives women of their dignity and self-confidence. From this notion, she concludes that it is not difficult to understand why a woman must depend on a man for protection and support. Công stresses (IRe. 19) that "folklore does not fail to spell out what is expected of her in return for this dependency: namely, she is to devote her entire life exclusively to the services of the patriarchal family that provides her with an identity".

Among the favourite folklores are those which exemplify a woman's unquestionable devotion to her husband and family, the more extreme, the more praiseworthy (IRef. 19). In the folklore "con cò lặn lội bờ sông", the miserable image of the Vietnamese woman was compared with a heron, thin and wretched but with great humility. She has no choice but takes all the responsibility on her shoulders and suffers in silence. There is the story "Anh Phải Sống" written by Khái Hưng about a woman, who has sacrificed her life, so her husband could live and raise their children. There is the legendary tale of the Lady from Nam Xương (Thiếu Phụ Nam Xương) about an attractive woman with unquestionable devotion. Công (IRef. 19) says that the Lady from Nam Xương represents "a pathetic case of obsession with, and blind conformity to, the ideal; but the fact that she endured and submitted to an undeserving man makes her even more virtuous".

On's study (1994) states that the status of Vietnamese women has traditionally been low. Though the wife has some influence in the family and defers to her husband's wish publicly, her role has always been subordinate. Young women are

advised to reserve the three codes of obedience and once they are married they have to take all responsibilities in their husbands' families, this burden is revealed in the folk-sayings:

Làm gái giữ đạo tam cương

Có chồng phải gánh giang sang nhà chồng

Nam ngoại nữ nội

Feudal conception saying that man looks after external activities whereas a woman's place is at home.

Thuyền theo lái gái theo chồng

The ship follows the steering wheel and woman follows her husband.

Đàn ông nông cạn giếng khơi

Đàn bà sâu sắc như coi đưng trầu

Men are as superficial as a well, women are as profound as a betel tray
Used metaphor to implicate that men are smart whereas women are shallow.
These folk sayings display discrimination against women.

Đàn bà cạn như lòng đĩa.

Women are as shallow as a dish.

And an unmarried woman is in an unstable position. There is much irony as well as wit in the following sayings concerning life of a woman:

Tròng trành như nón lá không quai

Như thuyền không lái như ai không chồng

Floating like an unstrapped (conic) hat

Like an unhelmed boat, like an unmarried woman.

Some say that this folk-song does not echo mockery but simply a comparison using metaphor. It really depends on the context of the situation.

As her youth is passing her by and if she is still not married, she will be pitied for:

Còn duyên kẻ đón người đưa

Hết duyên đi sớm về trưa một mình

While young and pretty, a woman has many suitors

When her prettiness dies, she then leads a lonely life.

Woman's helplessness is expressed through:

Thân em như hạt mưa sa

Hạt rơi ngoài giếng hạt ra ngoài đồng

My destiny is like a raindrop

Some fall in the gutter, some fall in rich ponds.

Woman is presented as a vulnerable human being here. This is a dominant image of woman in the Vietnamese culture. This sentiment is in contrast with the modern views, people nowadays are more open in their attitude towards single life. Being single nowadays can be an individual freedom of choice (La, 1993: 103).

Thân em như tấm lụa đào

Phất phơ giữa chợ biết vào tay ai.

My destiny is like a piece of red silk fluttering in the market and not knowing to whom it will be sold.

Công (IRef. 19) presents that woman has no control of her life or self-determination. She is at the mercy of fate and is inferior to man.

And if a woman is not married, she'll be satirised as expressed in these folk sayings:

Thối tai hôi nách rình rình

Không ai hỏi đến cật mình chính chuyên

Afflicted with bad odour in the ears and armpits.

She believes she is virtuous but no one will marry her.

While men are admired for their maturity, women are seen as ‘old maids’,
women’s youth and beauty are quick to fade away:

Trai ba mươi tuổi còn son

Gái ba mươi tuổi đã toan về già.

Men in the age range of thirties are still young

While women in their thirties age rapidly.

The term ‘gái già’ (old maid), used in humorous sexism to imply a girl who is over 30 years of age and still single. The concept of ‘face’ and social pressure is so strong that rather than risking shame and outcast, most women would accept an arranged marriage by a matchmaker.

Cây độc không trái, gái độc không con.

A bad tree is fruitless, a wicked woman is incapable of bearing children.

This proverb clearly illustrates that women’s main role is to bear (male) children and infertile women are scorned. It is always the women who are sterile, never the men.

Đàn bà đái không qua đầu ngọn cỏ.

Women are not capable of peeing high above the top of the grass

This implies that women in the old time are reputed to be powerless under many circumstances.

Đàn bà mặc quần không qua khỏi đầu.

Women are not able to pull their pants over their heads.

Chàng như mây mùa thu, thiếp như khói trong lò

My man is like a huge autumn cumulus,

I am but a plume from the fireplace

In these verses, ‘chàng’ (you) must clearly convey the idea of male/stronger sex.

When asked why women can not be clouds in the sky and men are smokes

rising from the fireplace, it was answered that perhaps because women usually were more home loving and homely. Women could become lofty autumn clouds only when they were day dreaming or feel romantic.

*Một trăm con gái đời nay ấy
Đừng nói ân tình với thủy chung.*

With most girls nowadays
It is useless to talk about loyalty in love

‘Ân tình’ here indicates rather moral obligation, as in “ân tình ân nghĩa” or ‘faithfulness’ - not just love (tình)

*Đàn bà lòng dạ hiểm sâu
Ngoài môi thì nói những câu chung tình.*

Women’s lips utter words of faithfulness
While their minds harbour thoughts of perfidy.

In some life activities such as family gatherings or occasions like ‘giỗ’ (a commemoration for the deceased relatives), men usually are seated at the table first and good dishes are first served for husbands and guests:

Ăn trên ngồi trước.

Whereas women sit in a corner and eat left overs:

Ăn xó mó niêu.

Some argue that the two proverbs are women’s laments and when one laments over something one tends to exaggerate the situation. Some say that this applies more with the Chinese tradition as husbands and guests are always served first and that some families adopt this pattern but not all families do so.

In many of the Vietnamese gatherings, women usually sit together at a table for women, while men sit at a table reserved for men. It appears that this scenario is seen by many as a natural thing to do. Women can talk about ‘women’s things’

considered by men as trivial and valueless and men can talk about 'men's things' regarded either as important and can not be understood by women or vulgar when they make jokes about women. In fact, this reveals clearly a gendered division in which men are seen as powerful and dominant figures and women are seen as inferiors.

Con gái mười hai bến nước, trong nhờ đục chịu.

(Girls are like twelve ferry-landings, if the water at her ferry-landing is clean, she is lucky, if it is not, she has to accept it)

In this context, marriage is a woman's destiny. If her marriage is good, she is considered lucky, if her marriage does not work, she has no choice but to accept it. Lê (1999) explains that an arranged marriage could be a safe way for a woman to avoid 'unlucky ferry landing'. But this would place a woman's life in man's hand and bereave her an opportunity to make her own decision.

Thân em như ngọn liễu đào, phát phơ trước gió biết vào tay ai.

(A girl's life is like a willow tree branch, it is blown in the wind and does not know where it lands)

Lê (1999) argues that woman is treated as an object in this context, her future is decided by a man.

Dạy con từ thuở còn thơ,

Dạy vợ từ thuở ban sơ mới về.

(Teach your children when they are two or three, teach your wife when she is still very innocent, first joins the family)

There are two differing interpretations for the above folklore. The first interpretation is that when a woman first joins her husband's extended family, she is not familiar with their ways of life, 'dạy vợ' simply means to help her get along with her new family, it does not inferiorize women as objects.

According to the second interpretation, when the verb 'dạy' (teach) is used, not only does it implicate a wealth of experience and knowledge of the one who teaches but at the same time, implicates positions portrayals of the sexes within a relational framework. Within this framework men are dominant, masculine

and valued while women are subordinate, feminine and devalued. In this context, when a woman enters marriage, she needs her husband to teach her to be a ‘good wife.’

Other linguistic stereotyping includes the viewpoint of “nhất nam viết hữu thập nữ viết vô” (having one son is more worthy than having ten daughters), this was popular among the Confucianist followers. The idea that men are to be respected and women are inferior to men also comes from the thought that man will look after and preserve the ancestor's belongings, carries the family's surname and passes it on even after he is married. Whereas the woman will lose her family name after she gets married and bears children of another family.

Other sayings are:

Con gái ngoại tộc, đánh tóc đuổi đi.

Nữ sanh ngoại tộc

A daughter is other people's child and because a daughter does not belong to the “real” family, she was not treated equally as other members of the family (La, 1993: 96)

Con gái là con người ta

This saying also means a daughter is other people's child. Girls were not taught to do the trade that required a lot of experience and could be handed down to the next generation. (La, 1993: 96)

When a girl is married she came under the control of her husband's family, the following folklore reveals the status of daughters-in-law:

Con dâu đích thực mẹ cha mua về.

Daughters-in-law are true daughters of their parents-in-law because they have paid for them. Since they were ‘bought’ (mua) home, they were expected to be patient, prepared to do most or all housework and led a life full of hard labour and sufferings in silence. Studies and stories have shown that mothers-in-law had absolute over their daughters-in-law and were traditionally cruel to them. It was

said that in cases, this was as a revenge on their daughters-in-law who in their old age would wield power in the same manner.

Children in the family often follow the parents' patterns. Girls, sisters have to do more work whereas boys and brothers do not do much as household tasks are considered for girls. Young children learn from adults' behaviours and imitate; therefore when they grow up they in turn adopt very similar behaviours. This marks a division of sex, role and status. Many men have been brought up to think that women are to serve them and there is no need to show appreciation.

Women have led a life of sacrifice and yet after they had children, if unfortunately one of the children was not educated in a way that everyone has expected, the blame would be on the mother:

Con hư tại mẹ.

If the child is disobedient, it is the mother's fault.

This ignores the father's responsibility and blames the mother for the child's conduct and behaviour.

Cháu hư tại bà.

If the grandchild is disobedient, it is the grandmother's fault.

Once again, the responsibility is shifted on the shoulder of a grandmother should her grandson become disobedient.

Nữ nhi thường tình

As vulgar as a woman

This is a feudal conception saying that women are inferior.

Nội tướng

Domestic leader

The term 'nội tướng' originated from Chinese characters was explained in various ways. 'Nội tướng' has the meaning of 'domestic leader' and includes elderly females of the family. It is not an expression that debases the value of women. It simply means an equal share of the work and responsibility. Vietnam has a history of war, men have to go to the battlefield and leave women with most

responsibilities. If men go to war to fight for the country, women help to support the family, if men go to work women perform household duties.

The terms ‘nội tướng’ could also be used in a happy context, in which the wife has every control in the family. The husband goes to work but the wife manages the family budget. In other words, his wage is hers.

When families migrate to the new countries, the role of the elderly females as ‘nội tướng’ has degenerated because their power in the family has reduced and this caused psychological problems in their readjustment. (Hassan et. al., 1985).

Đàn bà tay yếu chân mềm.

Women have very weak arms and legs.

There was a strong belief in this saying and yet when said, it is often said half as a joke and half- truth. This implicates that there are those who have some idea of what sexism is but think it is a trivial problem, and then turn it into humorousness.

Though proverbs are widely used to teach morality and reflect wisdom passed from generation to generation, proverbs are also “abused to maintain the ‘harmony’ of a male-dominating society” (Le, 1999). For examples, the following proverbs tend to discriminate against women:

Con không cha như nhà không nóc.

Children without fathers are like a house without a roof ridge.

Lê argues that despite themes praising the dedication, sacrifice and love of a mother, there are no similar proverbs, which emphasise the pivotal role of the mother.

In contrast to this interpretation, the proverb ‘Mồ côi cha ăn cơm với cá, mồ côi mẹ liếm lá đầu đường’, a fatherless child is well-fed (with fish and rice) whereas a motherless child is left to starve (on the road). This proverb emphasises the pivotal role of the mother, a mother’s loving care for her child is usually so much more throughout than a father’s and underestimates the role of the father.

4.9.2 Presupposition

We also find a presupposition in the way language is used.

As acknowledged in Vietnamese Discriminatory Language: A Sociolinguistic Analysis written by Lê and Lê (1999):

“Presupposition indicates a proposition, idea, view that underlies a surface structure. For instance, the question “how small is your house” carries the presupposition that your house is small; whereas the question “how big is your house” does not carry the presupposition that the house is big. Similarly, the sentence “he is a man but he can cook very well” implies the presupposition that men are not good at cooking and this is an exception (expressed in the word ‘but’).

Presupposition in language can reveal interesting insights about our perception of others and attitudes towards them...”

Đàn ông mà lảm chuyện (Le & Le, 1999)

He is a man but so talkative

Presupposition: Men are not talkative, only women are”.

Nhát như đàn bà.

He behaves like a woman, he does not have the gut to do something.

Presupposition: Women are not brave.

However the expression “nhát như cây” (as shy as a deer) is often used by man referring to another man.

Yếu đuối như đàn bà.

He is as weak as a woman is.

Presupposition: Women are weak, women are regarded as being unable to look after themselves. Only men are strong.

This presupposition also reveals the helplessness that our culture encourages in women. Women are trained to be helpless. Some act as cute little kitten, they show men how helpless they are, men feel macho and see that women need men to protect them

Lải nhải như đàn bà.

He talks excessively like a woman.

Presupposition: Women talk excessively. Men should talk earnestly.

Tiểu tiết như đàn bà.

He pays attention to trivial things like a woman.

Presupposition: Women are trivial. Only men are broad.

Đàn bà không biết gì hết/Đàn bà mà biết gì.

What does a woman know!

Presupposition: Women do not know anything. Only men know.

Đàn bà gây nhiều phiền phức.

Women are trouble- makers

Presupposition: Women are trouble. Men are not.

In Vietnamese society, the term 'gossip' is used to describe women's talks of no value. Perhaps a long time ago, when women did not have rights as decent human beings and were prevented from schooling, they had to rely on men for information. Nowadays, as life is changing, the new women acquire education and employment status, they travel, watch television and read newspapers, women do not 'gossip' but they discuss.

Some sexist terms also apply to man. An unmarried man can be called as 'ế' vợ.' (he is unwanted/has trouble getting a wife). The sexist term 'ế' chồng' (unable to find a husband) is used for woman. When the terms 'ế' chồng', 'ế' vợ' are used in Vietnamese, it can never be considered a good way of communication. It tells the listeners that the single person is desperate and hopeless.

The adjective 'ế' itself means unmarketable, slack. It is often used within the market context such as 'ế' hàng' (find no buyers/have few or no customers); 'ế' ẩm' (market is flat/slack trade)

Lê (1999) states that male and female are judged differently on the same behaviour. It is often positive for men and negative for women. Sexism against women occurred in:

Eating manner:

Nam thực như hổ, nữ thực như miêu.

Man eats like a tiger, woman eats like a cat.

Laughing manner:

Đàn bà chưa nói đã cười,

Chồng ra cửa trước dắt ngay trai vào.

Women laugh before talking

Getting another man at the rear door as soon as the husband leaves the front door.

4.9.3 People's appearance

There are folk sayings about people's appearance. It is also important to reiterate that on one aspect although these folk sayings are biased in stereotyping, they are also lifetime experiences. Once again it depends on the people's attitude, if one think that they are discriminatory then they are, if one think that they are merely real life experiences, then they are simply knowledge:

Đàn ông miệng rộng thì sang

Đàn bà miệng rộng tan hoang cửa nhà

or

Đàn ông miệng rộng thì tài

Đàn bà miệng rộng điếc tai láng giềng

A man with a large mouth is considered elegant whereas a woman with a large mouth is destructive to her family and troublesome for the neighbourhood.

According to Công (IRef. 19), a man's perfection would turn out to be a woman's defect. A man's large mouth signifies his talent and nobility, whereas, a woman's large mouth signifies gossip and wickedness. Her large mouth deafens her neighbours and causes disharmony to her family.

Những người béo trọc béo tròn

Ăn vụng bằng chóp đánh con cả ngày.

Chubby women eat stealthily and spank the children all day.

La(1993) argues that there are fat women who look after their husband and children well, and that not all fat women eat stealthily or have the habit of beating their children “all day long”.

Không râu bất nghì`

Man without a beard is to say- without a heart.

Những người ti hí mắt lươn

Trai thời trộm cướp gái buôn chồng người.

People who have tiny eyes like an eel's eyes,

Men would become either robbers or thieves whereas women would be stealing other people's husbands.

Expressions comparing people with animals, objects, sexual organs and evils

Ngu như bò, ngu như cho', ngu như heo.

As stupid as a cow/dog/pig. / A person who is as thick as a brick.

Implying a thickheaded person

Dốt đặc cán mai.

He is wood from the neck up.

Mít đặc (thick-headed, ignorant).

Béo như bồ sứt cạp.

Remark on a person who is fat and ugly.

Ugliness

Xấu như cú.

As ugly as an owl. Teasing a person who is ugly.

Xấu như dạ xoa, xấu như ma, xấu như quỉ.

As ugly as a demon. As ugly as sin.

Xấu như ma lem/ Xấu như ma mút.

As ugly as a mammoth.

A person who is looking ugly and dirty.

Cả vú to hông, cho không chẳng màng.

Old conception saying that a big woman is not pretty.

Béo như con cun cú.

He is as plumb as a partridge.

Teasing someone who is fat and short.

Cao như sếu vườn.

As tall and thin as a crane.

Teasing people who are tall and skinny.

Cao lêu đêu như cò hương(teasing someone who is very tall)

Gầy như que củi /gầy như cái que.

Thin as a rail. Teasing someone who is very thin.

Mình gầy xác ve.

Thin like the corpse of a cicada.

Chậm như rùa.

Teasing someone moving at a snail's pace.

Chậm như sên.

Teasing someone who is as slow as a snail.

Đen như cột nhà cháy.

Teasing someone whose skin/ face is as black as soot. Scorchingly black.

Đen như củ súng.

Someone or something as dark as the root of a waterlily.

Đen như cuốc.

As dark as an amouornis phoenicurus./ water hen.

Face

Mắt bầm ra sữa or Mắt búng ra sữa

Someone who is young and inexperienced (greenhorn; unfledged youth; sucker). Contempt for someone who is young and inexperienced or lacks talent

Mặt bèn bẹt như bánh giầy.

Face as flat as a rice cake.

Describing a person's face that is flat and does not look intelligent.

Mặt cú, da dơi

Face like an owl, skin is like a bat.

Depicting someone whose face is black and ugly.

Mặt như chuột kẹp

A rat face/ a narrow and small face, an evil looking person.

Comparing a person with a mouse as in “nhát như chuột ngày” (timid as a mouse in broad daylight).

Mặt phèn phẹt như cái mâm.

Mặt mâm.

Face is flat like a food tray.

Teasing someone whose face is big and flat.

Mặt mẹt.

Brazen- faced, a shameless person.

Mặt lưỡi cày.

Hatched- faced. A long face with a pointed chin.

Mặt lồn (pussy face). Extremely discriminating against women.

Mặt mo. Face as thick as a sheath/spathe, a shameless person.

Mặt rỗ như tổ ong bầu.

A pockmarked face like a beehive.

Teasing someone whose face is pockmarked.

Mặt ngựa, a horse face (a long face). *Mặt chó,* a dog face (offensive).

Eyes

Mắt ốc nhồi.

Bulging eyes like a snail's.

Mắt cú vọ.

Eagle eyes.

Mắt lợn

Porcine eyes.

Mắt lươn.

Small eyes like those of an eel.

Believed to be a deceitful person.

Mắt cá uơn (from Nguyễn Sa's poetry).

Eyes like dead fish.

Mắt trắng dã, môi thâm sì`

Eyes so white, lips are dark, a crafty/deceitful person.

Hair

Tóc như rễ tre.

Hair is like root of a bamboo tree. Teasing someone who has very bristle and hard hair.

Nose

Mũi cong như mũi lợn.

Nose is curved like that of a pig. Teasing someone with a curved nose.

Mũi diều hâu.

Eagle nose.

Mũi sư tử- short and flat nose (a lion's nose).

Mũi lõ- Long nose- Frenchman.

Lips

Cong môi hay hút, mỏng môi hay hôn.

Thin and arched lips. It is believed to be a distinctive feature of a person who tells tales and is easily vulnerable.

Mouth

Miệng cá ngão.

Mouth like that of a fish called *erythroculter pseudobrevicauda*.

Teasing someone who has an exceptionally wide mouth.

Miệng hùm gan sứa.

Big words but a coward at heart.

Miệng khôn tròn đại.

Glib speech, poor performance (a glib mouth, dumb buttocks).

Other terms which associate women with wicked animals:

“Sư tử cái” (a lioness); ‘chó cái’ (bitch); ‘bò cái’ (cow); ‘ngựa cái’ (literally a mare; figuratively, a slut); ‘cọp cái’ (a tigress) and “sư tử Hà Đông” (lioness from the Province of Hà Đông) referred to women who use less polite forms of speech or have forceful behaviours. Women are compared with evils in ‘bà chằng’ (ogress), “bà la sát” (she-devil).

The reason for this is that in Vietnamese society women are often associated with feeling and words of emotion. In contrast with “sư tử Hà Đông”, there is a popular poetic expression “áo lụa Hà Đông” (girls in silk dresses made from Hà

Đông province) by Nguyễn Sa. It implicates the gentleness of girls from Hà Đông and the poet's tender love of his memories.

Some say that, terms associating women with wicked animals are not used to degrade women. Instead, they convey only the meaning that women should also be tough when they need to be.

4.9.4 Occupation

The term “xướng ca vô loại” is often used by a number of people in the Vietnamese society to show disrespect for the singing profession.

This is due to the belief that ‘xướng ca’ (actors/actresses/singers) are people who lead a dissipated life, tend to change husband or wife as if they change clothes. And the term ‘vô loại’ (not belong to any group/not counted in/ loss of social position) is used to show disdain.

However according to some elderly people consulted, the original meaning of “xướng ca vô loại” was not used to show disrespect for singers. In the course of history during that period of time, singing was not classified as a profession in the Vietnamese society. There were only four traditional classes recognised in the the country: “sĩ, nông, công, thương” (scholar, farmer, craftsman, tradesman). It is said that this is a division of responsibilities in society and not a division stemmed from discrimination.

Scholars occupied the first rank due to the belief that they are educated people who would use their knowledge and morality to serve people in the righteous way, while the farmers, craftsmen and tradesmen would help the country economically. The singers do not belong to any of the four classes, that is why they are called ‘vô loại’. The word itself is not derogatory, its usage depends on people's attitude and how they apply it.

Since language acts as a storehouse of meanings (Kress, 1989), due to the course of history its meaning can alter slightly. Nowadays, with more western influence singing is a highly regarded profession in Vietnam.

With regard to professions such as porter, carrier, labourers, road cleaner (phu quét đường), ‘phu rác’ (garbage collector), we often hear remarks such as ‘làm culi’ (work as a labourer, coolie); or even harder when the classifier ‘đồ’ is used as in ‘đồ culi’. For the work of a domestic keeper, the remarks ‘đồ marie sên’, “

giống marie sên”, “Ma-ri Phong-tên” (fontaine- originated from French) are used with contempt to describe and compare a person with a housemaid/ ridicule a person with rustic appearance.

Male is also biased but not as much as female. In Buddhism, the Bodhisattva Quan Thế Âm is a symbol of love and compassion. According to Buddhist scriptures, the Bodhisattva or Bồ Tát is formless, therefore neither male nor female.

Some scholars said that the Vietnamese altered her gender from a male to a female “to fit the needs of the people” (Topmiller, 2001), this is a presupposition that a female Bodhisattva has more compassion than a male Bodhisattva.

Another interpretation is that the Bodhisattva Quan Thế Âm appears in different forms “ứng hiện tùy cơ ” to help people. For many Vietnamese the Bodhisattva’s love is as unconditional as a mother’s love for her child, so when they pray to the Bodhisattva for help, they think of ‘her’ through the mother’s image.

4. 9.5 Non-Confucian attitudes in folklore

As mentioned above, though the society was greatly influenced by Confucianism, the spirit of equality of the traditional Vietnamese society does not die out but exists alongside with the spirit of Confucianism. Following are proverbs that are in contrast with Confucian teachings:

Ép dầu ép mỡ ai nỡ ép duyên

One can press olive for oil/ One can press fat for grease but should not press a girl into marriage.

This denotes a freedom of choice in marriage, as there were families who respected their children’s wishes.

As opposed to the notion of men are to be respected and women are inferior to men, there is a folklore that is said to show the true spirit of the Vietnamese people:

Trai mà chi gái mà chi

Con nào có nghĩa có nghì thì hơn.

It does not matter which, you’ll be better off with a dutiful son or daughter.

Của chồng công vợ.

Husband's wealth; wife's earnings or A man's assets are to grow with his wife's effort.

Thuận vợ thuận chồng tát biển đông cũng cạn.

If concerted, man and wife's efforts can drain the East Sea dry.

This proverb shows the spirit of equality of men and women, living in harmony man and wife can accomplish anything.

Trên đồng cạn dưới đồng sâu

Chồng bừa vợ cấy con trâu đi cày.

"In the upper shallow rice field and in the lower deep rice field,

The husband harrows, his wife thins out while his buffalo tills.

Following are the common sayings that are in contrast to the inferior role of women in Confucianism:

Trai không vợ như ngựa không khớp.

Wifeless boy is like bridleless horse.

Trai có vợ như thuyền có lái'.

A married young man is like a boat that has a rudder.

Vợ ngoan làm quan cho chồng.

A wife who has tact and delicacy helps her husband succeed and earn the respect of relatives and friends (La, 1993:108).

The position of a wife is considered important here.

Nhất vợ nhì trời.

When the worst comes to the worst, wife comes first.

The following folksong presents a contrast image of the subservient woman. It ridicules the false concept of women's inferiority and dependency (Cong, IRef. 19):

Chính chuyên lấy được chín chồng

Vé viên bỏ lọ gánh gồng đi chơi

Ai ngờ quang đứt lọ rơi

Bò ra lổm ngổm chín nơi chín chồng.

(Respecting the rule of fidelity I have married nine husbands

Rolling them into balls, I put them in a jar and carried it with a shoulder pole.

Accidentally the suspending frame broke and the jar fell to the ground;

Out crawled the nine husbands scattering in nine different directions).

Cong (IRef. 19) suggests that the subservient image of woman is a reflection of the dominant tradition enforced by the ruling class or the elite tradition influenced by Confucian ideology. It sets certain behaviour for the ideal woman. In contrast with the Confucian image of woman, the folksong above illustrates a woman's deviance from the ideal and exposes what a woman can actually do in real life situations. This is believed as a recollection of the pre-Chinese indigenous tradition, which allows women more freedom and equality.

4.10 Conclusion

The discussion in this chapter strongly indicates that it is impossible to understand adequately sexist language in Vietnamese without taking into consideration the Vietnamese culture in general and the Confucian influence in particular. Sexist language is strongly encoded in Vietnamese proverbs, popular sayings and fables, which prescribe the female and male roles in the Vietnamese society. Depending on which side of the fence, one can see this prescription as glorifying the female role in society or patronising women. Many women were bound by the weight of history to their traditional obedience to men and this meant much silent suffering.

The research into linguistic elements is limited since the history of Vietnam is a history of war. To many people whose economic conditions are below average and struggling for the family's survival is the main issue, people would pay more attention to economic conditions of the country, how they would survive tomorrow rather than linguistic elements.

Chapter Five

Contrastive features of English and Vietnamese discriminatory aspects

5.1 Introduction

Contrastive analysis has been used by linguists to compare and contrast two or more languages in order to identify problems of second language learning. This chapter briefly discusses the use of contrastive analysis and some contrastive features of English and Vietnamese. The later part of this chapter presents a comparative discussion of English and Vietnamese in terms of linguistic and discriminatory/sexist features.

5.2 Contrastive analysis

According to Brown (1980) contrastive analysis theory involves a systematic comparison and contrasting of the first language and the second language systems. Linguists observe that when students learn a new language, they have a tendency of translating what they have first learnt in their native language into the second language. The difficulty in the acquisition of the second language lies in the interference of the first language with the second language. Learners can not always find satisfactory equivalents of their native language in the second language for learning a new language means having to learn a new system. Words, which designate a specific concept in one culture may not have a similar meaning in the second language's culture. Items of vocabulary, grammatical features in a new language are not always equivalent to the native language's vocabulary and grammar.

Some of the features of the new language may appear to be difficult while others may be easy to learners.

For Linguists, to be able to understand the degrees of difficulty encountered by learners and analyse the likenesses and differences between two languages, a scientific study of the linguistic structures is required. Studying linguistic contrasts is studying the rules of the systems of the two languages.

In one's own native language, it is unavoidable to make mistakes and misapply the rules of the system that the student is learning. This problem becomes larger in the second language learning for students have less chance to use the language s/he is learning. This is also because of the fact that certain sets of rules of the native language still exist consciously or subconsciously within one's mind.

Stern (1983) argues that such language comparison is not new in traditional language practice but Lado was the first to apply this principle systematically.

In addition to the linguistic features, one of the problems relating to learning a foreign language is the distant difference of the two cultures (Stern, 1983). According to Stern, most European languages share common features in linguistics as well as in the cultural assumptions. These common features reflect in the use of vocabulary and grammar. This is also the case for many oriental languages as they do have some common linguistic features. Despite their similarities in linguistic features, there is no guarantee that a learner will learn a second language easily as there are factors relating to society and culture.

However, for a European learner the differences of learning European languages are not as great as learning oriental languages. In Stern's analysis, the social and cultural factors contribute their part in the language learning process for " socio-economic and sociocultural differences which may manifest themselves in different attitudes to language in general" (1983, p. 277). Researches have shown that certain economic, political and cultural values may affect the status of a language. One interpretation is that the common stereotypes about a foreign language can influence a learner's motivation, their positive or negative attitudes when learning a foreign language. Other studies have found that these values are not a relevant factor for the achievement of foreign language learning.

There are different views on the contrastive analysis hypothesis. In the early seventies, a group of American researchers proposed the "creative construction hypothesis" which claimed that second language learning's process is similar to the process of first language learning. It develops in the way that a child learns his first language and denies the interference of the first language in second

language learning. Differences in the two languages are not the main cause of difficulties for the learners.

In these researchers' point of view, "the steps and sequences in second language learning are universal and have the same regularities that one can find in first language acquisition" (Stern, 1983, p. 331).

Another theory put forward was the "Restructuring Hypothesis" which claims that when the learners restructure their first language they will be able to develop the second language. In Schumann's research, acculturation, "the social and psychological integration of the learner with the target language..." (Stern, 1983, p. 331) plays a crucial part in second language learning.

Despite researches claiming that by using the contrastive analysis hypothesis, one can predict and understand difficulties or non-difficulties encountered by the students. This is done by having a systematic comparison between the foreign language, its culture with the students' native language and culture. Randal Whitman (as cited in Brown, 1980) subjectively claimed that this systematic comparison involved the four procedures. The first procedure involves description, which is to use grammar to describe the function of the two languages. The second procedure is selection, this is done for the reason that the capacity of a language is large and it is impossible to contrast all facets of the languages but only to select and contrast certain items such as rules or structures.

The third procedure involves using the method of contrasting the two linguistic systems and their relationships. The fourth procedure is prediction that is made based on the three procedures mentioned above.

The methodic approach with regard to comparison between the two languages is considered strength of the contrastive analysis hypothesis for the linguists and teachers. At least they know certain sets of linguistic rules in order to have a clearer picture of some difficulties encountered by learners. Wardhaugh (cited by Brown, 1980, p. 157) regarded the method of prediction of difficulties that will arise while students learning a foreign language as a 'strong version' of the contrastive analysis hypothesis. He believed that this was an unrealistic and impracticable approach:

“Does the linguist have available to him an over-all contrastive system within which he can relate the two languages in terms of mergers, splits, zeroes, over-differentiations, under-differentiations, reinterpretations, and so on...? Methods that linguists have used in contrastive analysis to compare and contrast the two languages are “more out of mentalistic subjectivity” (Brown, 1980, p. 45).

Wardhaugh (as cited by Brown, 1980) has acknowledged that although linguists have used their best linguistic knowledge to explain difficulties that they perceive, such observation is regarded as the ‘weak version’ of the contrastive analysis hypothesis. It is impossible for linguists to predict all other aspects of difficulties besides phonological and grammatical differences for language structure is complex:

“In fact, it is really only in the phonological component of language that contrastive analysis is mildly successful. In early stages of second language in fairly consistent patterns, largely because pronunciation is a psychomotor skill, and with its reliance on muscular coordination, is a factor of more predictable interference. Syntactic, semantic, or lexical interference is far less predictable, since ‘cognitive coordination’ in all its tremendous variability becomes more of a factor than muscular coordination” (Brown, 1980, p.157-158).

5.3 English versus Vietnamese

5.3.1 Linguistic aspect

In English, there are words for female derived from the male form. For example: the word ‘woman’ has ‘man’ attached to it, ‘mrs’ has ‘mr’ precedes ‘s’, ‘princess’ has ‘prince’ precedes ‘ss’, ‘countess’ has ‘count’, ‘hostess’ has ‘host’ etc...

In Vietnamese, this type of semantic structure does not exist but a separate pre-noun ‘đàn’ is used. ‘Đàn’ by itself as a noun has meanings such as ‘altar’ (platform), (musical instrument). ‘Đàn’, if used as a pre-noun, in front of ‘ông’ (man) as in ‘đàn ông’ means man/men. For woman, ‘đàn’ precedes ‘ba’ as in

‘đàn bà’ means woman/women. In English the pronoun ‘she’ is the subsum of pronoun ‘he’ whereas in Vietnamese there is no such subsume.

In Vietnamese, we often hear expressions such as “nữ văn sĩ” (female writer); “nữ ký giả” (female journalist); “nữ bác sĩ” (female doctor); “nữ luật sư” (female lawyer). This implicates that all those professions are particularly designed for men. Women who work in those occupations are merely exceptions and because they are exceptions, the pre-noun ‘nữ’ is added to distinguish the difference (Phan, 1999, p. 201-205).

According to Vietnamese critics, the pre-noun words ‘nữ’ (female) or ‘nam’ (male) are not regarded as sexist. These words are used merely to mark gender difference and emphasize what the speaker wants to say.

In English, the use of specified gender terms is regarded as sexist.

Stern (1997, p.14-15) defines sexist language as “ the use of feminine and masculine terms when the gender of the person one is referring to is either not known or not relevant.” To avoid the use of sexist language, Stern suggests the use of plurals with pronouns instead of the singular form. “Every one should do his duties”(sexist), instead, “All people should do their duty” (non-sexist).

Common gender terms should replace specified ones such as chairperson instead of chairman, poet instead of poetess, usher instead of usherette.

Masculine or feminine terms need to be avoided for occupations, judge instead of ‘woman judge’, nurse instead of ‘male nurse’, lawyer instead of ‘lady lawyer.’ Many people have begun to accept that the normal language they have used before is no longer normal. It has become impolite and sexist to women. In Vietnam, people may not notice the use of sexist language but in Australia, sexist language use may land a person in trouble.

The use of slang in both languages is believed for male use. There are words linked people with animals and body organs, eg. an ox head (kẻ đầu bò, a stubborn person); a person with a big liver (người lớn gan, a bold person); a person with a huge gall bladder (người lớn mật, a daring person). Vo (1994) states that these body organs are used simply to describe people’s psychological qualities, they are not used to denote people’s physical deformities.

Some of the linguistic differences are, in English the words ‘man’, ‘mankind’ refer to human beings whereas, in Vietnamese the equivalents for ‘mankind’ and ‘man’ are ‘người’ or ‘con người’. This does not differentiate between man and woman. English critics argue that if ‘mankind’ and ‘he’ are used as generic terms, the world is perceived as consisting of males only.

In English, adjectives precede nouns. One would say “a beautiful woman” in which sensibility (cảm tính) goes first, while, in Vietnamese, adjectives follow nouns, it’ll be translated into Vietnamese as “người đàn bà đẹp” (a woman beautiful), the noun ‘woman’ precedes the adjective ‘beautiful’.

In terms of semantics, Vo (1988) states that in some case, English uses only one verb to denote meaning, whereas, Vietnamese uses different verbs. For example, the verb ‘carry’ means ‘ẵm’; ‘bồng’; ‘gánh’; ‘vác’; ‘mang’; ‘khiêng’ in Vietnamese.

In other cases, English uses many verbs to denote meaning whereas Vietnamese tend to use one word. For example; the verbs ‘say’; ‘tell’; ‘speak’; ‘talk’ is equivalent to the word ‘nói’ in Vietnamese. Vo (1988) says that English language focuses on content and concepts whereas Vietnamese language focuses on forms. As a result, different words are used to denote different concrete forms.

5.3.2 Contrastive features in English and Vietnamese kinship terminology

By considering kinship terminology, we see a linguistic difference in Vietnamese and English. Kinship terminology expresses and embodies significant social relationships, which vary from one culture to another. In Vietnamese, grammatical constructions are associated with different relative social status of the speaker and the person spoken to, eg; em, anh, con, cháu. These personal pronouns have the ability to show feelings and express respect or disrespect. Whereas, in English only ‘you’ and ‘I’ or ‘me’ are used.

In the English language, the word ‘uncle’ is used to refer to the mother’s brother(s), the father’s brother(s), the husband of the mother’s sister(s), the husband of the father’s sister(s). In Vietnamese different words are used to signify different relationships with these categories of kin. Eg, cậu (em mẹ.-

mother's younger brother); chú' (em ba, father's younger brother), in north Vietnam, 'bác' (parents' older brother), in south Vietnam, 'cô' (father's older or younger sister). In North Vietnam, 'dì' (em me, mother's younger sister), in central Vietnam, such as Nha Trang, 'dì' is also used to address to mother's older sister.

'Em', 'con', 'cháu' or even personal names (Lan, Be) are used when addressing someone of equal or inferior social status. 'Bà', 'Cô', 'Cậu', 'Tôi' are used when expressing deference, formality or social distance. The terms 'thưa ông', 'thưa bà' indicate acknowledgment of differences in the social status of speaker and listener.

Vietnamese language obliges speaker to judge and acknowledge the nature of their social relationship in terms of status, power. This distinction, in terms of address, reveals a strong concern for respect and good feelings in personal relations in Vietnamese society (Clark, 1988). Terms of respects 'cụ.', 'ông', 'bác', 'thầy', 'bà' are referred to people who are older and in a higher status than the speaker. Younger people or people in a lower status than the speaker are referred to as 'em', 'con', 'cháu', 'chú', 'cô'. This distinction is seldom found among English speakers when referring to others. Compared to the impersonal English 'you' and 'I', the expressive terms used in Vietnamese speech in fact reveal that values and respect are deeply a part in Vietnamese society.

Another interesting aspect of using kinship terms to address to outsiders by the Vietnamese people is to familiarise them with ranks of relatives. An elderly man or woman can be addressed to as 'ông' (grandfather) or 'bà' (grandmother); these honorific terms are used to show respect for the elderly people (Nguyen, 1996).

However, this could be taken quite differently in the Australian society, the conception of young or old is looked at differently. Certain age is considered as 'old' in one country can be considered as 'young' in another country, if not understood this would cause disharmony in communication. I once worked with a female co-worker in her sixties, once in a conversation I mentioned the respect for the people of advanced age in Vietnamese society. The woman did not regard it as an aspect of respect but called it an insult. In Vietnamese society,

people who are in the age range of forties onwards are often considered themselves as 'già (old). This is perhaps because the Vietnamese get married early and have grown up children too soon. While in Australia, people who are in the age range of sixties or even seventies still consider themselves as 'only young'. This is, in fact, only a matter of cultural difference.

One may not be able to identify the relationship between Australian speakers in their conversation, but in Vietnamese conversation, one might be able to identify the relationship between speakers by listening to their terms of address.

It is noteworthy that if the terms of respect are not used properly, it may cause embarrassment instead of showing good intention. This occurs when the speaker is unable to assess the age well. If 'ba' is used, instead of 'cô', to address a woman who is young in age, but looks older in appearance, then it is no doubt that one has hurt her feelings.

While the terms 'mày', 'tao', 'mi' and 'tớ' can be used between close friends to denote friendliness and intimacy, these terms are also used when people are angry and hateful. When a couple is in love, they will address one another as 'anh' and 'em'. When they fall out of love, they will revert to 'ông', 'tôi', 'mấy người' (somebody) or 'ai' (insinuating you). In disagreement, argument or when divorced, they might use the vulgar terms 'mày' (you), 'con kia, thằng kia' (you) and 'tao' (I), 'con này' or 'thằng này' (I).

The terms 'mày' and 'tao' when used between friends show closeness, but if used between a man and a woman they contain rudeness. However, in some working class families, men use 'mày', 'tao' to address their wives.

In North Vietnam, some parents address their male children as 'tôi' (I) and 'cậu' (you) and daughters-in-law as 'mợ' (you). The pronoun 'tôi' used by parents, at times, can show indifference or discontentment. If 'tôi' (I) is used by children when talking to parents, it would be considered as plain rudeness.

5.3.3 Sociolinguistic aspect

Although discriminatory/sexist language exists in English and Vietnamese, Le and Le's (1999) wrote that there are many similar features of discriminatory/sexist language that English and Vietnamese share. The most

striking difference is not in linguistic units but more on moral teaching embedded in stereotypical expressions about men and women.

5.3.3.1 Communication

Studies of various authors on the organisation of conversations illustrate the power difference between men and women. In English and Vietnamese, men and women take very different roles in the process of communication. In contrast to the stereotypical belief that women do most of the talking and yet, their conversation is about nothing, researchers' findings have shown that women take up less of the talking time whereas men talk and interrupt more. Men often take control of the situations and women often give way in opinion to men and bridge the gaps in conversations. Spender (1980) cited by Lakoff (2003), finds that men dominate the conversation 80 percent of the time. When male participation falls below about 70 percent, the conversation is seen as women dominating by both men and women. Leet-Pellegrini (1980) cited by Lakoff (2003), reveals that in mixed group conversation, men generate most topics, whereas women's attempt are ignored by both men and other women in the group.

In Vietnamese gatherings, men often participate actively in conversation by doing most of the talking while women remain passive. Women's contribution is fragmentary and apt to be interrogative. Men maintain their conversational dominance by ignoring women's contribution or by violative interruption of women. Women don't often generate topics but are prone to listen to and follow men's discussion. Men rarely take part in women's conversation as it is regarded as "women's petty issues" (*chuyện vặt, chuyện đàn bà*), it is often assumed that women are only interested in clothes, make-up and childish things. Men would make joke out of it.

In English, study by Zimmerman and West (1975) cited in Lakoff (2003), says that one way for men to maintain their domination in conversation is by violative interruption of women.

In both English and Vietnamese men tend to tell more jokes and women laugh more. There are people who have some idea of what sexism is but trivialize it, then caricature it. Women are victims of this kind of weak humour, often made fun of by men in joke, the language used in jokes constructs female inferiority.

In Szirom's finding (1988), as well as the inequality of behaviour and treatment, females and males take very different roles in conversations. Some examples are men tell more jokes and women laugh more; men tend to perform the task-oriented role while women perform the socio-emotional role. The task-oriented role is essential to get the job done while the socio-emotional or expressive role is supportive and lessens the stress created by the former (Szirom, 1988, p.19). Another similarity is that both English and Vietnamese speakers believe that men's speech is efficient, forceful, authoritative, effective whereas women's style of speech is often trivial, modest, polite and can even be full of gossip. Cultural difference plays an important part. It appears that certain habits or language expressions can be discriminating in one culture but are quite a natural thing to do in another culture. In Western societies, privacy or individuality is considered of primary importance whereas in many Asian societies the issues of privacy or individuality are not considered as vital since all people share the same existence. This was brought forward and analysed in Le's paper (1999):

"In Asia, there seems to be no such a thing as privacy or individuality as a person is primarily a social being who is part of a complicated social network. One is constantly surrounded by people outside as well as inside one's home. 'Their' existence is interwoven in an individual's existence".

While straightforwardness or speaking one's mind is regarded as a mark for honesty in English-speaking societies, the Asians see it as impolite, a lack of intelligence or even brutal. In Indo-China, people generally do not go directly to the point but express their desires indirectly by hinting (Nguyen, 1994). In the Vietnamese society, people don't often speak their mind; instead, their way of speaking is indirect. They take precautionary measures before they want to say something. This way of speaking is more common among the older generation or among people who were born in Vietnam. People who have lived in Western countries many years tend to be less reserved in their way of speaking than people living in Vietnam. The young people who are either born in Australia or have grown up here are completely different in their approach.

5.3.3.2 Personal relationship

In terms of intimate relationships, Fisherman (1978), cited in Lakoff (2003: 162) says, “women do the conversational ‘shitwork’: getting even minimal responses from men”.

The role of the male head in the Vietnamese family is institutionalised. The Vietnamese traditional value is expressed in the saying “gà mái gáy to hơn gà sống thì không phải là một gia đình hay” (It is not good for a household to have the hen crowing louder than the rooster).

In the Vietnamese story of Hòn Vọng Phu (the Longing-For-Husband Stone), a woman is admired for her patience and persistence as she climbed the mount everyday longing for the return of her missing husband from the sea. She became a familiar sight to the villagers and one day while standing on the mount to wait for his return she and her son in her arms turned to stones forever. Supposed if it were a man doing the same thing it would be regarded as a joke and laughed at. People would admire Hòn Vọng Phu but be very likely to turn it into humorous sexism if there were a Hòn Vọng Thê (the Longing-For-Wife Stone). Attitudes are imprinted with clearly defined sex roles. A woman who waits for her husband (người đàn bà chờ chồng) is appreciated for her delicacy and patience. A man who waits for his wife (người đàn ông chờ vợ) can be belittled as ‘gà mái’ (hen) or having a weak character.

5.3.3.3 Interpersonal relationship

In interpersonal relationships, respect and honesty are understood differently in Vietnamese and Australian society. In Vietnam, it is considered normal to ask questions with regard to age, status of the family, the marital status when people first meet one another whereas to westerners, these questions are personal and it is not polite in western societies to ask for these information. The westerners prefer to take time to establish friendship, whereas, the Vietnamese are ready to help and share.

The Vietnamese often apply non-verbal behaviour to express respect, this can be misinterpreted as passivity and timidity. While Australians are more outspoken and direct, Vietnamese are reserved and indirect. This Vietnamese

aspect is seen as being shy by Australian standard. Maintaining eye contact is strongly encouraged as a successful interpersonal skill in Australian society (but it does not mean gazing or staring intensely), it conveys a feeling of wanting to know the person and it expresses respect to the speaker. A person who avoids eye contact can be misunderstood as being devious or unreliable. However, in Vietnamese culture, looking into someone's eyes can be interpreted as a challenge (IRef. 26), particularly if the other person is a senior in age or social hierarchy. Looking deeply into a man's or woman's eyes can be misunderstood as having love emotion (có tình ý). Generally speaking, some people avoid eye contact simply because they are shy.

Smiling is a non-verbal communication in the Vietnamese society. While Australians are prone to use verbal expressions of 'thank you', 'I am sorry', the Vietnamese way of saying 'thank you' or 'I am sorry' at times are expressed by means of a smile or silence. It is rare to find parents or people who are senior in age or social status apologise to younger people when making mistakes. No explanation is given but they may regret in silence or at times may do something nice to make up for the blunder. It is easy for young people who have grown up in a western country to develop certain paranoid about this kind of attitude. In Australia, verbal expressions of 'thank you' or 'I am sorry' are required.

The Vietnamese cultural signal of politeness shown by smiling can be misunderstood by westerners at times. For example, the action of a girl, who greets a male stranger approaching her way either by nodding or smiling, can be misinterpreted as making a pass at him.

According to Kang (IRef. 28), the underlying principle of politeness is to preserve harmony and every culture and language has certain standard mechanism to signal whether speakers are or are not polite. It is difficult to decode politeness in any situation because speakers may manipulate the standard mechanisms and listeners value them in different ways:

"...the fact that a speaker uses an apparently polite linguistic marker may not necessarily mean that the individual intends either politeness or rudeness. The usage may be entirely neutral and conventional"...

Kang (IRef. 28) stresses that it is exceedingly difficult to interpret the underlying substance of politeness rather than the conventional signals. This is complicated because of the different cultural presupposition held by speakers. All have different thoughts on what is good/bad, honest/dishonest, fair/unfair. Speakers' moral probity varies greatly: "... a cultural signal of politeness by a man from one culture to a woman of another culture may be mis-decoded as intrusive, rude, hypocritical..."

Coulmas cited in Kang's paper (IRef. 28) presents that "many routines, especially politeness routines, defy interpretation on the basis of word meanings alone and without knowledge of cultural habits, customs, attitudes etc." But Tannen and Oztek, 1986 (IRef. 28) argues that it is inadequate to base on the routine interpretation for native-like performance, because many of their expressions illustrate power relationships, solidarity and social currency.

Cultural presupposition holds a vital role in interpersonal communication. In English the term 'crazy' can be used to tease someone but if translated into Vietnamese, the meaning is 'khu'ng' or 'ddie^n' and if used to refer to someone, it can be offensive. Statements such as "you are short, tall, fat, thin" may be made in Vietnamese conversations and appear to be normal, while in English conversations, these expressions can cause discomfort when speakers don't know each other well and complement on their appearance. When found oneself in this situation, a westerner may feel at ease if s/he recalls that the Vietnamese person is speaking English with a Vietnamese mindset and values only the intention behind linguistic forms rather than the words themselves. This can be difficult for the westerner.

In Vietnam, gestures such as holding hands, putting one's hands on the shoulders or laps between people of the same sex are friendly gestures. In Australia, these gestures suggest sexual connotation. They are misunderstood as being homosexual.

Considering the question of public reputation in Vietnam and in Australia. As mentioned earlier, in Vietnamese society, great importance is placed on preserving face. Speaking the truth or being too straightforward, at times, can

be a signal of impoliteness. In some situations, a Vietnamese may place the question of preserving face above other moral values. For example, if a Westerner knows that s/he is lied to, s/he feels hurt and regards it as the other person's rudeness. But for the Vietnamese person who places the question of face above honesty may feel that s/he has a good intention behind what s/he has said and s/he lies only to protect the Westerner's prestige. This is sometimes difficult to accept by foreigners.

In terms of friendship, in both English and Vietnamese societies, male friends interact quite differently from female friends. In women's friendships, we find shared intimacies, self-revelation, and emotional support. In men's friendships, shared activities are involved, men's talks are usually about work, sports and sharing expertise (Spangler, 1992). Though men do exchange talks of exploits, complaints and concerns about women, their interactions are often contained. In both societies, the difference between men's and women's friendships is the expression of emotion, there seems to be a high level of emotional intimacy among women.

In terms of intimacy among men, studies have also shown that men could become bonded to one another without becoming intimate (Rubin, 1985, cited in Spangler, 1992). On the personal level, this type of bonding among men comes from the fact that they share life-and-death experiences such as in war (eg; in the Vietnam war, this type of bonding developed strongly among men, soldiers felt connected and bonded to one another). This bonding also comes from an intuitive understanding of each other as men.

In both English and Vietnamese societies, it seems that though men may feel connected and bonded to one another, they are not intimate because they hardly share problems and emotions. Miller (1983, cited in Spangler, 1992) suggests that men are not emotionally intimate with each other as women are because they are afraid of appearing homosexual.

5.3.3.4 Emotion

In both English and Vietnamese societies, the way man demonstrates emotional control determines his ability. A man who is seen to lose control of

his emotions in a relationship is a man who loses his independence and finally his masculinity.

Male and female expression of emotions is under constraint in both Vietnamese and English. In Lakoff's study (2003), although male and female are under constraint in expressing emotions, such as men were not supposed to cry or express sadness and women were not allowed to show anger, it seems that the constraint intensifies the male power and female powerlessness. The expressed sadness is looked at as an expression of powerlessness and helplessness, anger expressed by men shows power or authority whereas if a woman expresses anger, its power is denied as she is said to be cute when she's mad. These rules strengthen male power and female powerlessness.

In the Vietnamese society, if a man shows emotion or attachment, he may receive a sexist remark such as “yếu đuối như đàn bà” (as weak as a woman), a discriminatory remark such as ‘lại cái’ (an offensive term for male homosexual, equivalent to ‘poofter’ in English).

The custom reinforces male's absolute authority due to his primarily economic and principally societal functions. Because of this reinforcement, males hardly could express emotion, as this is regarded as a sign of weakness or woman-like. Emotion is stereotypically associated with women, women are portrayed as emotional creatures and it is natural for them to be emotional.

5.3.3.5 Similarities and differences

In both societies it has been difficult for women to advance with their roles when they attempt to move outside the sphere of the home. According to Spender (1998), when women strive to move outside the narrow sphere of their home and family, attempt to advance with their new roles as experts in society, they “do not join the ranks of those who enjoy positive status because they carry their femaleness, their minus maleness with them...” (P.20).

Julia Stanley (as cited by Spender, 1980, P. 20) suggests that the “negative semantic space” exists for women and “... no matter what women do they are

still branded as women and therefore can not develop positive meanings and definitions of themselves...” When a woman becomes a professional in one of the fields usually reserved for males’, says Stanley, “she does not move into the corresponding semantic space covered by the noun conventionally used as its label.” Instead, she must signify that the norm, the positive, does not apply and so she becomes a ‘lady’ doctor, a ‘female’ surgeon, a ‘woman’ lawyer, or else, in less prestigious occupations, a ‘waitress’, a ‘stewardess’, a ‘majorette’.

According to Lakoff (1975, p.31), in life, women are “identified in terms of the men she relates to” whereas this does not apply to men. In conversations people often ask more about the work that the husband does to know the security of the family’s material comfort.

In Vietnamese, we often hear of terms such as “bà bác sĩ” (a doctor’s wife), “bà giáo sư” (a teacher’s wife), “bà giám đốc” (a director’s wife). In reality, these women may not be doctors, teachers or directors. They are addressed in such manners because they are simply married to men whose occupations are doctor, teacher or director, they are addressed according to their husbands’ titles as men are the hosts of the families (Phan, 1999). On the contrary, if men are married to women who are doctor, lawyer or teacher, they are not addressed by their wives’ titles.

This habit indicates a hierarchy of power in the Vietnamese society, since men have the leading role, women can depend on men but men can not depend on women. Men who have their wives supported them would be ridiculed as ‘ăn bám’ (live off a woman) or ‘vô dụng’ (useless).

In English one greets guests with “ladies and gentlemen” whereas in Vietnamese, up till the present time we still say “thưa quý ông quý bà” (gentlemen and ladies), the role of men is still dominant, the role of women is subordinate. However in conversations, people are prone to use the term ‘vợ chồng’ (wife and husband).

In English it would be an insult if female words were used to address to males. As claimed by Spender (1980:23):

“Unless irony or insult is intended it is usually a violation of the semantic rule to refer to males with terms that are marked for minus males. There is a jarring of images if and when people make such a mistake. It is all right, for example, to call a mixed sex group ‘guys’ or ‘men’ but it is a mistake to – and an insult- to refer to a group which contains even one male as ‘gals’ or ‘women’...”

In English and Vietnamese one finds similar expressions about women, eg. “You think like a man”, “you are pretty smart for a woman”, “you are beautiful when you are angry”, “you are feminine for a career woman” etc. These comments devalue the female role for they assume that only men are able to think logically, are intelligent whereas women are only dolls and weak.

In both Vietnamese and English contexts, at times, females were allowed the option to display certain male qualities in addition to female characteristics, e.g; “cô ấy là đàn bà nhưng suy nghĩ như đàn ông” (she is a woman but she thinks like a man). If a woman is said to have some male qualities, this is not an insult but a statement saying that she may be too independent, determined. In a sense, it can be a compliment that she is quite different from other ordinary women. She may be admired for this quality as in the saying “đàn bà dễ có mấy tay” (how many can one find among women).

Whiles females at times are allowed to have certain male qualities, males were always expected to practise behaviours that disassociate themselves from anything feminine. It would be an insult for a man if he were to have a woman’s quality, eg; “ông ta suy nghĩ như đàn bà” (he thinks like a woman), “ông ta xử sự như đàn bà” (he acts/behaves like a woman). One would violate the semantic rule if one say that “he is a man but does not act like one, he may be a prim or he pays attention to trivial details, he is not decisive enough”.

The similarity between Vietnamese and English here is that if one uses male terms to refer to women then there is no loss of prestige. On the contrary if one uses female terms to describe males then there is a loss of prestige.

According to Spender (1980, p. 23-24):

“The semantic derogation of women fulfils a dual function: it helps to construct female inferiority and it also helps to confirm it. The process is not a simple, linear one, but a more complex, interactive and dialectical one. In a society where women are devalued the words which refer to them- not surprisingly- assume negative connotations. But because the options for defining women are confined to negative terms, because their meanings are primarily those of minus male, women continue to be devalued”.

Another similarity is the use of names revealing an aspect of patriarchy. In both English and Vietnamese societies fathers pass their names on to their sons. In the families where there are only daughters it is said that these families die out because there is no male heir. Researchers suggest that by saying a family dies out simply because of the absence of sons is not to recognise the existence of daughters. In many Vietnamese families it is believed that having sons is having God’s blessing (được Trời thương).

In English and Vietnamese, there are sayings and proverbs that touch upon women containing a severe negation of the value of women in society. These proverbs have been handed down from generation to generation. It takes time to break down the barriers of the tradition in these proverbs:

Words linked women with animals, eg. vixen (chồn cái); bitch (chó cái); tigress (cọp cái); whore, slut (ngựa cái, ngựa bà,, dĩ ngựa, dĩ thỏa).

Common sayings in Vietnamese, eg. “Không thể tin tưởng đàn bà” (Women are not to be trusted), “Đàn bà mà làm được gì” (What can a woman do?), “Đúng là đàn bà, lắm điều nhiều chuyện” (Women are great talkers).

In English, we find “ Women are as wavering as the wind”, “A woman’s answer is never to seek”, “All women may be won”, “Women in state affairs are like monkeys in glass houses”, and “Women naturally deceive, weep and spin”.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted some similarities and differences between the two languages. There are many fascinating differences and similarities in terms of sexist language in English and Vietnamese. However, due to the limited scope of this chapter, it deals only with a few.

There seems to be some 'coincidence' that discriminatory language, particularly sexist language, exists in both English and Vietnamese and tends to be bias towards women. In the end, this demonstrates the traditional masculine roles of power and domination and the subservience females presented in various contexts of differing cultures. The unequal power balances of the two sexes are reflected in many societies and in fact reveal a culturally determined idealisation of male dominance. Women are subjected to trivialisation; skills and strengths are often devalued in comparison to cultural standards linked to dominant standard of males. Verbal stereotypes have done and still do damage to the relationship between the sexes. They need to be changed to keep up with our modern society.

Chapter Six

Research Methodology

6.1 Introduction

In writing a thesis, research methodology is one of the most significant factors. Not only does it reveal the nature of inquiry conducted in the study theoretically but also reflects the theoretical orientation and ideology of the researcher. It is applied as a tool to achieve the researcher's objectives and determines the success of a research. In relation to human inquiry, Cohen and Manion (1989, p.1) present:

“Man has long been concerned to come to grips with his environment and to understand the nature of the phenomena it presents to his senses. The means by which he sets out to achieve these ends may be classified into three broad categories: experience, reasoning and research. Far from being independent and mutually exclusive, however, these categories must be seen as complementary and overlapping, features most readily in evidence where solutions to complex problems are sought”.

This chapter explains the methods that were carried out to undertake this study which, includes techniques used for data collection, a pilot study, the period of the study, the settings and the participants in the study. Chapter six also provides methods of data analysis related to the aims and objectives of the study, research validity, reliability and ethical approval.

This research sketches the attitude of Vietnamese migrants towards language sexism and how participants respond to established norms in relation to the social role and status of males and females. In this regard, the study attempts to build a conception based on participants' views, actions and responses provided, how sexism is reflected in their understanding of the world. Their views, actions and responses are a reflection of the effectiveness of male dominance and female trivialisation, which in turn are shown in their language application.

To achieve the objective of the study, both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used. While qualitative method was used in the interviews to interpret details of participants' views on sexism and their actions relating to the role and status of males and females in society. What participants said was listened carefully, rewritten on paper notes, some was recorded on a cassette-recorder. Their facial expression was observed attentively to determine some certainty of the answers. Interview data were carefully studied in relation to the field notes.

The quantitative method was used to interpret the statistical information concerning participants' views of discrimination in general, sexist language usage and cultural norms. Questionnaire reveals their thinking and personal experience of discrimination. It describes whether their attitudes and values have changed or remained as they are in special situations in their new countries. Within the academic context, the knowledge gained from learning and reading literature regarding the object of inquiry was an experience. It has drawn the researcher's attention to valuable information that was not previously thought about. It has provided the inspiration to write this thesis and improved general knowledge.

Critical thinking or reasoning indicates a systematic way of carrying out an inquiry, it is needed to analyse and synthesise the relevant literature and research. In addition to a survey and interviews, books, newspaper articles, magazines in both Vietnamese and English, e-mails and Internet articles were also the source of data collection. The study was also based on text analysis, primarily written texts and proverbs. Vietnamese literature articles found were translated into English and then incorporated into the thesis. This study does not end at the completion of the literature review but also includes investigation of the views held by Vietnamese participants most living in Australia and some living in other countries. In order to achieve the aims set out in this research, different approaches are used to enhance research vigour such as, problem definition, researching current knowledge on the field, constructing research on available information and in search of truth using a questionnaire.

These steps are outlined as follows:

Step 1: Problem definition. In this case, the participants are Vietnamese migrants and their thoughts in relation to cultural norms, the role of males and females and language sexism. While there has been abundant work in sexist language in English, there is very limited work in Vietnamese sexist language.

Step 2: Researching current knowledge on the field. This was carried out during the research and it is presented in chapters on literature review.

As the researcher was a native Vietnamese speaker with good knowledge of Vietnamese and English, there was no need to go through the texts with other native speakers as normally taking place in studies conducted by non-native speakers. The researcher also conducted informal discussions and interviews with Vietnamese migrants in Sydney, took notes from informal conversations with acquaintances and friends. With interviews the researcher has used pseudonyms to protect their privacy and asked people belonging to different age groups questions about language sexism and society.

At home, help from relatives and immediate family was given through questions and answers. There were also some informal discussions with friends at coffee mornings/afternoons or parties. Conversations with friends helped the researcher to clarify the issues more clearly; their comments have been appended to provide extra information for the research.

Step 3: In search of truth by conducting face-to-face interviews with the participants. The major purpose of the interviews was to corroborate facts that had been established, to clarify and extend information. Interviews have also assisted in overcoming any bias that might have occurred. Face-to-face interviews were also suited to surveying people who are not likely to respond by telephone or mail. Another interviewing technique was via e-mail, questions were sent to friends overseas asking for their comments and evaluations on the research topic. Friends in turn forward to others for more information.

Step 4: A questionnaire was prepared carefully in the process of researching. It was designed to make the task of responding as easy as possible. It informed participants of the research objectives and made questions easy to answer rather than confusing and difficult. Each question is intended to get the information it

needed to get, words are easy to understand. Questions were not interpreted the same by participants but were answered correctly and in a way that can be understood. Not only did the participants gain attention, they provided informative feedback effectively.

6.2 Qualitative and quantitative approach

The objectives of this study covered some aspects involving individual thinking and interaction. It attempted to investigate the views and attitudes of Vietnamese migrants towards sexist language. Some of the aspects concerned were discrimination, the use of sexist language, cultural norms and the role of males and females. It was decided that a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches would be appropriate.

The qualitative method identifies the existence of particular beliefs and interpretations in the community. It may not tell us how prevalent they are but it does tell us that they exist. The term 'qualitative' emphasises on processes and meanings that researchers examine. It is not measured in terms of quantity, amount or frequency. Qualitative method presents detailed data about a much smaller number of people and cases. Through description of situations, interactions, cases, events and observed behaviours, these qualitative data provide depth and detail for the study.

An advantage of the qualitative approach over the quantitative approach is that the researcher had an opportunity to explain the importance of the survey and assured participants of its confidentiality. The researcher could make questions easier by giving examples. Participants were encouraged to express their views on the subject of the study as freely as possible. However, face-to-face surveys also had a disadvantage. Even though the researcher had ensured confidentiality, participants were reluctant to express freely their views in face to face interviews. They appeared to be reserved. This is a lack of effectiveness in the qualitative process. Another difficulty of conducting personal interviews was the qualitative data collected and analysed could be prone to errors due to subjectivity and imprecision.

It is noted that when analysing data, the researcher can be easily affected by their own bias and researchers should take great care not to allow one's own prejudices and preconceived notions to influence their understanding and interpretation of data. The qualitative data was gathered in both formal and informal contexts. A reason in favor of conducting interviews in an informal context was the enthusiasm of participants. Participants would discuss topics covering aspects relating to social themes and the relationship between culture and language freely and easily. Even though interviewing was aimed at stimulating responses from participants, it also meant showing respect for participants by making sure they will not be embarrassed by not understanding what is expected of them. Questions were asked in a way that participants felt motivated to express their comments and ideas.

On the other hand, the information of a quantitative research is equally valuable. While qualitative method is concerned with the nature of phenomena such as, state and characters, the properties and quantitative method provides a broad and generalisable set of findings. It tells us whether such beliefs and interpretations constitute widespread attitude and behaviour patterns. It is concerned with the degree, in which, phenomena have certain states, properties, characters, and relations between differences and similarities. Data collection and analysis are treated objectively with the quantitative method. A limited set of questions are used to measure reactions of many people, this method facilitates comparison and statistical aggregation of data.

In this study, the quantitative approach provides some information and insight into the effects of traditional socialisation on the Vietnamese migrants' attitudes and behaviours. Both qualitative and quantitative research approaches are necessary to our understanding of the social world.

6.3 Participants

The majority of participants in this study are mostly the Vietnamese migrants living in Australia, some are from America, one comes from England and one is from France. Most have a good knowledge of English. The role of participants is significantly important, without their co-operation, the study would be unable to achieve its final destination. Participants are the key players in both the

questionnaire and interviewing processes. Participants provide real experiences relating to discrimination, cultural difference and language sexism.

Since the research topic is a sensitive one as it touches people's values and beliefs, participants' feelings and thoughts were treated with respect. Questions were asked with utmost care and provided a logical step to find out participants' perceptions of discriminatory language. However for some, research questions were not accepted, simply because they were not applicable to their situations. For others, bias deeply rooted in their mind and they strongly refused to see different points of view.

The participants in this research have the following common feature or characteristic: most currently living in Australia, most are employed and educated. The lowest level of education is year 12 achievement and the highest level of education obtained is from a tertiary institution. The questionnaire data gathering process was conducted with 170 participants during a year period.

In order to obtain a good number of participants to discussion and questionnaire, migrants and youths as young as 15 years old living in other western countries such as America and France were also invited to participate in the questionnaire. To promote interpersonal communication, the researcher used pseudonyms to protect their confidentiality. Participants were addressed as 'participant 1' or 'participant 2'. Informal discussion was part of interaction.

Participants' age groups, based on gender (from questionnaire):

There were 71 males and 99 females. Total: 170

Table 1:

18-29 years old	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+
4 males	12 males	28 males	18 males	9 males
18 females	17 females	35 females	19 females	10 females

Table 1 presents gender, number and percentage of participants in the questionnaire administration. Most of male participants ranged from 30 to 59 years old. Only 4 males ranged from 18 to 29 years old and 9 males from 60

years plus. Most female participants were in the age range between 18 to 59. There were only 10 in the age range of 60 or older.

Table 2:

Occupation	Office	Factory	Studying	Retired	Other work	
Males		15	24	4	11	17
Females		28	15	9	13	34
Education	Uni/TAFE	Secondary	Primary	Never attend school		
Males		44	24	3		
Females		58	33	7	1	
English	Fluent	Average	Basic	No knowledge		
Males		17	48	6		
Females		34	49	10	6	

Duration of time in Australia or in other western countries

	1 year	2-3 years	4-5 years	6-7 years	8 years +	
Males				1	70	
Females		1	3	5	5	85

The participants' educational background varied from primary to tertiary level. 102 participants had obtained tertiary training, 57 had reached secondary education, 10 participants obtained primary education and only 1 did not attend school.

6.4 Questionnaire

The questionnaire used in this research provides some anonymous background information relating to details such as age, occupation, sex, education and English. It also provides participants' views and attitudes on sexist language in Vietnamese and their evaluation of Vietnamese cultural features. In terms of clarity of expression, language use in questionnaire is straightforward.

There were 200 questionnaires sent and only 173 were returned. Among 173 questionnaires returned, there were 3 incomplete. There were 71 male participants and 99 female participants.

The questionnaire was carefully prepared; there were 57 questions. Part A consists of six questions providing background information, part B consists of 51 questions asking about common features of sexist language. All questions

were asked in a simple and straightforward manner that enables quick thinking and consumes less time for participants. A small number of questionnaires were returned on the spot but many participants posted the questionnaires to the researcher. The questionnaire guaranteed total confidentiality, as there was no mark of participants' personal identity shown on the returned questionnaire.

Apart from giving their responses by ticking, participants could write down their comments without fear of disclosing their identities. Their details were not identified because there was no name printed on the questionnaire, this helped participants to write what they thought, hence, the feedback tends to be more reliable. The questionnaire involved a financial cost about \$200. Each participant could only submit one questionnaire.

Part A: Background information

Multiple choice: A multiple-choice question provides several answers to choose from. Multiple choice questions are used in this research to determine the categories of participants' backgrounds such as age, occupation, sex, education level, general English ability and years living in Australia or other western countries.

Part B: participants' views and attitude toward sexist language.

Part B of the questionnaire seeking participants' views on language sexism, the range of response includes five scales: strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree, and strongly disagree. Items of the main part of the questionnaire were designed to obtain data on three themes:

- (a) Sexist language in Vietnamese.
- (b) The social roles and status of male and female.
- (c) The influence of Confucianism in Vietnamese society.

6.5 Interview

With regard to interview, there were 40 participants interviewed, participants in face-to-face interviews had completed the questionnaire beforehand. A sub-set of participants were selected and invited in face-to-face interview for the purpose of an in-depth observation and exploration of their views. With regard

to participants living in other western countries, interview questions were forwarded via e-mail or by means of on-line chats.

6.6 Research validity

There are two main issues concerning validity, which involves the use of questionnaire in this research:

Arrangement of questionnaire items:

Section B of the questionnaire aimed at seeking participants' attitudes towards the sexist language. Questions were arranged into different ways to assure research validity. Questionnaire items were grouped under their appropriate headings but were mixed across sub-themes as indicated in details above. In addition, some questions in the questionnaire had items consisted of opposite views (Q35 & 36, 9 & 14, 44 & 46). If the same participants gave the same ranking to the items in each pair, this would indicate inconsistency and invalidity.

6.7 Pilot study

Some participants were invited to participate in a pilot study to ensure that the questionnaire was supposed to do what it was expected to do. In the pilot study participants were given an opportunity to raise their comments and offer suggestions for the refinement of the questionnaire. In the trial questionnaire, the following items were raised:

(a) A participant said that “ngon ngu ky thi phai tinh” should be replaced by “ngon ngu phan biet phai tinh”. It was said that language could not discriminate, only people could, it was suggested that ‘phan biet’, ‘distinguish’ should replace the term ‘kỳ thị’, ‘discriminate’, which sounds too strong.

(b) The trial participants suggested that some language items should be clearer, such as using a different word, or shorter phrases, this would help participants to focus on the questions and consumed less time reading the questionnaire.

(c) There were different ranges of responses from participants evaluating the topic and language used, some found that the subject of Vietnamese sexist language new and strange. The first reaction from male participants was that there was no sexism in Vietnamese society, they believed that Vietnamese society treated women and men well, each sex had their own duty and responsibility and there was no discrimination.

(d) Several female participants said that the topic of the study was interesting and encouraged the researcher to consult as many people in the linguistic fields as possible. Other female participants responded that they were not sure of sexist language in Vietnamese but they agreed that the role of Vietnamese woman in the Vietnamese society was too far behind.

6.8 Research reliability

Quantitative research methods are primarily used to test theory; the researcher used it as a deductive logic based on outcomes of questions. On the other hand, qualitative researchers are concerned with the meaning of the phenomena and personal experiences, which is not a readily observable process. Attention is paid to the social context in which events occur and produce meaning. There is an emphasis on understanding of the social world from participants' viewpoints.

The degree of reliability with regard to qualitative research depends on identifying and documenting the accuracy as well as consistency or inconsistency of patterns, themes, worldviews, and any other phenomena relating to the study in various human contexts.

The reliability of the data derived from the questionnaire and interview depends on participants' understanding of the topic and their sincerity in answering the questions.

6.9 Ethical Issues

Ethical issues have been seriously considered as this study involved human subjects. Interview and questionnaire data were collected from the Vietnamese migrants living in Australia and other western countries. Ethical approval was

obtained from the Ethics Committee of the University of Tasmania and ethical procedures were undertaken.

Although people were invited to take part in research activities, there was no pressure for them to participate in interviews or answering questionnaires. Participants were given sufficient information on the purpose of the study and the manners, in which data would be collected and treated.

Before conducting interview or asking participants to answer questionnaires, complete anonymity was informed. Names were not written on questionnaire or revealed from interviews. Participants participated voluntarily in the interview sessions, they were approached in a culturally sensitive manner and their life-learning experience was respected.

6.10 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed an important task of research: planning and methodology. It describes how the procedures and methods of the study were carried out. In research activities, planning and methodology are vital tools as they revealed direction and manners in which the researcher conducted the study. This study was done with great consideration of various factors such as techniques of data collection, pilot study, duration of the study, settings and participants of the study. In addition, approaches to issues of reliability and validity as well as ethical approval were also provided.

Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were employed to describe how the Vietnamese migrants respond to issues of discrimination, gender and sexist language. Their answers and behaviours are a reflection of their subconscious mind that collects all thoughts. The most common thoughts have created the strongest subconscious behaviours.

Data collected by participant-observation and questionnaire were studied carefully. It provided the greatest opportunity for the researcher to gain access to details concerning the topic. The researcher has collected data from informal talks with people throughout the year.

The following chapter seven provides questionnaire findings, followed by chapter eight, which discusses the result of interviews.

Chapter Seven

Quantitative Data Analysis

7.1 Introduction

In analysing the data, it was important for the researcher to focus on the original purpose of the study: to investigate the Vietnamese migrants’ attitude toward sexist language by means of questionnaire.

This chapter focuses on the findings of the questionnaire, this method is important for it avoids the rigidity and limitation of one person’s perspective. It interprets findings by taking into account others’ perspective, how they conceptualise issues and problems. The questionnaire was designed to investigate certain issues to the understudying topic and provided a wider understanding of the issues.

7.2 Questionnaire results

There were 200 questionnaires sent to participants and there were 173 returned.. There were 71 male participants and 99 female participants. Questionnaire items were of factual nature. However one was rejected due to too many missing responses Questions regarding experience, attitude towards discrimination and opinion on language issues were involved. The questionnaire consisted of 57 questions of multiple choice. They are factual and opinion questions. Before sending out a questionnaire, its general content and the purpose of research were explained. A number of questionnaires were handed in person and some were sent by post. 173 people returned the questionnaire. However one was rejected due to too many missing responses. The results of the questionnaires were checked several times.

The first section of the questionnaire covers biographical data on age, job, gender, educational level, English ability, and residence length.

Figure 1 - Age

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
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Valid	18-29	22	12.8	12.8	12.8
	30-39	29	16.9	16.9	29.7
	40-49	68	39.5	39.5	69.2
	50-59	34	19.8	19.8	89.0
	60 over	19	11.0	11.0	100.0
	Total	172	100.0	100.0	

Figure 2 - Job

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	white collar	43	25.0	25.3	25.3
	blue collar	41	23.8	24.1	49.4
	student	13	7.6	7.6	57.1
	retiree	23	13.4	13.5	70.6
	others	50	29.1	29.4	100.0
	Total	170	98.8	100.0	
Missing	System	2	1.2		
Total		172	100.0		

Figure 3 - Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	male	71	41.3	41.5	41.5
	female	100	58.1	58.5	100.0
	Total	171	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		172	100.0		

Figure 4 - English

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	fluent	53	30.8	30.8	30.8
	average	99	57.6	57.6	88.4
	little	14	8.1	8.1	96.5
	no English	5	2.9	2.9	99.4
	others	1	.6	.6	100.0
	Total	172	100.0	100.0	

Figure 5 - Residence length

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	less 1 year	1	.6	.6	.6
	2 to 3 years	3	1.7	1.7	2.3
	4 to 5 years	4	2.3	2.3	4.7
	6 to 7 years	7	4.1	4.1	8.7
	over 7 years	157	91.3	91.3	100.0
Total		172	100.0	100.0	

7.3 Preliminary data analysis

The second section of the questionnaire covers perceptions, attitudes and behaviour of respondents which are dependent variables. The section starts with item 7 and ends with item 55.

Figure 6 'Case processing summary' provides information about the total of cases with missing data.

Figure 6 – Case Processing Summary

Case Processing Summary						
	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Job * q7	170	98.8%	2	1.2%	172	100.0%
Job * q8	170	98.8%	2	1.2%	172	100.0%
Job * q9	167	97.1%	5	2.9%	172	100.0%
Job * q10	170	98.8%	2	1.2%	172	100.0%
Job * q11	169	98.3%	3	1.7%	172	100.0%
Job * q12	170	98.8%	2	1.2%	172	100.0%
Job * q13	170	98.8%	2	1.2%	172	100.0%
Job * q14	168	97.7%	4	2.3%	172	100.0%
Job * q15	170	98.8%	2	1.2%	172	100.0%
Job * q16	168	97.7%	4	2.3%	172	100.0%
Job * q17	169	98.3%	3	1.7%	172	100.0%
Job * q18	169	98.3%	3	1.7%	172	100.0%
Job * q19	170	98.8%	2	1.2%	172	100.0%
Job * q20	167	97.1%	5	2.9%	172	100.0%
Job * q21	167	97.1%	5	2.9%	172	100.0%
Job * q22	170	98.8%	2	1.2%	172	100.0%
Job * q23	169	98.3%	3	1.7%	172	100.0%
Job * q24	169	98.3%	3	1.7%	172	100.0%
Job * q25	170	98.8%	2	1.2%	172	100.0%
Job * q26	170	98.8%	2	1.2%	172	100.0%
Job * q27	167	97.1%	5	2.9%	172	100.0%
Job * q28	169	98.3%	3	1.7%	172	100.0%
Job * q29	169	98.3%	3	1.7%	172	100.0%
Job * q30	169	98.3%	3	1.7%	172	100.0%
Job * q31	170	98.8%	2	1.2%	172	100.0%
Job * q32	170	98.8%	2	1.2%	172	100.0%
Job * q33	169	98.3%	3	1.7%	172	100.0%
Job * q34	164	95.3%	8	4.7%	172	100.0%
Job * q35	169	98.3%	3	1.7%	172	100.0%
Job * q36	170	98.8%	2	1.2%	172	100.0%
Job * q37	170	98.8%	2	1.2%	172	100.0%
Job * q38	170	98.8%	2	1.2%	172	100.0%
Job * q39	169	98.3%	3	1.7%	172	100.0%
Job * q40	169	98.3%	3	1.7%	172	100.0%
Job * q41	170	98.8%	2	1.2%	172	100.0%
Job * q42	170	98.8%	2	1.2%	172	100.0%
Job * q43	169	98.3%	3	1.7%	172	100.0%
Job * q44	170	98.8%	2	1.2%	172	100.0%
Job * q45	169	98.3%	3	1.7%	172	100.0%
Job * q46	167	97.1%	5	2.9%	172	100.0%
Job * q47	169	98.3%	3	1.7%	172	100.0%
Job * q48	170	98.8%	2	1.2%	172	100.0%
Job * q49	170	98.8%	2	1.2%	172	100.0%
Job * q50	166	96.5%	6	3.5%	172	100.0%
Job * q51	170	98.8%	2	1.2%	172	100.0%
Job * q52	167	97.1%	5	2.9%	172	100.0%
Job * q53	167	97.1%	5	2.9%	172	100.0%
Job * q54	168	97.7%	4	2.3%	172	100.0%
Job * q55	169	98.3%	3	1.7%	172	100.0%
Job * q56	167	97.1%	5	2.9%	172	100.0%
Job * q57	169	98.3%	3	1.7%	172	100.0%

The next step of the data analysis was to run through crosstabulation of independent variables and dependent variables. This produced a pile of pages of crosstabulation results. It is very place-consuming to list all the results here. Instead, the following tables illustrate how a dependent variable (for instance, q12) is related to each of the six independent variables (age, job, gender, educational level, English ability, and residence length)

Figure 7 - Age * q12 Crosstabulation

Count

		q12					Total
		strong agree	agree	uncertain	disagree	strong disagree	
Age	18-29	4	7	4	6	1	22
	30-39	5	13	4	7	0	29
	40-49	15	25	16	11	1	68
	50-59	7	16	5	6	0	34
	60 over	4	5	3	5	2	19
Total		35	66	32	35	4	172

Figure 8 - Job * q12 Crosstabulation

Count

		q12					Total
		strong agree	agree	uncertain	disagree	strong disagree	
Job	white collar	7	13	12	10	1	43
	blue collar	8	23	5	4	1	41
	student	3	5	2	3	0	13
	retiree	6	7	4	6	0	23
	others	11	16	9	12	2	50
Total		35	64	32	35	4	170

Figure 9 - Gender * q12 Crosstabulation

Count

		q12					Total
		strong agree	agree	uncertain	disagree	strong disagree	
Gender	male	10	32	14	14	1	71
	female	25	33	18	21	3	100
Total		35	65	32	35	4	171

Figure 10 - Ed level * q12 Crosstabulation

Count

		q12					Total
		strong agree	agree	uncertain	disagree	strong disagree	
Ed level	tertiary Graduate	22	34	24	19	3	102
	Highschool	10	28	4	15	1	58
	primary school	3	2	4	1	0	10
		0	2	0	0	0	2
Total		35	66	32	35	4	172

Figure 11 - English * q12 Crosstabulation

Count

		q12					Total
		strong agree	agree	uncertain	disagree	strong disagree	
English	fluent	12	16	13	10	2	53
	average	19	42	16	20	2	99
	little	2	6	2	4	0	14
	no English	2	1	1	1	0	5
		0	1	0	0	0	1
Total		35	66	32	35	4	172

Figure 12 - Residence length * q12 Crosstabulation

Count

		q10					Total
		strong agree	agree	uncertain	disagree	strong disagree	
residence length	less 1 year	1	0	0	0	0	1
	2 to 3 years	0	2	1	0	0	3
	4 to 5 years	1	2	1	0	0	4
	6 to 7 years	4	3	0	0	0	7
	over 7 years	72	68	9	7	1	157
Total		78	75	11	7	1	172

The analysis shown above only gives frequency information, which reveals some indications about the responses. However the information may not be handy enough for the researcher to make a precise statistic conclusion.

A different data analysis strategy was used to focus on group statistics. In other words, each independent variable is used to cover all the dependent variables from question item 7 to the last question item 57. For example, Gender is chosen as shown in the Group Statistics .

Figure 13 - Group Statistics

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
q7	male	71	2.69	1.064	.126
	female	100	2.67	1.083	.108
q8	male	71	2.61	1.102	.131
	female	100	2.31	1.143	.114
q9	male	69	1.86	.753	.091
	female	99	1.91	.797	.080
q10	male	71	1.87	.844	.100
	female	100	1.60	.765	.077
q11	male	71	1.96	.801	.095
	female	99	1.88	.848	.085
q12	male	71	2.49	1.012	.120
	female	100	2.44	1.166	.117
q13	male	71	3.32	.953	.113
	female	100	3.04	.931	.093

q14	male	69	2.91	1.040	.125
	female	99	2.91	1.021	.103
q15	male	71	3.92	1.118	.133
	female	100	3.50	1.124	.112
q16	male	71	3.34	1.330	.158
	female	98	2.88	1.387	.140
q17	male	71	4.13	.985	.117
	female	99	3.79	1.023	.103
q18	male	71	3.76	1.088	.129
	female	98	3.04	1.251	.126
q19	male	71	3.17	1.095	.130
	female	100	3.48	1.283	.128
q20	male	69	3.45	1.195	.144
	female	99	4.01	1.005	.101
q21	male	68	2.16	1.074	.130
	female	100	2.19	.961	.096
q22	male	71	2.30	1.126	.134
	female	100	2.68	1.246	.125
q23	male	70	3.19	1.183	.141
	female	100	3.98	1.092	.109
q24	male	70	2.77	1.119	.134
	female	100	3.01	1.159	.116
q25	male	71	1.96	.885	.105
	female	100	2.18	1.009	.101
q26	male	71	3.65	1.196	.142
	female	100	3.61	1.043	.104
q27	male	68	3.75	.952	.115
	female	100	3.63	.971	.097
q28	male	70	4.11	1.029	.123
	female	100	4.55	.880	.088
q29	male	71	3.41	1.129	.134
	female	99	3.19	1.218	.122
q30	male	70	2.97	1.116	.133
	female	100	2.76	1.120	.112
q31	male	71	2.31	1.090	.129
	female	100	2.52	1.218	.122
q32	male	71	2.49	1.194	.142
	female	100	2.98	1.239	.124
q33	male	70	4.17	.851	.102
	female	100	4.38	.982	.098
q34	male	70	2.40	1.082	.129
	female	95	2.91	1.297	.133
q35	male	71	3.14	1.222	.145
	female	99	3.70	1.366	.137
q36	male	71	2.51	1.094	.130
	female	100	2.59	1.280	.128
q37	male	71	2.94	1.145	.136
	female	100	2.73	1.100	.110
q38	male	71	1.90	.913	.108
	female	100	1.87	.939	.094
q39	male	71	2.46	1.053	.125

	female	99	2.41	.869	.087
q40	male	71	1.99	.993	.118
	female	99	1.90	.974	.098
q41	male	71	2.30	.868	.103
	female	100	2.16	.838	.084
q42	male	71	1.99	.902	.107
	female	100	1.95	.914	.091
q43	male	71	2.34	1.041	.124
	female	99	2.60	1.340	.135
q44	male	71	3.73	.970	.115
	female	100	3.82	1.019	.102
q45	male	70	2.24	1.013	.121
	female	100	2.01	.916	.092
q46	male	70	2.81	1.067	.128
	female	98	2.73	1.011	.102
q47	male	71	2.48	.984	.117
	female	99	2.44	.917	.092
q48	male	71	2.10	.897	.106
	female	100	2.00	.888	.089
q49	male	71	2.41	1.008	.120
	female	100	2.31	1.195	.120
q50	male	71	3.31	1.022	.121
	female	96	3.51	1.056	.108
q51	male	71	2.37	.898	.107
	female	100	2.02	.738	.074
q52	male	71	3.08	1.092	.130
	female	97	2.80	1.037	.105
q53	male	71	3.25	.937	.111
	female	97	3.27	.963	.098
q54	male	71	2.93	1.019	.121
	female	98	2.50	.944	.095
q55	male	71	2.79	1.054	.125
	female	99	2.41	.979	.098
q56	male	70	2.81	1.120	.134
	female	98	2.61	.970	.098
q57	male	71	3.39	.783	.093
	female	99	3.31	.888	.089

This table indicates the means difference on a gender basis and it could provide interesting discrepancy (or lack of it) as demonstrated below.

Question item 17: *The terms “Ba” and “co” indicate sexist language in Vietnamese.*

q17	male	71	4.13	.985	.117
	female	99	3.79	1.023	.103

Male respondents tend to disagree (mean 4.13) more than female respondents (mean 3.79) .

Question item 10: *Vietnamese society is harsher to women than to men.*

q10	male	71	1.87	.844	.100
	female	100	1.60	.765	.077

Respondents definitely agree with this statement. Female respondents tend to agree with this ‘reality’ (mean 1.60) than their male counterparts (mean 1.87)

Question item 18: *Addressing women by their husbands’ name such as “Mrs. Tuan, Mrs. Nghiep” reflects sexist language.*

q18	male	71	3.76	1.088	.129
	female	98	3.04	1.251	.126

Both male and female respondents disagreed. Predictably, male respondents (mean 3.76) tend to disagree more than female respondents (mean 3.04).

Question item 22: *Co`ng dung ngo`n hanh (work, beauty, speech, manner) are essential to females.*

q22	male	71	2.30	1.126	.134
	female	100	2.68	1.246	.125

It is interesting to note that both male and female respondents do not quite agree with this statement. Traditionally, those with a strong Confucian influence should totally agree with this Confucian statement. In this study female respondents are less accepting (mean 2.68) than the male counterpart (mean 2.30)

Question item 23: *Women without husbands are like boats without oars.*

q23	male	70	3.19	1.183	.141
	female	100	3.98	1.092	.109

This statement is a proverb which treats women as subservient to men. Interestingly both male and female respondents mildly reject this traditional view; and females are most against it (mean 3.98 whereas males are mildly against the statement (mean 3.19).

Question item 29: *Swearing words tend to be biased against females.*

q29	male	71	3.41	1.129	.134
	female	99	3.19	1.218	.122

According to the researcher's expectation, respondents would agree with this statement. However, the result indicates that respondents slightly disagree with this statement, particularly male respondents tend to be more against it (mean 3.41).

Question item 50: *Sexist language does not exist in Vietnamese.*

q50	male	71	3.31	1.022	.121
	female	96	3.51	1.056	.108

Male respondents tend to disagree less with this statement than female respondents. Thus one would expect this view reflected in question item 56 below which has the reversed view

Question item 56: *Vietnamese language is sexist.*

q56	male	70	2.81	1.120	.134
	female	98	2.61	.970	.098

Both male and female respondents slightly agree. Female respondents are more in agreement (mean 2.61) than the male counterparts (mean 2.81).

The compare-means analysis below provides the results which indicate the degree of agreement and disagreement on a number of questionnaire items on the basis of a single variable.

Figure 14 – Compare means analysis

AGE		q28	q33
Age 18-29	Mean	4.81	4.23
	N	21	22
	Std. Deviation	.402	.973
Age 30-39	Mean	4.52	4.28
	N	29	29
	Std. Deviation	.688	.841
Age 40-49	Mean	4.37	4.35
	N	68	68
	Std. Deviation	.991	.958
Age 50-59	Mean	4.18	4.33
	N	34	33
	Std. Deviation	1.02	.816
Age 60 and over	Mean	3.95	4.11
	N	19	19
	Std. Deviation	1.35	1.150
Total	Mean	4.36	4.29
	N	171	171
	Std. Deviation	.969	.931

Questions item 28 and 33 were chosen as they both express the view that women are subservient to men.

Item 28: *Women are born to serve men.*

Item 33: *Husbands are bosses and women are subservient.*

The total mean result shows that the view expressed in these two items is strongly rejected by the respondents of all age groups. The most interesting indication is that for item 28, the younger the respondents are, the more vigorous they are in opposing this view.

Figure 15 – Compare means - Age

Age 18-29	Mean	4.81
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Age 30-39	Mean	4.52
Age 40-49	Mean	4.37
Age 50-59	Mean	4.18
Age 60, +	Mean	3.95

The compare-means analysis below indicates the mean difference in two items (q19, q20) in terms of the length of living in Australia and/or a Western country.

Item 19: *Men with a large mouth are respectable whereas women with a large mouth are noisy!*

Item 20: *Men are more intelligent than women.*

Figure 16 – compare means - Residency

RESIDENCY		q19	q20
Under 1 year	Mean	2.00	4.00
	N	1	1
	Std. Deviation	.	.
1+ - 3 years	Mean	4.33	3.33
	N	3	3
	Std. Deviation	.577	1.155
3+ - 5 years	Mean	3.25	4.75
	N	4	4
	Std. Deviation	.957	.500
5 + - 7 years	Mean	3.14	3.71
	N	7	7
	Std. Deviation	1.215	.951
7 years +	Mean	3.35	3.75
	N	157	154
	Std. Deviation	1.224	1.139
Total	Mean	3.35	3.77
	N	172	169
	Std. Deviation	1.212	1.123

The compare-means analysis of this aspect of discrimination in items 19 and 20 indicates that this discriminatory view is not acceptable generally (mean 3.35 for item 19 and mean 3.77 for item 20).

However those who have lived in Australia for the shortest time (less than one year) tend to agree with the traditional view in the proverb “*Men with a large mouth are respectable whereas women with a large mouth are noisy!*” Whereas

cognitively they did not accept the view that men are more intelligent than women.

The issue the researcher wanted to find out was whether there was any difference on the view held in these two items (19 & 20) in relation to two variables:
Residency length and Education level.

Figure 17 – Compare means – Residency & Education

EDUCATION LEVEL		q19	q20
Tertiary	Mean	3.36	3.90
	N	102	101
	Std. Deviation	1.28	1.054
Secondary	Mean	3.41	3.67
	N	58	57
	Std. Deviation	1.04	1.185
Primary	Mean	3.00	3.10
	N	10	10
	Std. Deviation	1.24	1.287
No formal education	Mean	4.00	
	N	1	
	Std. Deviation	.	
5	Mean	1.00	3.00
	N	1	1
	Std. Deviation	.	.
Total	Mean	3.35	3.77
	N	172	169
	Std. Deviation	1.21	1.123

An examination of the total means of these two independent variables shows there is a close relationship: residency and Education level have the same overall mean (3.35), which is against the view.

Similarly, this trend is also present in the gender aspect, which has the same overall mean of 3.35.

Figure 18

GENDER		q19	q20
Male	Mean	3.17	3.45
	N	71	69
	Std. Deviation	1.095	1.195
Female	Mean	3.48	4.01

Total	N	100	99
	Std. Deviation	1.283	1.005
	Mean	3.35	3.78
	N	171	168
	Std. Deviation	1.215	1.118

Female respondents were more in disagreement (mean 3.48) with this view than the males (mean 3.17)..

The researcher was keen to examine whether Confucianism was still a force in the minds of Vietnamese people, or more specifically Vietnamese migrants who had left their country and were living in Australia.

Question item 39 captures this aspect: “ *Confucianism has some influence in the use of sexist language .*” The view in this statement was examined in terms of all the six independent variables. Here are the results.

Figure 19 – Age : Q39

q39

AGE	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Age 18-29	2.77	22	.528
Age 30-39	2.43	28	.920
Age 40-49	2.32	68	.984
Age 50-59	2.44	34	.927
Age 60 +	2.42	19	1.216
Total	2.43	171	.946

The results indicate that generally there is an agreement that *Confucianism has some influence in the use of sexist language*. However, the young age group, that is age between 18-29, tends to be less agreeable (mean 2.77) on this question than the other age groups.

Figure 20 – Career : Q39

q39

CAREER	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
White collar	2.49	43	.798
Blue collar	2.45	40	1.061
Student	2.38	13	.961
Retiree	2.61	23	1.234
others	2.30	50	.839
Total	2.43	169	.950

As far as the variable ‘Career’ is concerned, retirees tend to be less agreeable (mean 2.61)

Figure 21 – Gender: Q39

q39

GENDER	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Male	2.46	71	1.053
Female	2.41	99	.869
Total	2.44	170	.948

As far as the variable ‘gender’ is concerned, there is no significant difference between male respondents (mean 2.46) and female respondents (mean 2.41)

Figure 22 - Education Level: Q39

q39

Education	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Tertiary	2.41	102	.948
Secondary	2.51	57	.966
Primary	2.20	10	.919
No schooling	2.00	1	.
Others	3.00	1	.
Total	2.43	171	.946

As far as the variable ‘education level’ is concerned, there is no significant difference among the groups.

Figure 23 – English: Q39

q39

q5	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Fluent	2.42	53	.819
Average	2.39	99	.988
Little	2.62	13	1.121
No English	2.80	5	1.095
Others	3.00	1	.
Total	2.43	171	.946

The 'No English' group tends to be less agreeable (mean 2.80) compared to those who know English.

Figure 24 – Residency: Q39

q39

q6	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Under 1 year	2.00	1	.
1+ - 3 years	3.00	3	1.000
3+ - 5 years	2.75	4	.500
5 + - 7 years	2.00	7	.816
7 years +	2.44	156	.958
Total	2.43	171	.946

There is no explanation for the discrepancy between the group under 1 year of residency (mean 2.00) and that over 1 year to 3 years (mean 3.00)

7.4 Cluster analysis

Cluster 1: Link between cultural norms and whether there is discrimination in Vietnamese society.

Q8-Sự phân biệt từ thành kiến và kỳ thị thường xuyên xảy ra tại Việt Nam.

Prejudice and discrimination often occur in Vietnam.

Percentage calculated: 52% males agreed, 25% males disagreed.

63% females agreed, 19% disagreed.

Question 8 was established to find out to what extent discrimination occurs in Vietnam. The majority of participants, particularly, females agreed that prejudice and discrimination occur frequently in Vietnam.

Q10. Xã hội Việt Nam khắc khe với đàn bà hơn là đàn ông.

Vietnamese society is harsher on women than men.

Percentage calculated: 89 % males agreed, 7% males disagreed.

91% females agreed, 3% disagreed.

Participants' responses to this question provide an indication of the role and status of Vietnamese women within the Vietnamese social context. The majority of participants agreed that Vietnamese society is stricter to woman than to man.

Q36- Người đàn ông Việt Nam thường có nhiều quyền hành trong gia đình hơn là đàn bà.

Vietnamese men have more power in the family than Vietnamese women.

Percentage calculated: 68% males agreed, 20% males disagreed.

62% females agreed, 29% females disagreed.

Discussion:

Research findings show that discrimination does exist in the Vietnamese society. Power is clearly a key consideration; stereotype tends to be directed at women as a subordinate group and men as the ruling group. While men are born to be dominant and respected and women are born to be inferior to men. This clearly marks out the boundaries of men and women in the Vietnamese society and family as a unit. The whole society is fashioned in accordance with its own values system, sensibility and ideology. The ruling group makes it appear to them that their beliefs and values are right and natural not only for them but also for everyone.

Cluster 2: Social stereotypes promoting sexist language.

Q22- Công dung ngôn hạnh thì cần thiết cho phái nữ.

Women must possess the four virtues of Cong (proper work), dung (decent appearance), ngon (proper speech), hanh (decent conduct).

Percentage calculated: 86% males agreed, 18% males disagreed.

53% females agreed, 32% disagreed.

Q32- Phụ nữ là phái yếu.

Women are weaker sex.

Percentage calculated: 65% males agreed, 25% disagreed.
48% of female participants agreed, 40% disagreed.

Q34- Đàn bà cần phải giữ gìn ý tứ hơn đàn ông.

Women should be better mannered than men should.

Percentage calculated: 70 % males agreed, 21% disagreed.
50% females agreed, 35% disagreed.

Discussion:

Findings show a strong tendency for gender stereotyping to set in, women are assigned apparently to certain categories such as women must possess the four virtues of “công, dung, ngôn, hạnh”, women are the fair sex and women need to be better behaved than men. On the basis of this gender assignment, naturalised norms and expectations about certain behaviour are imposed upon women. Women’s behaviour, personality in terms of a set of common-sense attribution are stereotyped.

Cluster 3: Features of sexist language in Vietnamese.

Q13-Những từ ngữ kỳ thị phái tính thường được sử dụng trong báo chí Việt Nam ở Úc hoặc nơi bạn cư ngụ

Sexist terms are often found in the Vietnamese newspapers published in Australia or where you reside.

Percentage calculated: 20 % males agreed, 46% males disagreed.
25% females agreed, 36% females disagreed.

The numbers of participants who were not sure are more than the numbers of participants who agreed/disagreed. This implies that the subject of sexist language is quite new and not many are familiar to it.

Q47- Ngôn ngữ có tính cách phân biệt phái tính được tìm thấy trong văn chương Việt Nam.

Sexist language can be found in Vietnamese literature.

Percentage calculated: 69% males agreed, 15 % disagreed.
59% females agreed, 14% females disagreed.

Discussion:

Contradiction arises from questions 13 and 47. While most participants believed that sexist terms were not found in Vietnamese newspapers in Australia, most agreed that Vietnamese literature is more biased towards women than men.

Q50- Ngôn ngữ Việt không mang tính kỳ thị phái tính.

There is no sexism in Vietnamese language

Percentage calculated: 22 % males agreed, 48% males disagreed.
19% females agreed, 56 % disagreed.

Q56- Tiếng Việt có kỳ thị phái tính.

Vietnamese language is sexist.

Percentage calculated: 51 % males agreed, 29% males disagreed.
51% females agreed, 17% disagreed.

Q54- Phái nam thường dùng ngôn ngữ kỳ thị phái nữ.

Men often use sexist language toward women

Percentage calculated: 44% males disagreed, 29% males disagreed.
60% females agreed, 16 % disagreed.

Q57-Phái nữ thường dùng ngôn ngữ kỳ thị phái nam.

Women often use sexist language toward men.

Percentage calculated: 13% males agreed, 51% males disagreed.
18% females agreed, 49% females disagreed.

Q55- Ngôn ngữ có tính cách kỳ thị phái tính thường nhắm vào phụ nữ hơn là phái nam.

More women have been victimised to sexist language than men have.

Percentage calculated:
53% males agreed, 31% males disagreed.
61% females agreed, 13% females disagreed.

Discussion:

Research findings expose sexist practices in language use and communication. There is no denying that linguistic sexism exists in Vietnamese and this gender bias was found more among male users than female users. This linguistic stereotyping is problematic and damaging for women in every sphere as it reinforces women's subordinate status.

Cluster 4: Features of sexist language

Q19- Đàn ông miệng rộng thì sang; đàn bà miệng rộng tan hoang cửa nhà.

Man with a large mouth is elegant; woman with a large mouth is destructive for the family.

Percentage calculated:

29 % males agreed, 38% males disagreed.

23% females agreed, 57 % females disagreed.

Q20- Đàn ông thông minh hơn đàn bà.

Men are smarter than women.

Percentage calculated:

24% males agreed, 52 % males disagreed.

11% females agreed, 65% females disagreed.

Q16- Tiếng chửi thề 'đụ mẹ' là ngôn từ kỳ thị phái tính.

The vulgar term 'du me' (fuck your mother) is a sexist term.

Percentage calculated:

29% males agreed, 55% males disagreed.

43 % females agreed, 41% females disagreed.

Q29-Nhiều chữ dùng để chửi thề thường nhắm vào phụ nữ.

Coarse language is normally biased against female.

Percentage calculated:

27% males agreed, 60% males disagreed.

30% females agreed, 50% females disagreed.

Another source of contradiction arises when participants were asked if language used tends to reproduce sexist stereotypes. This is contradictory to questions 54 and 55 when most answered that males often use offensive language towards women. Though denied the stereotype of women as inferior human beings was presented in talks.

Cluster 5: Participants' opinions and attitude toward sexist language. Link between culture and language shows that language and culture can not be separated.

Q9- Cách sử dụng ngôn ngữ phản ánh thái độ của người dùng.

Language usage reflects the speakers' attitude.

Percentage calculated:

87% males agreed, 3 % males disagreed.

84% females disagreed, 3% females disagreed.

Q14- Nhiều người dùng ngôn ngữ kỳ thị phái tính nhưng điều này không ảnh hưởng đến thái độ của họ trong sự kỳ thị nam nữ.

Many speakers use sexist language but this does not reflect their attitude towards sexism.

Percentage calculated:

38% males agreed, 32% males disagreed.

41% females agreed, 27% females disagreed.

Q44- Ngôn ngữ kỳ thị phái tính chỉ có tính cách vui đùa.

Sexist language is only a form of joke.

Percentage calculated:

15% males agreed, 68% males disagreed.

10% females agreed, 69% females disagreed.

Q-45 Ngôn ngữ có tính cách kỳ thị phái tính có thể có hại.

Sexist language is detrimental.

Percentage calculated:

79% males agreed, 11% males disagreed.

82% females agreed, 8% females disagreed.

Q46- Người ta thường dùng ngôn ngữ kỳ thị phái tính vì thói quen hơn là có chủ ý.

Sexist language is frequently used out of habit and not implictional.

Percentage calculated:

55% males agreed, 31% males disagreed.

51% females agreed, 26% females disagreed.

Q48- Không nên dùng ngôn ngữ có tính cách phân biệt phái tính nơi công cộng.

Sexist language should be avoided in public.

Percentage calculated:

79% males agreed, 10% males disagreed.

82 % females agreed, 8 % females disagreed.

Q51- Không nên dùng ngôn ngữ có tính cách phân biệt phái tính khi nói chuyện với nhau

Sexist language should be avoided in interpersonal communications.

Percentage calculated:

69% males agreed, 13 % males disagreed.

81 % females agreed, 4% females disagreed.

Discussion:

Based on the results of questions 48 and 51, the vast majority of participants believed in the effectiveness and value of communication without using sexist language. Most participants said that sexist language should not be used in public (question 48) and in conversations (question 51).

However contradiction arises when responses to questions 14 and 46 were examined relating to speakers' attitude towards sexism.

Responses to questions 14 and 46 were contradictory to the others. Most male and female participants said that sexist language is used among many speakers but this did not necessarily reflect their attitude towards sexism, it may be used without any intention. Responses for these two questions also show that there appears to be a certain amount of confusion in the participants' minds over what

sexist language actually means. Their answers seem to contradict main the features of questions 9, 44 and 45. It appears that this misunderstanding of the subject and between thoughts and practice shows that many participants were not sure of themselves about sexist attitude. These result findings may arise because participants are unfamiliar with this subject, therefore caused confusion.

Cluster 6: Influence of Confucianism. What environment promotes sexist language, where sexist language is learnt.

Q39- Khổng giáo có ảnh hưởng trong việc sử dụng ngôn ngữ có tính cách phân biệt phái tính.

Confucianism exerts certain influence on sexist language application.

Percentage calculated:

58% males agreed, 17% males disagreed.

47% females agreed, 6% females disagreed.

Q53- Ngôn ngữ có tính cách phân biệt phái tính xuất phát từ văn hóa tây phương.

Sexist language is an import of western culture.

Percentage calculated:

21% males agreed, 38% males disagreed.

15% females agreed, 37% females disagreed.

52- Người ta học những lời nói có thành kiến về phái tính từ trong gia đình.

Sexist language is learnt from family.

Percentage calculated:

41% males agreed, 35% males disagreed.

47% females agreed, 28% females disagreed.

Q40- Cha mẹ làm gương cho con cái về vấn đề dùng ngôn ngữ phân biệt phái tính.

Parents set an example for their children concerning the use of sexist language.

Percentage calculated:

84% males agreed, 10% males disagreed.

85% females agreed, 11% females disagreed.

Q42- Trẻ em nên được chỉ dạy tránh những lời nói có tính cách phân biệt phái tính trong gia đình..

Children should be taught to avoid using sexist language in the family.

Percentage calculated:

83% males agreed, 7% males disagreed.

84% females agreed, 15% females disagreed.

Discussion:

According to results of questions 39 and 53, sexist language is not an import of western culture but an import of Chinese culture as Confucianism plays a dominant role in its application. Most males and females agreed that Confucianism exerts an influence on its usage (question 39), while more males than females disagreed that sexist language derived from western influence.

On the whole, it appears that participants are critical of the textbooks and they question their value. Participants believe that children should be taught not to use sexist language in the family context and that changes and improvements are needed in textbooks.

Most participants agreed that sexist language is learnt within the family (question 52), most agreed that children should be taught not to use sexist language (question 42) and parents should set a good example for the children (question 40).

Cultural norms have been conceived in language (question 39) and help to explain what kind of subconscious knowledge speakers draw towards their language use. On the societal level these norms characterise a society, speech acts and activities that include the kind of language and stances expected. With this view in mind, speakers tend to orient themselves toward hierarchy.

Cluster 7. Social context and sexist language: Understanding culture, understanding language, attitude towards change.

Q11- Thái độ của người Việt ở Úc (hoặc tại quốc gia của bạn) về bình đẳng phái tính khác với khi họ còn ở Việt Nam.

Vietnamese migrants' attitude towards gender equality issues is different in comparison with when they were in Vietnam.

Percentage calculated:

86% males agreed, 6% males disagreed.

76% females agreed, 7% females disagreed.

Q37- Bạn chỉ để ý đến vấn đề ngôn ngữ có tính phân biệt phái tính sau khi đến Úc (hoặc các quốc gia tây phương khác).

You are only aware of the issue of sexist language after you have migrated to Australia or other western countries.

Percentage calculated:

45% males agreed, 38% males disagreed.

49% females agreed, 26% females disagreed.

Q41- Tìm hiểu về vấn đề phái tính nam nữ sẽ giúp người ta thấy được thể nào là ngôn ngữ có tính cách phân biệt phái tính.

Understanding of gender issues helps recognise what sexist language is.

Percentage calculated:

70% males agreed, 11% males disagreed.

73% females agreed, 6% females disagreed.

Discussion:

Based on responses to questions 11 and 37, the majority of people have agreed that after migrating to another country and adapting to new cultural ways of life, migrants' attitude toward gender equality has become different. Certain sets of beliefs and values can be changed. This helps to explain that by venturing into the unknown and learning people may see other aspects that they have not paid attention to before (question 41).

7.5 Conclusion

The advantage of using questionnaire in research is that it provides a set of data which represent different kinds of variables. The data collected in this study was subject to statistical analysis with the use of SPSS as a tool. The discussion in this chapter described and explained the relationships between the independent variables collected in the first part of the questionnaire dealing with demographic information and the dependent variables in the second part of the questionnaire dealing with personal views and attitudes. The next chapter provides a different kind of insights as its data analysis is not about statistical relationship but about ideas and concepts.

Chapter Eight

Interview data analysis

8.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an original collection of interviews representing attitudes of Vietnamese migrants towards male and female social roles in Vietnamese society as well as the influence of Confucianism and language sexism. The three areas of concern are closely related and identified for their importance in the research.

As language plays a vital role in expressing group relations and conflicts, sexist language is the derogatory language used in reference to both males and females. It reflects and encodes the values, beliefs and prejudices of the culture to which we belong.

This collection of interviews proves to be a valuable source of information assisting the researcher in providing answers to the questions raised.

The three sections, the role of males and females, Confucianism influence and sexist language are the main themes of the study. Interview questions were established beforehand, with the order of questions and wording varying in accordance with each participant's knowledge of the issues raised. It also depended on the extent to which the participant responded to the questions.

Interview questions were directed at the performative character of gender in the Vietnamese society. Gender differences is not only understood in the culturally transmitted codes of performance but also from gender identities rooted in nature and biology.

Questions were asked about the social roles of males and females within the cultural studies. To which the social expectation for males and females represented the conformance to extremely rigid roles, and expected to possess certain characteristics in their image or certain behaviours that would disassociate themselves from anything masculine or feminine. Since cultural values are woven into the fabric of people's lives, questions were asked about the complex relationship of the powerful influence of Confucianism to the people's thoughts, values and desires.

The major themes' findings were presented in the order, in which, questions were asked. The raised issues on which participants agreed or disagreed were presented to the correct extent possible.

The results of the interviews revealed the constructions and representations of patriarchy, an embodiment of dominant values in Vietnamese culture. These responses reveal that sex roles evolve from stereotypical ideologies of gender. These ideologies indicate that images centre around the male as role model in the outside work and female as a role model in the domestic environments. Men are prone to dominance and women tend to be portrayed emotion and sensitivity.

In comparison, it is also an embodiment of dominant values that exists in western societies. However, in Vietnamese society deeply influenced by Confucian traditions, not only the socially structured silences for women cultivate the illusion about what constitutes femininity and gender relations between males and females. Vietnamese women are treated as inferiors; the attitude that “*co chong thi phai ganh vac giang son nha chong*” (when a woman is married, she is expected to take all responsibilities from her husband's family) is widely adopted. Femininity in Vietnamese society is portrayed as being wifely devoted, dedicated and virtuous. Within the relational framework, the portrayal of women implies that they are subordinate, feminine and devalued while men are dominant, masculine and valued. With results of interviews, the researcher hopes to answer some of the questions raised in the research.

8.2 Using Qualitative Method in Interviews

Research is conducted as a tool to test and explore ideas. In research, data comes from various sources and data analysis is one of the most significant tasks. Analysis of data varies in accordance with research questions and the type of data gathering.

For this part of the study, qualitative method was used. Data was gathered by means of interviews and observations, transcripts and field notes. In contrast to quantitative data that are mostly numerical, standardised and systematic, qualitative data are verbal and detailed. Qualitative method emphasises the human touch in human interaction, whereas quantitative method treats the research as the main issue and then the people.

While quantitative data are easily aggregated for analysis and facilitated summaries to provide comparisons and generalisations, qualitative method is flexible and

interactive. In a way, data collected for qualitative research was coded so that they become statistically analysed. According to Strauss & Corbin, 1990:18, these data are in fact “quantifying qualitative data”.

Since this research attempts to uncover the nature of participants’ experiences relating to language sexism and their thinking about cultural norms, qualitative method is used to uncover and understand what lies behind these issues. It is difficult to obtain intricate details relating to issues by only using quantitative method.

Interviews were regarded as a secondary research tool in this part of the study. The participants’ direct statements in interviews are basic source of data. Even though the expressed personal views in interviews could be biased and wrongful, however, they reflect the reality of life where rights and wrongs are intermingled and at times difficult to distinguish. One understands the world as perceived by the participants, their gain of knowledge, the level of emotion, thoughts, ideals, way of life and experiences are expressed through their responses.

In this study, interviews substantiated similarities and disparities in the questionnaire and observation findings. Not only did the participants’ answers reveal the reality of the questionnaire items but also invaluable data answered many of the study’s raised questions.

Some participants accepted face-to-face interviews where, the researcher used notebook, pen, and micro-cassette recorder. For others, the interviews were conducted over the telephone, informal talks or coffee mornings.

In language studies, analysis involves identification of topic, categories and general patterns, results of questions, all of which lead to interpretations.

In order to obtain valid and reliable data, the researcher has tried to follow steps suggested by Strauss and Corbin (1990: 18) which required when doing this part of qualitative research:

“...to step back and critically analyse situations, to recognise and avoid bias, to obtain valid and reliable data, and to think abstractly. To do these, a qualitative researcher requires theoretical and social sensitivity, the ability to maintain analytical distance

while at the same time drawing on past experience and theoretical knowledge to interpret what is seen, astute powers of observation, and good interaction skills...”

In the interpretation of data, the researcher believes that even though she can give her own opinion on the issue, data gathered from participants should not be analysed but presented in a manner that reflects their own beliefs and values. This is not to interfere with participants’ words and thinking. Though the participants’ views of reality may not reflect the truth but they should be reported in ways that were expressed by them, showing what their observed world is really like. Presenting data in such manners will also assist the researcher not to intrude one’s own biases upon the data as the researcher’s interpretation might give a detached conceptualisation of that reality.

Some of the advantages of the qualitative method are:

- Level of participants’ concern was shown.
- Questions have unearthed the aspirations and meanings of participants.
- Differing views and ways of life of people are shown in personal interactions, whereas textbooks only present us with limited views. Views and values from textbooks could be restricted as they were based on certain culture.

One of the disadvantaged aspects of this reflection of personal feelings was when participants, at times showed hostility towards the subject. Some were extremely culturally sensitive and would find every possible way to defend their cultural beliefs and rights, as this occurred only among most male participants.

The researcher has tried to present an accurate description of what was being studied. There were face-to-face interviews and responses received via e-mails. These data gathered from interviews were analysed in terms of conceptual issues, positive and negative aspects were covered apart from suggestion and exploration. This involves personal feelings of participants. The involvement could not be found in quantitative analysis. The participants’ positive or negative responses showed individual concepts and meanings for the study to gain insight into the problem.

8.3 The Interview Process

The interview process was conducted with Vietnamese migrants living in Australia, England and America. The interviews provide an opportunity to interact with people, to understand participants' views, feelings, attitudes and participants played an important role as they provided a lot of revealing information about the topic.

The interviews were regarded as a useful research tool. As was mentioned above, the purpose of the interview was to obtain information from participants' opinions on various issues. The findings from the interviews are used to corroborate daily observations and questionnaire findings. Interview findings also offer the researcher a realistic glimpse into the strongly cultural influences on people, the complexity of thoughts forming a solid bias that is not easy to break. The results of the interviews complement other findings about the topic and reinforce what would have already been revealed, show that those findings are evident clearly.

All questions in the interviews were planned carefully and allowed participants to have a wide observation and to fully express their ideas. The questions were straightforward, open-ended and worded as neutrally as possible. Though, questions were prepared to match as far as possible with participants, to get ideas across, the researcher had to vary the wording and order depending on the participants' reaction and willingness to participate, their knowledge of issue and the degree to which they elaborated when responding to questions. Leading questions portraying any point of views on an issue were avoided. A theoretical framework was avoided when asking question, as this would have been a burden for most people. It was effective to use simple questions as they were grasped quickly and remembered, conscious attempts were made to avoid the use of linguistic terminology that participants may not have been acquainted with, thus minimising the possibility of intimidating participants.

The time of the interview was about roughly half an hour. The interviews took place wherever possible and convenient to the interviewees. Some were conducted at the researcher's home or at friends' home. Some were conducted at a conference location. Some interviews were conducted over the telephone as some participants lived interstates, or via e-mails if participants lived in a different country. Others were done by means of on-line chats.

Before interviewing or sending interview information via e-mails participants were given an explanation and were guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality. Some interviews were recorded. Before the interviews commenced, participants were asked if they had objections to the interview being recorded. On tape, contents were in Vietnamese and later fully translated into English.

In face-to-face interviews, participants spoke in plain Vietnamese and afterwards, the researcher transcribed the content into English. In e-mail exchanges, except for one, all participants wrote in English. E-mail exchange provides a valuable source of information, as the people were more relaxed and more likely to express their opinions. Their beliefs and values were expressed more freely as they are 'faceless' while in a face-to-face situation there seemed to be some restriction as to avoid embarrassment.

Despite some inconvenience in face-to-face interviews such as embarrassment, there were other advantages. The researcher had an opportunity to ask about the meanings and concepts underlying participants' attitudes towards cultural norms and the use of sexist language, the participants had a chance to provide in-depth information on issues. This provides the researcher with an understanding of the issues in the eyes of participants and this knowledge could not be found in questionnaires.

In addition, the researcher also had an opportunity to learn from people of their effective communication, their self-worth and self-expression. To an extent, it was also possible to determine the level of honesty in participants with regard to their feelings and thoughts. What is left unsaid is equally vital to what is said.

Most interviewees' ages ranged from 30- 80, some were in their teenage from 15-18. The majority of the participants in interviews have been in a western country for many years, graduated from tertiary institutions. Some were born in a western country and are on home duties.

During the interview process, it was noted that elderly people who spent most their lives in Vietnam reinforced strongly the view for a patriarchal society. People in the age range of 40s and 50s had the same attitude and strongly reinforced the view.

People who migrated to or were born in western countries are more open-minded. However, in some cases, people who migrated to a western country at a young age but were brought up in families that were extremely culturally determined tend to have the same thinking as to follow the same patterns as their parents do.

8.4 Interviews - Purpose and Content

The purpose of the interviews was to provide a more in-depth understanding of participants' perceptions of cultural norms, by probing further into issues of male and female role. Through the study, the researcher hopes to see more of the ways in which participants thought about the issue of language sexism. Confucian influence over male and female roles. The interviews endorsed the concept of attitude and its relationship to behaviour.

This study indicated that friendly conversations stimulated more sincere and qualified responses from the participants. Participants would go to the extremes to protect their views as they verbalised their opinions strongly. Participants' responses to the interviews verified the findings and attitudes of the study. They questioned the validity, correctness and whether they believed it to be true and the reasons for this belief.

Data obtained from the interviews provided a good source of qualitative data from the participants' perspective as these data are also used to validate the findings of the questionnaire used in the study. Some questions touched upon their feelings towards male and female social status, some asked about their understanding, experiences whether they find cultural norms most applicable, their reactions if cultural norms were challenged. The rest of the questions dealt with participants' opinions of the role of male and female.

Some participants responded well only to discussions of concepts while others responded well when vivid examples were given, including quotations from books and newspapers. Though, all participants have a general knowledge of English, Vietnamese remains the mother tongue and was used in interviews. Using the native language facilitates people to express their views more fluently, besides most native

speakers prefer to talk to each other in Vietnamese. It is considered to be more polite and easier to conduct the face-to-face interviews in Vietnamese. Speaking English language with Vietnamese native speakers, in particular with the elderly people, would have appeared to be artificial and awkward. Native speakers expressed their views with more feelings and openness in their mother tongue. In order to establish a good rapport with participants in interview situations, the researcher avoided any possibility that could make participants feel awkward.

Interviews were recorded using a General Electric micro-cassette recorder, later contents were translated into English. All participants have read and answered questionnaires. The interviews touched upon the same topic but each interview was different. With several participants, the interviews took the form of friendly chats. This proved to be more effective in this way, indeed as most seemed interested, as people felt more relaxed to have a chat about things and even talked about their personal experience. As soon as the researcher mentioned the study and the 'interview' began and notes were taken, the participants' attitude changed, they became reserved and did not want to talk openly. Some seemed nervous and did not like the idea of their answers being recorded. Several were difficult. This was the case particularly with the elderly males who did not want to talk. In contrast to face-to-face interviews, the questions sent via e-mail were answered more freely and openly regardless of language use.

Male participants showed their hostility about the subject whereas females spoke freely. It appeared the interview provided them with a chance to talk about issues in their lives that were not touched upon previously. For a number of people, the interviews were kept at a formal level, participants were willing to provide the information asked for but did not go into meticulous details. However, with elderly male participants, one plainly refused to participate and saying that he was too old and others were reserved. There seemed a lack of trust and openness among some of the elderly males in their 60s and 70s, it might be the age gap between the researcher and interviewees. Generally, Vietnamese elderly people don't want to be questioned about their experiences, opinions or reveal their feelings by a person half their age.

On the structure of the interviews, efforts were made not to offend the participants in any way, words were carefully used and questions were asked with great consideration for others' feelings since this is a sensitive issue. Though, questions were simple and straightforward, in one case, a participant refused to answer questions on roles of male/female or if there was discrimination against women in Vietnamese society. He plainly said that there was no such thing as a man controls woman in Vietnam and that woman should act according to the cultural patterns. This participant's occupation was a doctor before 1975 in Vietnam. Not only that he showed his hostility towards the subject, he was angry and wrote an article published in a Vietnamese newspaper in Sydney satirising the researcher and the topic. He wrote that there were no books written in Vietnamese about the subject of language sexism, therefore sexism and discrimination are non-existent. There were only books written about the examples of Vietnamese women, who were praised for their devotion and dedication. Since this participant felt uneasy about the responses, questions were dropped and interview ended. In other cases, when participants provided an unclear answer, the researcher used probes as a means to encourage the participant to elaborate on the response. Participants' opinions were varied, whether agreed or disagreed, they were all presented to the possible extent.

8.5 Interviewing questions and answers

The interview questions were about the social status of Vietnamese men and women, particularly in the Vietnamese family as a unit. Whether the ancient platitude that men are to be respected, women are inferior to men (Nam trong Nu khinh) is confronted (participants 11, 15 and 18). Whether it is right and natural for men to seek and hold power and for a woman to be submissive is normal, marking her as feminine and devoted (Participants 1, 6, 7, 9 and 12).

Participants were also asked if they think Confucianism played a part in the Vietnamese culture, imposed certain values and beliefs, that in turn induced certain set behaviours in men and women. Answers (participants 6, 11, 15 and 17) revealed the reality of the lives of women, it is the beliefs about the nature and role of women that had far-reaching effects. The beliefs about difference between males and females

influenced how people act and how they feel about themselves as in males' answers 1, 2 and females' answers 3 and 5.

One of the assumptions of patriarchy is that women belong to men as their property. In order to keep the property secure, men enforce rigid rules on women. As a result, women become worthless. As the language reflects and contributes to the survival of the stereotype, we use different words to describe identical behaviour by men and women. The traditional sayings based on interpretations of Confucian beliefs raise awareness of the implications of such sayings on women's life participation and status in society. Participants were also asked if certain Vietnamese sayings function as instruction manuals for people's behaviour, and presuppose the inappropriateness have biased attitude towards men and women.

Followed are the participants' responses, the researcher's task here is to gather the data and present them in such manners that "the informants speak for themselves". There is no interference or interpretation made by the researcher.

Male viewpoints:

P.1. This is a man's world; men, the stronger of the two sexes, make the rules to their advantage.

P.2. Women suffer more in life than men do. You are born a woman because you were not good enough in your past lives. God and fate have intended for women to be inferior to men and this is true and prevailing all times. (This participant has lived in America for more than 20 years).

P.3. A 13-year-old Vietnamese boy born and grown up in the US says that dating a Vietnamese girl is asking for trouble; she can take things seriously and will act as if she owns you. If you call her at home, you have to deal with her strict, controlling parents too. It is more fun to go out with American girls; after a few months, if things don't work out, you can easily say goodbye and date someone else. When you marry, "lấy con gái Việt Nam lời hơn" (you get a profit out of marrying a Vietnamese girl).

P.4. From a Vietnamese man in his late 30s living in France and married to a French woman: "đàn bà Việt Nam vừa xấu, vừa dữ" (Vietnamese women are ugly and have a bad disposition).

P.5. Up to our generation, a man is expected to be a good breadwinner; a woman's place is at home to take care of her family and household chores; if she works, she will have to full-fill most domestic duties as well. The next generation of Vietnamese is growing up in Western countries and no longer adheres to these defined roles.

P.6. Man is the head of the family, a woman has to look after her family, there is no need to complain, and it is her duty to do so for her husband and children. No, the Vietnamese society does not discriminate against women, in fact, the Vietnamese woman's status is high, look at the examples of the Trung sisters (Hai Bà Trưng), who led an uprising against the Chinese occupation two millennia ago, they were admired for their spirit of invincibility, look at the examples of female revolutionaries such as Cô Giang, Cô Bắc who fought for Vietnam's ideal of freedom. And there are many other respectable Vietnamese women etc. This proves that Vietnamese women are not inferior to men. (This participant was a former university teacher in Vietnam before 1975).

P.7. Men always have a respected status in the Vietnamese society and should be decision-makers. House chores are for women; men look after outside work of the country. Confucianism exerts certain influence in the Vietnamese society, but let's remember that not all are under this influence. I don't know if proverb and folklore contribute to the survival of gender stereotype.

P.8. The role of Vietnamese men is to protect and support their wives. A woman who has young children commits to full-time housework and needs help and support from her husband. If my wife decides to go to work, I would help her. If she decides not to, it is fine with me. I don't think men should treat women as inferiors, we should not tolerate such thinking. Yes, there are sayings that degrade women. Do you know the saying "đàn bà mặc quần không qua khỏi đầu" (a woman is not able to pull pants over her head)? It means a woman is not able to achieve anything.

P.9. Man is the breadwinner therefore, his wife and children have to listen to and obey him. Listening to the father makes the family function well and woman does not know as much as man does. No, Vietnamese language is not sexist. Sexism is of the western nature. Vietnamese women are highly respected in the Vietnamese culture, they devote their lives to their families, and this is the right thing to do. Look at the Japanese women, if you compare them with the Vietnamese women, you'll see Vietnamese women have more rights than they have.

P.10. There is no sexism in Vietnamese language and the proof is that you can not find any books on this topic in Vietnamese. Women should be content with what they already have got.

P.11. Women are born to serve men (đàn bà sanh ra để phục vụ đàn ông), that is natural from generation to generation. In the bible, God uses part of man (xương sườn) to create a woman. A man is a man; a man has to worry about so many things. I don't know about sexist language. (This participant is in his thirties, came to Australia when he was in his twenties).

P.12. I strongly believe in the traditional family, in which the husband is the boss and the father is strict to his children, if a father is not strict, children will not respect him and he won't be able to teach them. So if a father is remote and aloof to his children, this is normal. Parents owe their children sustenance and education and the children in return are obliged to show obedience, respect and support in life and death. All this is part of life. A woman should respect her husband by following his wish. Housewives are lucky because they don't have to go to work and the hardest thing is not to cook but how to earn a living. (This participant is in his early 50s has been in Australia for 29 years, he came here when he was 21 years of age).

P.13. Women should be content with what they have. Discrimination does not exist in Vietnamese society. The status of Vietnamese women in the Vietnamese culture is already high, don't demand for more. Look at the Vietnamese mothers and wives, how they sacrifice their lives for the sake of their husbands and children. (Received from a male participant via Chat on Internet).

P.14. No, generally speaking, the Vietnamese language is not sexist. There may be some saying to show the unfairness towards women, but this is only of a minority. Men and women are equally treated in the Vietnamese society, I think the work is equally shared, women choose to defer to their husbands' wishes in public, but at home they have more power than what you would think. To say Vietnamese language is sexist is not to understand the Vietnamese culture at all or to understand it only on the surface. (This participant was a secondary school teacher in Vietnam before 1975, he taught Vietnamese and Buddhism).

P.15. Yes, the status of women is low in the Vietnamese society, but that is how it has always been, women can not think as far as men can, women are women and men are men. You can not compare a man with a woman and vice versa.

P.16. How could a woman be equal to a man? If a woman wants to be equal, ask her to go and lift up a rice sack that weighs 25 kilos and see. Woman should be happy with what they have. No such thing as language sexism in Vietnamese, we only make jokes for fun. (This participant was an ex-serviceman in the army).

P.17. Yes, in some Vietnamese families, men show their authority over their wives and children, but remember there are families, where husbands and wives mutually support and respect one another. I don't know about the issues of language sexism that I have not thought of it, there may be some proverbs showing discrimination for women. Yes, people are influenced by Confucian values; this is only because the Chinese occupied Vietnam for so long, not all values are bad. For example, a man must have 'nhân' (humaneness), 'nghĩa' (righteousness), 'lễ' (civility/ritual propriety), 'trí' (wisdom), 'tín' (faithfulness), now what is wrong with these qualities?

The only negative view is towards women, but only the Chinese treat women unfairly, Vietnamese do not. Read about the devotion of Vietnamese women for their families and examples of heroines in Vietnamese society.

P.18. What does she know? She thinks she is right but she is only a woman and she lies beneath me. (View of a divorcee about his wife).

Female viewpoint:

P.1. Beauty works to a woman's advantage because even though Vietnamese men do not consider women their equals, life can still be great for a woman if she is pretty because men succumb to beauty. A beautiful woman has a lot of power over men and can accomplish a great deal in life. Unfortunately if a woman does not have good looks, she is doomed to never succeed to her full potential.

P.2. Another participant argues that the above view is not true all the times or can't be true any more. Beauty without intelligence is doomed for failure. A woman's beauty is an added strength to her success combined with her other qualities.

P.3 Most men prefer to be the boss and have a submissive wife who caters their needs and desires. Men wish they could afford the extra income that their wives bring home. Housewives and full-time mothers are becoming rarer because of economic rules. Thanks to the success of woman liberation movement. Women are expected to work as hard as men however they are still at a disadvantage because they earn less and have to shoulder numerous child raising and cleaning tasks, which as a whole may ironically add up that liberated women work harder than men do. Men's share of house chores is only a small fraction of women's. I completely agree with the opinion that we live in a man's world: mạnh (men) ăn hiếp yếu (women).

That is why women keep fighting. Most of them are so stressed out that they have no quality of life. Where is this going? Are we incapable of holding and living up to our tasks?

P.4. The impact of Western culture has brought about changes in Sex roles in Vietnam. However, in the rural areas and city backgrounds, differences were still great regarding the traditional sex roles. Women are still subservient to men, people still adhere to the four virtues, công (proper work), dung (decent appearance) ngôn (proper speech) hạnh (proper conduct), women are expected to endure, suffer and sacrifice.

P.5. Women were traditionally subordinate to men. Women were completely bound by domestic duties and environment. They were seen as inferior to men. It was the culture that put the women into their submissive roles and men in their dominant roles. Women and men are products of the culture. Yes, the burden was brought to Vietnamese women but the question was that why Vietnamese women accept this burden without questioning the cultural norms. Was it because they simply had to do what their mothers/grandmothers did? How many people would dare to go against the traditional norms? No one would. (This participant is in her late thirties and has lived in Australia over ten years)

P.6. I don't know about sexist language, I have never thought of it but I know that the status of Vietnamese women has improved due to living in Australia. In Vietnam, it is common for men to hit their wives during domestic arguments or if the wives don't listen or answer back. There was no law protecting women from violent husbands. Men treat their wives as their properties and could be so abusive. The position of Vietnamese women is always low compared to men's.

P.7. I think Vietnamese women in America rule their households. These women have the confidence to do as well as men or even better outside of their homes. They tend to be leaders in business and earn respect from society. Nowadays it is up to each individual (man or woman) to show what they can accomplish and others will treat them with respect. Usually the more money a man or woman makes, the more highly he/she is regarded. (This participant agrees that this is a better way for Vietnamese women than the traditional 'thùy mị', gentle nature and passive character many girls were encouraged to grow into). I have no idea on language sexism.

P.8. Yes, Vietnamese women in the US rule their households and treat their husbands like puppets. These women make major decisions and are the matriarchs in their family. I, too rule in my family. My husband works full-time and does most of the housework. I work part-time. This is great for women, women who have the upper hand and do not care whether men feel emotionally hurt. (This participant did not answer question on Confucianism influence or sexism in language).

P.9. Up to our generation, a man is expected to be a good breadwinner; a woman's place is at home to take care of her family and household chores; if she works, she still has to fulfil most domestic duties as well. Yes, a man has more power in the family than a woman's and yes, Vietnamese society is influenced by Confucianism, but if you ask me to explain it further, I don't know how but I know it exists. (This participant is in her 40s). Women now contribute a large part of income to the family and are still bound in their traditional thinking that part of their job is not only to work as hard as males do but also to embrace their female duties without the help of their spouses. The next generation of Vietnamese growing up in Western countries no longer adheres to these defined roles.

P.10. No, I don't agree with the view that this is a man's world and that man, the stronger of the two sexes, makes the rules to their advantage. Women are as capable as men or even more so in many areas. It is unfair for men to discriminate women. Men should be more considerate; they should yield more and compromise with women to have a better love relationship or more harmony in the family.

P.11. I agree with the way Vietnamese society is organised. A woman should keep face for her husband and family no matter what happens. Men are more lucid than women and they know what is good for the family. I support the husband's rights. A woman should listen to her husband and not try to take control and family will go wrong if a woman doesn't do what man say. (This participant is in her 60s).

P.12. Vietnamese men are very spoiled at home; it is much better to marry an American man. (This participant is in her twenties).

P.13. A religious man is different from a cultural man. A cultured man behaves in a way that accords with the culture, whereas a religious man acts in the faith of God. My husband believes in God and he treats me kindly, I was not treated as an inferior but an equal to my husband. You see the difference between a religious man and a cultured man. A cultured man treats his wife strictly.

P.14. Vietnamese men are rude (lỗ mǎng). They would hit their wives during domestic disputes and this is so common in Vietnam. Our society has trained men to be like this. A woman is powerless in this sort of situation. My husband said to me

that what I do all day is just to cook a meal, pay some bills and collect children from school; we have young children and he just doesn't see what I am going through.

P.15. Vietnamese women tend to over worry about everything and this is due to the fact that they have always carried so many burdens. When they were younger, they were taught that girls have to look after parents, younger brothers and sisters. On entering marriage, they are taught that their responsibility is to look after and to devote their lives to the needs of husbands and children. As a result, they become stressed due to bearing too much emotional burdens. Vietnamese men are bossy, it is the same with my husband, and all my friends are in the same situation as I am in. They even find it hard to go out for coffee with friends, as when they come back their husbands became difficult and gave them a hard time with complaining. The burden was brought to us, Vietnamese women by culture, but I wonder why Vietnamese women accepted it. We were never asked what we wanted out of life, they assume responsibilities for us and that we have to follow them. A woman should be asked what she expects out of life. I know a lot of women who go to work. this responsibility, however, does not necessarily increase her status to her husband, at times it can cause conflict in the family because an independent woman discusses things and men resent it, they see it as a form of disobedience.

Yes, we were influenced by Confucian teaching, people followed these teaching but don't ask me to go into details, I know it is there but to explain, I can't.

P.16. In our disagreement, I was always scolded at, my husband always swears 'đù má or 'đù mẹ' (F. your mother) to me, I did not answer back but I was hurt, I told him not to say that many times but he would not listen. I have pity on him because he did not know what he was saying. I hope that one day he would see that I am a good wife. You should not get fed up when your husband gets angry, a few slaps on the wife's face does not mean anything... as long as he does not beat her brutally. (This participant is in her late forties and a housewife, she has lived in Australia for 15 years).

P.17. Yes, I think that Confucianism plays a major part in the Vietnamese ways of conduct. Many of my friends came to America when they were in their teens, spent somewhat 25-30 years here and yet, the way they think is very Vietnamese. People

can never change, you see, when they have children they still name their children after Confucius saying. For example; ‘nhân’ (a man must be merciful, benevolent and human), ‘nghĩa’ (a man must help the needy and desperate), ‘lễ’ (a man must observe family and social hierarchies, adhere to rites and ceremonies), ‘trí’ (a man must have insight and wisdom), ‘tín’ (a man must be consistent and loyal), in particular, ‘nghĩa’, ‘trí’ and ‘tín’, she believes that they are the popular male names.

P.18. A female participant says that Confucianism still exerts an influence on the sex roles in Vietnamese society. But one has to take into account people’s personal circumstances and individuality, whether they apply Confucian principles earnestly (in a humane way) or apply them to put down others.

To apply Confucianism the right way would be in such a circumstance - a person comes from a respectable family in which parents adhere to the principle of Confucianism the right way and set good examples to children, children would get a good influence. The children in turn would continue to maintain what good parents have taught them and continue to do so for their children. No matter what situations they would be in, they would not do wrong. If a person comes from a family that does not believe in Confucianism or from a good family but he has a bad character, he still would use Confucianist principles to force his wife and children to obey him, to serve him and yet he, himself, can not do what is good for him. These people in fact only used Confucianism principles to serve his own interests and to consolidate his own position. This kind of behaviour does not produce good results, in particular, when migrating to a free western country where everyone has a chance to live as they wish and don’t need to follow good examples. (This participant is in her forties, has lived in Australia for more than 15 years and is a health worker).

P.19. I think 80 per cent of Vietnamese men are authoritarian. Only 20 per cent are broad-minded about the role of male and female. The 80 per cent regard their position as the boss in the family and as the boss, wife and children have to listen to him.

Yes, Vietnamese women are disadvantageous in many areas; they don’t really have their say and live silently. (This participant has been in Australia for 19 years, was graduated from a tertiary institution and is presently a housewife).

P.20. (From an e-mail received from USA) I have witnessed a few situations and incidents:

-At my parents' house, although my mother used to work full-time, it was her responsibility to do all housework; my father retired long before my mother but seldom helped around the house; he believes it is perfectly alright for him to spend his days leisurely because he is a man.

-An acquaintance of mine said her husband only helped her around the house when they were alone; when they had company he would like her to show that she would do all the housework so he would not feel embarrassed.

-At Vietnamese parties, most men gather in the living room or sit down at the dining table first to chit chat or watch TV while women get food ready from the kitchen; if there are not enough seats, women let the men sit together and after serving them women eat in the kitchen.

-A girlfriend of mine when having to go to a doctor prefers a male over a female doctor; she believes that a man does a better job than a woman in medicine.

-From what I have seen many Vietnamese men believe only they can be in control in dating and respectful women should go along with them and never make any initiation. A male friend told me that he automatically loses respect for a woman if she says "I love you" first; in fact he broke up with a girlfriend over this; after she expressed that she loved him, he just dropped her not even saying why; later a male friend of his explained to her why.

-Another girlfriend of mine called H. H is in her 40s and has a teenage daughter. H knows a couple of good friends, who has a nice teenage son, the two families often get together and the children have become girlfriend and boyfriend. H coaches her daughter very carefully not to call that boy and not to express too much enthusiasm over him, because H is very certain once her daughter makes any move, the boy and his parents will look down on her.

P.21. I did not finish my university degree in Vietnam, I asked my husband's permission to study again in Australia but he said no. I think he is scared that I will get better educated than he. Because he is my husband, he goes to work to support

me, I feel that it is my duty to respect him and I don't want to do anything against him.

P.22. Men only please women when they are dating; after you marry him, even if you please him, he still puts you down. An educated man is even worse than a man who is not well-educated, an educated man hatches a plot well. (The participant is in her fifties).

8.6 Result of interviews (interview analysis)

Having discussed with the participants their opinions on the social status of men and women, Confucian influence and language sexism, the interview came to a close with the following conceptual issues which reflect strongly the meanings underlying the attitudes of the participants.

8.6.1 Role and status of women

Interview results showed that most women agreed that male dominance and female inferiority were evident in the Vietnamese society. More female participants strongly expressed their dislike of the way women were being treated in Vietnam. In particular with the presentation of the sacrificing image of woman, female participants thought that this was a burden for women, all women were raised and taught in such a manner, they had to follow the same path as their mothers and grandmothers had chosen. Some said that women took others' emotional burden to the extent that she lost herself. There were only two female participants accepting that the role predestined for women was good for women and should be followed by women as they considered it as 'thiên chức' (heavenly mandate). Those females are in their late 50s as one participant is in her 60s and the other is in her 50s.

Most recognise that the traditional role of women is to be submissive and obedient. After marriage, a woman should devote obedience not only to their husbands but parents-in-law. Most recognise that their status was low and males were superior. They believe they are treated unfairly but accept it because it is the norm. More female participants admitted their subordinate role due to their husbands' hostility.

All women agreed that the Vietnamese society was patriarchal but some did not go into details for fear of losing face.

Some women agreed to the role of men as head of the family. They wanted men to take control but with understanding, a figure whom they could lean on. Some still want to follow their mothers' and grandmothers' path as this is social expectation and they want to reserve traditions. Though they are exhausted because of this burden, they continue to carry it because it is the traditional way and expected social behaviour. They strive to maintain family honour and prestige.

One participant says that women themselves should be asked what they want or expect out of life. They need to answer these questions for themselves. In many households where the men work and women stay at home looking after children, the contribution of women as wives and mothers tend to be undervalued by their husbands. A participant says that her husband thinks what she does all day is simply to prepare the evening meal, pay some bills and collect children from school.

Among participants interviewed, it was rare to find a woman to say that Vietnamese wives have a strong influence in the family even though some do contribute to family income.

8.6.2 Role and status of men

The majority of males said that men should be the leaders and women should respect and follow men. This in fact reveals the gender stereotypes of male dominance and the trivialisation of women. This is expressed in the Confucian sayings "a woman's duty is not to take control or take charge", "Women are to be led and to follow others".

Worldly matters are highly regarded for men (*bình thiên hạ* - to pacify the world), whereas domestic matters are considered trivial and should be left for women. While men are honoured for strength, women are praised for passiveness and gentleness: "Man is honoured for strength; a woman is beautiful on her account of her gentleness", "Women's nature is passive".

Only one participant shows an understanding for his partner and would respect her decisions. Participants agree that a woman's role is subordinate and this is another way of regarding their wives as their property. The status of women is inferiorised in the examples of sacrifice and devotion. Women are represented in tangential and servile positions in accordance with the Confucian saying: "A woman should look on her husband as if he were Heaven itself, and never weary of thinking how she may yield to him".

Males justified themselves and the way society was supposed to be, whereas some women either hid their feelings or showed resentment.

Male responses seemed to praise role of the subordinate women and there was no need to change.

In the face-to-face interview and via e-mails, when participants were asked if any of the male participants read any English book on the subject of the language sexism and all said no.

In summary, it becomes clear in the interviews that most participants have never reflected upon certain aspects of their behaviour/roles. Males conceptualised their roles in accordance with cultural norms. They saw themselves as the heads of the family, whose duty was to lead and give order. They perceived their roles as one of authority and were unable to accept changes. The lack of understanding made it virtually difficult for them to think about change.

It seems that male expectation was limited to what they tell their family should/should not do rather than striving to build up a relationship based on mutual respect and understanding. Despite realities and constraints in the family many males bring Vietnam to Australia and create a Vietnamese environment and live in that environment in Australia. It seems that the concept of exploitation was misunderstood as the concept of sacrifice in a relationship.

Questions on patriarchy caused uneasiness among male interviewees and some tried to evade the question. They did not give a clear indication of whether they supported the new role of women in a western country or not. The researcher did not persist in eliciting a definite response from these participants, as not to cause uneasiness and awkwardness for them when responding a question they were not certain. Some

evaded the question while others provided short responses. Little awareness or knowledge of the topic on language sexism was stated.

There was only one male showing sympathy towards women's role and all other males in this study show their hostility towards it. They do not see their relationship with family as complex and diverse. The restricted perception of their role was that they are the heads of the families, they are men, therefore wives and children are to respect and show this respect by listening to them. This perception justifies their tendency to adopt traditional roles in family.

8.6.3 Confucian influence

Based on the answers and attitudes of participants, Vietnamese society is like other societies, males are expected to emulate certain characteristics such as dominance, aggressiveness and independence. They were expected to practise behaviours that would disassociate themselves from anything feminine. This goes to an extent that feminine qualities are seen as inferior among women, let alone men.

When questions were asked about Confucianism and its influence on Vietnamese culture, many participants responded positively. They defined Confucianism through sayings such as *nhân* (humaneness), *ngĩa* (righteousness), *lẽ* (civility), *trí* (wisdom) and *tín* (faithfulness). Women are inferiorised as men's properties. This is a major contradiction in Confucianism. While the role of man is highly regarded, women are expected to be seen but not heard. The role of women was undervalued and it is a detrimental aspect of Confucianism perceived by people. The negative result of this influence is the breakdown in relationship, which becomes abusing and uncaring. The devoting image of a Vietnamese woman was the only example of womanly goodness in a society that still enthusiastically honours the conventions of patriarchy in its purest form.

Generally speaking, Vietnamese values and views are written by the people who are for Confucianism, thus reflecting the values and view of those who strongly support it.

8.6.4 Cultural theme

In discussions, male participants viewed Vietnamese culture as a powerful resource, which gives them motivation and authority, whereas female participants view it as a responsibility and independence in their thinking and behaviour. Men and women are assigned to apparently natural categories accordingly and on the basis of this gender assignment, naturalised norms and expectations about their behaviour are imposed upon them. This allows gender stereotyping to set in.

At the conference of Vietnamese women's federations, the researcher gave a brief talk on sexist language in Vietnamese and asked people to respond with the questionnaires. A few weeks later, one male wrote in a Vietnamese paper published in Sydney about the gender issue and sexist language discussed at the conference. If he had known it beforehand, he would not 'allow' his wife to attend the conference. This shows the commonsensical categories of Vietnamese males and females, who in turn reproduce sexist stereotypes.

It is noted that in an interview discussion, some female participants who want to learn and change in their new world of knowledge and interaction have said that their partners did not feel comfortable with their improvement. Many Vietnamese families break down because men tend to behave in their old dominant ways, they abuse their wives to keep face with friends and to show that they are 'real men'. The concept of honour acts as agent of social control and was important to the males. If a man says that his wife is under his thumb, he is regarded as a man and he is honoured for a man. It appears that public image is all important. Males are concerned with what people might say about him in his family.

Intertwined with the concept of social control was the practice of patriarchy, man has to defend his honour so he has to make sure that his instructions are followed by his wife and children.

The authoritarian pattern found in social relationship is reinforced within the family walls. Man as the father - husband usually takes the major decisions making to affect the family. This position of the father - husband clearly discriminates in the favour of the head of the household.

In general Vietnamese men are taught by the culture that as men, they should not have to worry about domestic matters, these tasks are for women and men only have to

worry about worldly matters. Having grown up from such view, many Vietnamese men fail to take note to relief the burden carried by their working wives.

8.6.5 Marriage theme

In Vietnamese society, marriage is often seen as a permanent institution. Women are taught to learn humility and not to leave their husbands. Proverbs such as “một câu nhin chín câu lành” or “chồng giận thì vợ làm lành, cơm sôi bớt lửa một đời không khê” (when the husband is angry the wife makes up first, likewise, lowered heat, boiled rice will not burnt). Should problems occur they only hope that their husbands would “hồi tâm” - regret and behave well again. Therefore, divorce is not common in Vietnam. When there were family disputes between the spouses, other family members such as parents, grandparents, uncle, aunt, sister, or brother of both sides step in and mediate. Because of the sexual asymmetry of the male and female status in Vietnam, women are often treated with unfairness. Women are often advised to forgive, learn humility and sacrifice for the sake of their children. In addition, women are unable to leave an unhappy marriage mainly because of their social and economic dependence.

In Australia women have more freedom and choice, the Australian society provides women with both social and legal status. The social security system assists women in need with maintenance payments, they are not alone and helpless, and men can no longer use financial dependence as a means to isolate their wives. Some women don't want to break up an unhappy marriage for they don't want their children to suffer and bear emotional wounds. Some male participants think that this system encourages women to leave the marriage quickly instead of reconciliation.

8.6.6 Participants' attitude towards sexist language

As views are exchanged on various issues, there are a lot of different opinions and this gives a wide variety of information. This learning from participants provides researcher with a realistic picture of the world.

The results of the interviews indicate that people were not conscious of sexist language in Vietnamese. It was to them a new topic that has never come to their

attention. There were some people who strongly denied that there was sexism in the Vietnamese society and language. On reflection, some gave a different point of view when seeing the researcher the second time. One of the participants said that after the first encounter, he went home and borrowed books on this subject and felt that he was so backward. The other participant accepted in the second meeting that there was in fact some discrimination in Vietnamese society towards women and a degree of language sexism contained in some proverbs and folklores.

Participants' attitudes show that the topic was challenging socially and emotionally. Most would have to say that it is an interesting aspect to explore. Not everyone agrees on the meaning of the concept of sexism in the Vietnamese language. There are different definitions and orientations. It depends on one's views on the roles of male and female in theory as well as in practice.

The majority of women agreed that social pressure on unequal sex roles has held the traditional role of women as subordinate to man in Vietnamese society and the strength of the traditional beliefs was the obstacle to women. The people who were married in Vietnam said that to be good wives, women needed to keep quiet and not to utter negative words or express any negative feeling toward their husbands. Not many Vietnamese husbands are prepared to listen to and share their wives' feelings. Therefore, the most common marital problem is the lack of communication.

8.7 Conclusion

The interviews have provided the researcher with an opportunity to tackle some of the entrenched clichés. The analysis of the interview presents several important results and these results indicated and marked stereotyping.

The findings suggest that:

- Among most males, the traditional stereotypical roles are difficult to change, despite present living conditions in western countries. They bring Vietnam to Australia by sticking rigidly to cultural norms that favour males' rights and many continue to live within that environment. Considered themselves at the top of the family, men assume that husband/father knows best. This is in fact common in other western societies, however, it seems more rigid to Vietnamese males as they

run into their beliefs deeply influenced by the Confucian doctrine that a husband and father must have the absolute power. This belief defines men's territory, men continue to struggle for power in the new cultural environment, and argue for it as not many step outside it.

- Images of Vietnamese women in reality and in literature have been predominantly submissive and manipulative. In informal discussions, many women said that when they raised a family issue or questioned their own action, their spouses often problematised it, dumping on them by reinforcing the conclusion that they had no knowledge and had not acted properly. It is difficult for Vietnamese women to maintain their individuality and not conform to what others expect. Some female participants were determined to overcome constraints of cultural norms and want to improve family relationship and changes may be possible but to achieve this they would have to face the difficulty of jeopardising deep-rooted cultural norms. Only two participants did not want change and what is not said reveals as much as what is said about the roles of women. The socially structured silences that Vietnamese women have to accept her role as devoted mother and wife. The devoted wifely and motherly examples are heard of and written in Vietnamese literature to identify silences supported by the Vietnamese people in accordance with the roles of women.
- The cultural message celebrates the role of male dominance while inferiorises woman's. The cultural standardisation reflects devoting women as an ideal figure of Vietnamese women, while ignore them as individuals with their own needs and feelings. Discourse in family can be seen as a struggle for power.

The participants' responses have shown that there is an ongoing struggle for power from the male side and an ongoing struggle for connection from the female side rather than equality. Most male participants and some female participants did not really want women to be equal. Their responses have shown that a man's dream is power, whereas a woman's dream is to have a happy family. It is difficult for a man to negotiate with his spouse for fear of losing control and as for a woman, she is

prepared to go along with her husband to keep peace and harmony in the family for fear of family loss.

In fact male and female participants in their own ways of speaking illustrate that they are attached to their taught beliefs and these beliefs determine their quality of life. Women position themselves as childcare providers, hence subordinate and men position themselves as breadwinners and thus the dominant.

The researcher wants to suggest that women and men continue to be loving parents but family interaction needs not to be seen as power struggle but a connection for love and understanding. Vietnamese women need to acquire more education and employment status than being passive receivers, while the definition of manhood needs to be re-defined to better accommodate the new situations; old knowledge needs to be replaced by the new approach where respect and communication are required. When we examine our belief systems, we often find thoughts derived from what we are subtly taught, by looking at the positivity and negativity of the issues, we may discover our true identities by letting go of the illusions of identities to discover our true selves.

On the social plane, issues of one own's culture and other cultures need to be explored, outdated expectations of traditions need to be questioned and social links in the wider community need to be established to adjust to changes.

Chapter 9

Conclusion

This study has finally reached its destination. Like a journey, this research study was initially conceptualised, organised, and conducted. Finally it is important to reflect on what has been achieved or not been achieved. This concluding chapter gives a summary of the study. It examines the significance of the study, particularly its contribution to the understanding of linguistic discrimination in the Vietnamese cultural context. It also highlights results in relation to the raised issues in this study. Finally it includes implications and recommendations for future research dealing with discriminatory language with a focus on sexist language in Vietnamese.

9.1 Reflective overview

The past two decades have witnessed a great interest in political and social issues relating to social equity, social justice in academic discussion and research. The gender issue is one of the most researched themes. The traditional perceptions of the roles of males and females in different social contexts have been questioned. Gender stereotyping has been examined in children's literature, mass media, interpersonal communication and organisational communication. While there is an abundance of research dealing with discriminatory language, particularly sexist language, in the Western context, there is little or virtually no research dealing with discriminatory and sexist language in Vietnamese. This is the reason why this study has been conducted. It attempts to open up the mystery of discriminatory and sexist language in Vietnamese.

This study is aimed at investigating the features of sexist language in Vietnamese and made some comparison with that in English. Special focus is made on the cultural context, in which sexist language is developed and used. This study is a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods including findings from interviews and a questionnaire represented the attitudes of

Vietnamese migrants living in Australia and some other western countries whose cultures had some impact on their attitudes.

It is also based on text analysis, particularly written texts and proverbs. The research data are derived from mass publications in Vietnamese such as books, articles, and magazines. A clear advantage of the adopted research approach is that the researcher is a native Vietnamese speaker with good knowledge of Vietnamese and English, therefore there is no need to go through the texts with other native speakers as normally taking place in studies conducted by non-native speakers.

This study does have its strengths and weaknesses. The main strength is that the study could be seen as one of the pioneer studies in a new research theme from the Vietnamese viewpoint. It attempts to describe the link between Vietnamese culture and Vietnamese sexist language.

9.2 The research study and results

This study attempts to investigate (a) how Vietnamese migrants respond to discrimination; (b) their attitudes towards sexist language and; (c) their views on male/female role and status; (d) how Confucianism and its implementation exert an influence in the Vietnamese society. For this purpose, both quantitative and qualitative approaches were employed. Data from the questionnaire, interview transcripts and observation notes were examined, how they responded to questions of norms reflected the effectiveness of their social roles. Quantitative approach was undertaken in the form of a descriptive analysis of questionnaire to identify the trends of the study. Qualitative approach was undertaken by means of interview, it was applied to elaborate particulars of the focus study as interview data enabled description of particular information. There were 170 people participated in the questionnaire administration and 40 people participated in interview sessions to discuss issues related to cultural norms, gender and language sexism.

9.3 The significance of the research findings

The study has brought some interesting insights, which contribute to the research knowledge on discriminatory/sexist language in Vietnamese and the Vietnamese migrants towards sexist language. They are briefly summed up as follows:

- Sexist language exists in Vietnamese. Proverbs are one of the main sources, which could reveal a great deal about discriminatory/sexist thoughts and language features in Vietnamese. Proverbs are normally seen as a strong reflection of cultural stereotyping. In many Vietnamese proverbs, females are given an inferior role in society, whereas, males play a more important role in the family, community and society.
- Confucianism plays an important role in the development of discriminatory and sexist thoughts and language as far as gender is concerned. The gender issue has always been treated as an essential issue in the traditional Vietnamese society due to the influence of Confucianism. Many Confucian teachings reinforce this male dominating trend in the Vietnamese literary world as well as in folklore.
- Education is a very strong socialising force, which promotes some prejudice and discrimination. In the Vietnamese context, this is abundantly revealed in textbooks and various teaching practices. Children are taught about social roles and their responsibilities very early in education. There is a Vietnamese proverb “tiên học lễ, hậu học văn” (first learn about social conducts, later learn about literacy).

There are some implications that can be drawn from this study. They are briefly presented as follows:

- From an interpersonal communication perspective, sexist language is not a rare phenomenon in communication. It occurs in conversation, discussion,

and formal talks in both written and spoken language. It could be used to express speakers' intention to discriminate against others in society or the sexist language is so deeply-rooted in the language that even speakers are not aware of its presence. In other words, interpersonal communication is ideologically encoded.

➤ From an intercultural communication perspective, it is not easy to communicate with others from a different culture without the interference of our own cultural values. When English is used in an Asian context, for example, it also carries its sexist language into the intercultural communication. For example, the expression 'Friday Girls' denotes a lack of respect for female workers and if used in a Vietnamese context, it could also communicate some prejudice embodied in this expression. Understanding the cultural backgrounds and traditions of a range of people and groups who have migrated to Australia is vitally important, these cultural backgrounds and traditions affect people's attitudes, expectations and behaviour to various social issues. A thorough understanding helps to clear problems of attempting to analyse a diverse group of people.

➤ From a pedagogical perspective, teaching is very much entrenched in its socio-cultural context. As teaching is primarily a language-mediated activity, in which various communicative tasks take place such as talk, discussion, lecture, essay, examination, and interview. The teacher is, therefore, in a very powerful position to influence learners, particularly about their perception of people in society. Teachers can consciously or unconsciously create a teaching discourse, in which prejudice and discrimination are developed. Language can be an excellent instrument of teaching but it can also breed prejudice and discrimination. Teachers should be aware of the nature of discriminatory language and know how to handle it properly in a school context.

9.4 Limitation of the study

This study focused on the views and attitude of Vietnamese people living in Western countries towards sexist language. In doing so, aspects related to contextual factors were examined to indicate whether or not their views and behaviours were changed due to the new social and cultural environment. How participants responded to questions indicate the effectiveness of cultural norms, social roles and language use. However, the result of this study only offered the views of Vietnamese migrants in Western countries, it was not examined the views and attitude of Vietnamese native-speakers living in Vietnam. Further research study is needed to identify how Vietnamese people living in a socialist Vietnam relate to these issues and whether or not there is a significant distinction between Vietnamese people residing in Western countries over many years and Vietnamese people living in Vietnam. Topics need to be covered are (a) the intellectual and social role of women, (b) degree of Confucianism influence in present Vietnam as well as the relationship with the Western world and faiths. The relationship with the Western world needs to be examined to see how Vietnamese society and culture reflect nowadays. Further study could be taken to include native-speakers representing different regions of Vietnam to measure the similarity and distinction between them. Similar study could invite more people from all walks of life with various levels of education in Vietnam to participate in the questionnaire administration and interview sessions.

Some data collected was relied on cassette recording, it was later translated into English for the study. Field notes written in interviews and observations were rechecked carefully for accuracy of information.

Overall, this study identified the important role that participants hold, their views and attitude were reflected through the ways, in which they perform their social role and how they affirmed their roles. Their attitude on the topic indicate how they have aspired to norms and how norms have affected their directions of thoughts. Their experience and perspective need to be taken into account to determine necessary reform for a better meaning of life.

9.5 Suggestions for future research

The study of this paper is not limiting to the final work on the subject of discriminatory/sexist language. It is only an attempt to describe the subtleties of influence of the culture and traditions on people's attitudes, behaviours, language and provide some information to show the complexity of culture and society.

➤ *Attitudes of Vietnamese people in Vietnam towards sexist language.*

This study is conducted only with the Vietnamese migrants living in a Western country, my interaction reveals to me that while most Vietnamese males do not seem to accept that sexist language exists in Vietnamese, many Vietnamese females are prone to think that there is sex discrimination in Vietnamese society.

I am not surprised at the males' attitude because most have denied it but I am surprised because of their unexpected hostility towards the subject. Not only did they trivialise the problems that women face and turn them into humorous sexism, they strongly protected their rights as 'men' despite of having some ideas that a Vietnamese woman's life was a long list of "what a woman should do." Social pressure is so strong that the Vietnamese woman allows it to convince her of how she should feel. With this 'should' in mind, she tells herself that her true feelings do not count and ends up piling this 'should' on her shoulder.

A Vietnamese woman is expected to always concern about how other people in her extended family felt. This is regarded as a shiny example of devotion and dedication. The interviews and questionnaire assisted the researcher in overcoming any bias that may have occurred and ensured the study remain an accurate account of events.

Vietnam is now undergoing changes due to foreign investments and foreigners have exerted some cultural influence over the country. Flowing with this tendency, many native-speakers learn a new language to communicate and find employment in the business world. Other influence is in the music industry, music is composed with melodies of Japanese, Thai, Taiwanese, Russian, American etc. At one stage when a large number of Chinese from Taiwan

entered Vietnam for investment, Vietnamese women wore a lot of cheongsam (Chinese dress). Vietnamese natives' attitudes on cultural and social issues may have changed due to influences from various parts of the world. This is an interesting area to investigate. One may want to focus a study on a specific cohort such as Vietnamese natives in urban and rural areas of Vietnam, Vietnamese high school and University students in Vietnam, and Vietnamese teachers in Vietnam.

- *Study on discriminatory language with a focus on sexist language in other Asian countries with shared cultural orientations:*

In East Asia, the Confucian philosophies, ideas, rituals, practices and habits of the heart have informed the lives of countless people. Confucians in China, Korea, Japan and Vietnam have created historically worldviews, ways of life and sensibilities that are still alive today (Berthrong, 2000). It is a fascinating question to explore how Confucianism is understood in Asian countries' cultures as the Way or 'Dao' over centuries and vast spaces. A study on language sexism offers an insight, not only into the linguistic aspects, but also into the nature of cultures, societies where belief is found on the living philosophical tradition of Confucianism. It is also interesting to focus the study on the intellectual and social role of women in the Confucian tradition.

- *Work-related discriminatory language in Vietnamese:*

Jobs are valued differently according to the social status attached to them by society. How does this reflect in language. Classifiers in Vietnamese can be studied to determine their discriminatory features. Proverbs are also an important source for data collection.

- *A contrastive study of sexist language in English and Vietnamese:*

If sexist language occurs both in English and Vietnamese, what are the similarities and differences. What are some of the problems regarding the basis on which one contrasts the two-language system?

9.6 Conclusion

There is a close relationship between language and culture. One cannot learn a language meaningfully without learning its culture. Similarly, learning a culture without learning its language does not give an adequate appreciation and comprehensive knowledge of that culture. A study of discriminatory language with a focus on sexist language could give some interesting insights into the language-culture relationship. This study has attempted to examine some characteristics of discriminatory/sexist language in Vietnamese and the culture context in which this discriminatory/sexist language exists. It is hoped that this study could make a small contribution to applied linguistic research dealing with language and culture from a Vietnamese perspective.

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Appendix

QUESTIONNAIRE

(Note: this sample is used only for the Ethics Committee to have some idea about the kinds of information included and it is not in the final standard form to be given to participants. The final Questionnaire will be both in Vietnamese and English.

TOPIC: Vietnamese Migrants' Attitudes towards sexist language.

RESEARCH AIM: The aim of this research is to examine the attitudes of Vietnamese migrants in Australia towards sexist language, with a special focus Vietnamese. The results of this study will contribute to the understanding of Vietnamese migrants in Australia in general and their attitudes towards sexist language.

The questionnaire will take approximately 20 minutes to complete.

You are invited to participate in this survey by completing this questionnaire and returning as soon as possible in the enclosed envelope to:

Mira Chau
Research Student
Faculty of Education
University of Tasmania
Locked Bag 1307
Launceston, Tasmania 7250

Your help is very much appreciated.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND CO-OPERATION.

QUESTIONNAIRE:

Xin bạn chọn một câu trả lời cho mỗi câu hỏi bằng cách viết chữ x trước câu trả lời của bạn. (Please place x in the blank space indicating your choice.

A- Biographical information of participants. Chi tiết cá nhân.

1 -Age (Tuổi):

☐ a.18- 29 ☐ b.30-39 ☐ c.40-49 ☐ d.50-59 ☐ e. Over 60

2- Nghề nghiệp (employment):

☐ a. Nhân viên văn phòng (office work). ☐ b. làm việc lao động (labourer) ☐ c.

Còn đi học (student)

☐ d. Về hưu (retired) ☐ e. Những cái khác (others)

3- Phái tính (gender):

☐ a. Nam (male) ☐ b. Nữ (female)

4- Trình độ học vấn: (educational level)

☐ a. Đại học hoặc tốt nghiệp tại các trường kỹ thuật (tertiary education)

☐ b. Trung học (highschool)

☐ c. Tiểu học (primary school)

☐ d. Không có đi học (no formal education)

5- Khả năng Anh ngữ: (English ability)

☐ a. Lưu loát (fluent)

☐ b. Trung bình (fine)

☐ c. Sơ khởi (poor)

☐ d. Không biết Anh ngữ (no English)

6- Thời gian ở Úc: (time in Australia)

☐ a. Dưới hai năm (under 2 years)

☐ b. 2 đến 3 năm (from 2 to 3 years)

☐ c. 4 đến 5 năm (from 4 to 5 years)

☐ d. 6 đến 7 năm (from 6 to 7 years)

☐ e. Trên 8 năm (over 8 years)

B- Quan điểm cá nhân

Xin bạn cho ý kiến của bạn bằng cách khoanh tròn con số mà bạn chọn theo tiêu chuẩn sau đây:

(please give your opinion to each question by circling a number indicating your best choice.)

1: Rất đồng ý (strongly disagree)

4: Đồng ý (disagree)

3: Không có ý kiến (not sure)

4: Không đồng ý (disagree)

5: Hoàn toàn không đồng ý (strongly disagree)

7	Sự phân biệt từ thành kiến và kỳ thị thường xuyên xảy ra tại Úc (Discriminatory language often occurs in Australia)	1	2	3	4	5
8	Sự phân biệt từ thành kiến và kỳ thị thường xuyên xảy ra tại Việt Nam (Discriminatory language often occurs in Vietnam)	1	2	3	4	5
9	Cách dùng ngôn ngữ phản ánh thái độ của người dùng (The use of language reflects speakers' attitudes)	1	2	3	4	5
10	Xã hội Việt Nam khắc khe với đàn bà hơn là đàn ông	1	2	3	4	5
11	Thái độ của người Việt ở Úc về bình đẳng phái tính khác với khi họ còn ở Việt Nam (Attitudes of Vietnamese migrants towards gender in Australia are different from the attitudes they held in Vietnam.)	1	2	3	4	5
12	Đàn bà thường dùng ngôn ngữ lịch sự hơn đàn ông (Female speakers often use more polite language than male speakers)	1	2	3	4	5
13	Ngôn ngữ kỳ thị phái tính thường được tìm thấy trong báo chí Việt Nam ở Úc (Sexist language occurs often in the Vietnamese press published in Australia)	1	2	3	4	5
14	Nhiều người dùng ngôn ngữ kỳ thị phái tính nhưng điều này không ảnh hưởng đến thái độ của họ trong sự kỳ thị nam nữ (Many people use sexist language but this does not affect their attitudes towards females in terms of prejudice and discrimination)	1	2	3	4	5
15	Tên đệm 'Thị' như 'Nguyễn Thị Hoa', phản ánh ngôn ngữ kỳ thị phái tính trong tiếng Việt (The female middle name 'Thị' as in 'Nguyen Thi Hoa' reflects gender-discrimination in Vietnamese)	1	2	3	4	5
16	Tiếng chửi thề 'đụ mẹ' phản ánh ngôn ngữ kỳ thị phái tính (Swear word 'đụ mẹ' indicates sexist language)	1	2	3	4	5
17	Hai chữ 'ba' và 'cô' phản ánh ngôn ngữ kỳ thị phái tính trong tiếng Việt (The two words 'ba' (mrs) and 'cô (miss)' indicate sexist language)	1	2	3	4	5
18	Cách xưng hô dùng tên chồng (như Bà Tuấn, Bà Nghiệp) phản ánh ngôn ngữ kỳ thị phái tính trong tiếng Việt (The use of husbands' names by married women reflects sexist language in Vietnamese)	1	2	3	4	5
19	"Đàn ông miệng rộng thì sang, đàn bà miệng rộng tan hoang cửa nhà" "Men with big mouths are elegant but women with big mouths are bad for the house) Vietnamese proverb.	1	2	3	4	5
20	Đàn ông thông minh hơn đàn bà 'Men are more intelligent than women'	1	2	3	4	5

21	Có nhiều chữ phải dùng riêng cho đàn bà và nhiều chữ dùng riêng cho đàn ông. Đây không phải là ngôn ngữ kỳ thị (There are words used specifically for woman and men. They are not sexist language)	1	2	3	4	5
22	"Công dung ngôn hạnh" thì cần thiết cho phái nữ "Work, beauty, speech, virtue" are essential female characteristics (Confucianism)	1	2	3	4	5
23	"Gái không chồng như thuyền không lái" "Women without husbands are like boats without sterns" (proverb)	1	2	3	4	5
24	Đồng tính luyến ái là điều xấu xa (Homosexuality is immoral)	1	2	3	4	5
25	Ngôn ngữ diễn tả nhan sắc thường được dùng cho đàn bà hơn là đàn ông (Words describing physical beauty are often used for females than for males)	1	2	3	4	5
26	Tên trong tiếng Việt như 'Hoa' cho phái nữ và 'Mạnh' cho phái nam phản ánh ngôn ngữ kỳ thị phái tính (Some Vietnamese names exclusively used for male and female, e.g. Hoa, and 'Manh' reflect sexist language)	1	2	3	4	5
27	Đàn bà thường giỏi về văn chương hơn đàn ông (Females are better at literature than males)	1	2	3	4	5
28	Đàn bà sanh ra để phục vụ đàn ông (Females are born to serve males)	1	2	3	4	5
29	Nhiều chữ dùng để chửi thề thường nhắm vào phụ nữ (Swear words are often discriminatory against females)	1	2	3	4	5
30	Đàn ông ăn nói cầu thả hơn đàn bà (Male speakers speak more carelessly than female speakers)	1	2	3	4	5
31	Người ta không khó chịu khi nghe người đàn ông chửi thề bằng người đàn bà (Listeners are less tolerant to swearing made by women than by men)	1	2	3	4	5
32	Phụ nữ là phái yếu (Females belong to the weak sex)	1	2	3	4	5
33	"Chồng chúa vợ tôi" (Husbands are masters and wives are servants) Proverb	1	2	3	4	5
34	Đàn bà phải giữ gìn ý tứ hơn đàn ông (Women should pay more attention to manners than men)	1	2	3	4	5
35	Vai trò của người đàn bà Việt Nam phụ thuộc và thấp kém hơn đàn ông (The role of Vietnamese women is less important than that of Vietnamese men)	1	2	3	4	5

36	Người đàn ông Việt Nam thường có nhiều quyền hành trong gia đình hơn là đàn bà (Vietnamese men have more power in a family than Vietnamese women)	1	2	3	4	5
37	Tôi chỉ để ý đến vấn đề ngôn ngữ có tính cách phân biệt phái tính sau khi tôi đến Úc (I started to be aware of sexist language when I lived in Australia)	1	2	3	4	5
38	Các sách giáo khoa dành cho trẻ em không nên dùng loại ngôn ngữ có tính cách phân biệt phái tính (School books used for children should not include sexist language)	1	2	3	4	5
39	Khổng giáo có ảnh hưởng phần nào trong việc sử dụng ngôn ngữ có tính cách phân biệt phái tính (Confucianism has some influence on the use of sexist language)	1	2	3	4	5
40	Cha mẹ làm gương cho con cái về vấn đề dùng ngôn ngữ phân biệt phái tính (Parents should be a good model for their children in the handling of sexist language)	1	2	3	4	5
41	Tìm hiểu về vấn đề phái tính nam nữ sẽ giúp người ta nhận ra thế nào là ngôn ngữ có tính cách phân biệt phái tính (An understanding of gender issues helps people to be aware of sexist language)	1	2	3	4	5
42	Trẻ em nên được chỉ dạy tránh những lời nói có tính cách phân biệt phái tính trong gia đình (Children should be taught not to use sexist language)	1	2	3	4	5
43	Người đàn ông chửi thề thường không bị lên án bằng người đàn bà chửi thề (People tend to condemn women more readily than men in the use of swearing language)	1	2	3	4	5
44	Ngôn ngữ kỳ thị phái tính chỉ có tính cách vui đùa (Sexist language is used unseriously)	1	2	3	4	5
45	Ngôn ngữ có tính cách kỳ thị phái tính có thể có hại (Sexist language can be destructive)	1	2	3	4	5
46	Người ta thường dùng ngôn ngữ kỳ thị phái tính mà không hay biết gì cả	1	2	3	4	5
47	Ngôn ngữ có tính cách phân biệt phái tính được sử dụng trong văn chương Việt Nam (Sexist language exists in Vietnamese literature)	1	2	3	4	5
48	Không nên dùng ngôn ngữ có tính cách phân biệt phái tính nơi công cộng (Sexist language should not be used in public places)	1	2	3	4	5
49	Nói tục và chửi thề thì khác nhau (Dirty words and swearing words are different)	1	2	3	4	5
50	Khi nói chuyện với giáo viên cần dùng ngôn từ lịch sự (People use polite language when speaking with teachers.)	1	2	3	4	5
51	Ngôn ngữ Việt không mang tính chất kỳ thị phái tính (Sexist language does not exist in Vietnamese)	1	2	3	4	5

52	Không nên dùng ngôn ngữ có tính cách phân biệt phái tính khi nói chuyện với nhau (In interpersonal communication, sexist language should be avoided)	1	2	3	4	5
53	Người ta học những lời nói có thành kiến về phái tính từ trong gia đình (Sexist language tends to be learned from the family)	1	2	3	4	5
54	Ngôn ngữ có tính cách phân biệt phái tính xuất phát từ các nền văn hóa Tây phương (Sexist language originated in the Western cultures)	1	2	3	4	5
55	Phái nam thường dùng ngôn ngữ kỳ thị phái nữ (Male speakers often use sexist language biased against females)	1	2	3	4	5
56	Ngôn ngữ có tính cách kỳ thị phái tính thường nhắm vào phụ nữ hơn là phái nam (Sexist language tends to be more directed to females than males)	1	2	3	4	5
57	Tiếng Việt có những ngôn từ mang tính cách kỳ thị phái tính (Vietnamese language has sexist words)	1	2	3	4	5