【研究例会 IN ハンガリー　発表】

Kinship Terminology from a Cultural Perspective: Japanese versus? Hungarian

Judit Hidasi

This article is part of a longer study in progress on the relationship of language use and society with regards to kinship terminology. The article first gives some frame to the study by briefly introducing the concept of kinship, next different descent patterns in societies to be followed by categorization patterns of kinship terminology (Morgan) in Hungarian and Japanese. It is assumed that kin terms are valuable clues to the nature of a kinship system in a society as well as to the social statuses and roles of kinsmen, of the roles of men and women. Changes in kinship terminology also reflect to a certain extent changes of a given society.

What is kinship?

Kinship refers to the culturally defined relationships between individuals who are commonly thought of as having family ties. All societies use kinship as a basis for forming social groups and for classifying people. However, there is a great amount of variability in kinship rules and patterns around the world. In order to understand social interaction, attitudes, and motivations in most societies, it is essential to know how their kinship systems function.

In many societies, kinship is the most important social organizing principle along with gender and age. Kinship also provides a means for transmitting status and property from generation to generation. It is not a mere coincidence that inheritance rights usually are based on the closeness of kinship links. Kinship connections are based on two categories of bonds: those created by marriage (**affinal** relatives: husband, wife, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law) and those that result from descent (**consanguinal** that is 'blood' relatives: mother, father, grandparents, children, grandchildren, uncles, aunts and cousins), which is a socially recognized link between ancestors and descendants.

A third category of bond, referred to as **fictive kinship**, is used to create links to people who otherwise would not be kinsmen. Godparenthood is an example of fictive relationships in European cultures. This kind of bondness has been particularly important for instance in Hungarian culture – where in village-communities this kind of relatedness meant a base for community cooperation, solidarity and mutual help.

People often use different kin terms when addressing someone directly in contrast to when they are referring to them in a conversation with someone else. In Japanese culture for instance this distinction is clearly recognized by making a sharp difference between **terms of address** and **terms of reference** (*okaasan* versus *haha*, or *otousan* versus *chichi*).

Descent patterns categorizations

Kinship is perceived in a number of different ways around the world, resulting in a variety of types of descent patterns and kin groups. In kinship categorizations , one individual is usually labeled as Ego by anthropologists. This is the person to whom all kinship relationships are referred. The **unilineal descent principle** traces descent only through a single line of ancestors, male or female. Both males and females are members of a unilineal family, but descent links are only recognized through relatives of one gender. Hence the two basic forms of unilineal descent are referred to as patrilineal and matrilineal.With **patrilineal descent**, both males and females belong to their father's kin group but not their mother's. However, only males pass on their family identity to their children. A woman's children are members of her husband's patrilineal line.

The form of unilineal descent that follows a female line is known as **matrilineal**. In this pattern, individuals are relatives if they can trace descent through females to the same female ancestor. While both male and female children are members of their mother's matrilineal descent group, only daughters can pass on the family line to their offspring. However nowadays – due to changes in life-patterns, in economy and to the effect of modernization and globalization – even these societies tend to follow a different pattern, that of **cognatic descent**.

Most developed societies around the world today trace descent through both the mother's and the father's ancestors to some degree. The result is a more varied and complex family system. It occurs in four variations: **bilineal, ambilineal, parallel,** and **bilateral** descent. Out of the four, in this paper we briefly discuss only the ambilineal and the bilateral descent pattern, which have a direct relevance to the discussed cultures: Japanese and Hungarian.

Ambilineal descent is a particular descent system that, in a sense, combines unilineal patterns. Descent from either males or females is recognized, but individuals may select only one line to trace descent. Since each generation can choose which parent to trace descent through, a family line may be patrilineal in one generation and matrilineal in the next. The reason for choosing one side over the other often has to do with the relative importance of each family. In other words, ambilineal descent is flexible in that it allows people to adjust to changing family situations. For instance, when a man marries a woman from a politically or economically more important family, he may agree to let his children identify with their mother's family line to enhance their prospects and standing within the society.

By far the most common pattern is **bilateral descent**, which is commonly used in European cultures. This cognatic system traces descent from all biological ancestors regardless of their gender and side of the family. In addition, all male and female children are members of both their father's and mother's families.

However, particular families may disregard the descent pattern dominant in their culture and treat it as a matter of individual choice – legal regulations permitting.

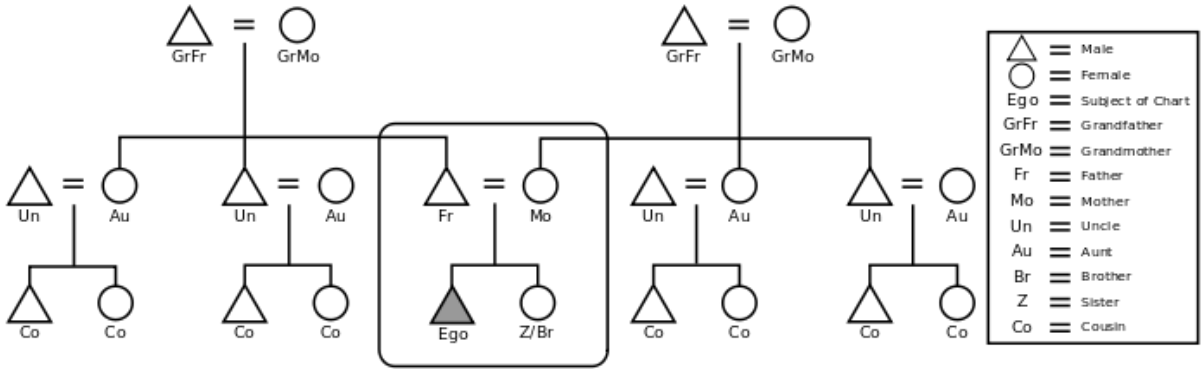
While there is no inherent gender bias in the bilateral descent principle, there often is a slight male bias in marriage practices and in the creation of families. This can be seen in many socities today when a man's family name is used by his wife and children. With this exception, however, there usually is no other similarity with patrilineal descent.

Kinship terms and kinship terminology

Kinship terminology refers to the various systems used in languages to refer to the persons to whom an individual is related through kinship. Different societies classify kinship relations differently and therefore use different systems of kinship. (Lévi-Strauss 1949)　Kinship terminologies include the terms of address used in different languages or communities for different relatives and the terms of reference used to identify the relationship of these relatives to Ego or to each other.

Kin terms are valuable clues to the nature of a kinship system in a society as well as to the social statuses and roles of kinsmen. Based on　the typology of six basic patterns of classification elaborated by Lewis Henry Morgan (1818–1881) in his 1871 work *Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity of the Human Family* there are six distinct kin naming systems used around the world.　They are referred to as the Eskimo, Hawaiian, Sudanese, Omaha, Crow, and Iroquois systems. They are nevertheless not limited to the cultures for which they were named.　These systems are seldom followed exactly – they usually have unique cultural variations.　The Eskimo system is one of the simplest, despite the fact that it is found in the majority of the most technologically complex societies. The common denominator for the Eskimo kin naming system is an economy that forces the nuclear family to be mostly independent.　The Eskimo kin naming system is found mainly in societies that use the bilateral principle of descent and that strongly emphasize the nuclear family over more distant kinsmen.　Both Ego's mother's and father's collateral relatives are considered equally important.　That is to say, no distinction is made between relatives on the mother's and father's side of the family.　This is reflected in the kin names.　Despite the fact that some relatives are lumped together with the same linguistic terms in the Eskimo and other kin naming systems, people do make distinctions between them as unique individuals.

The Eskimo-type kinship terminology system



We assume　that both Japanese and Hungarian are typologically nearest to the "eskimo kinship" system, which has both classificatory and descriptive terms; in addition to sex and generation, it also distinguishes between lineal relatives (those related directly by a line of descent) and collateral relatives (those related by blood, but not directly in the line of descent). Lineal relatives have highly descriptive terms; collateral relatives have highly classificatory terms. Another dimension added to kinship relations is relative age. Rather than one term for "brother", there exist, for example, different words for "older brother" and "younger brother". (Haga 1998)

In traditional Hungarian society an individual was identified principally by his or her place in a kinship organization. Traditionally, more emphasis was placed on the paternal kin than on the maternal because of the "male-centric" worldview in Hungarian rural society and the economically more beneficial inheritance system to males along the patriline. An urban and a rural system coexist in Hungary. The urban system reflects nuclear family organization, and the rural system and its many regional variants depict the traditional extended family organization. Generally, Hungarian kinship terminology is descriptive and sharply distinguishes between affinal kin, consanguineous kin, and fictive kin. The fictive kinship of godparenthood (*keresztkomaság*) is a highly significant, lifelong alliance.

Bilateral kinship-terms Hungarian – English – Japanese

HUN *szépapa* **ENG** *great-great-grandfather* **JAP** 高祖父 *kousofu*	**+5**	**HUN** *szépanya* **ENG** *great-great grandmother* **JAP** 高祖母 *kousobo*
HUN *ükapa* **ENG** *great-grandfather* **JAP** 曽祖父 *sousofu*	**+4**	**HUN** *ükanya* **ENG** *great-grandmother* **JAP** 曾祖母 *sousobo*
HUN *nagyapa* **ENG** *grandfather* **JAP** 祖父 *sofu*	**+3**	**HUN** *nagyanya* **ENG** *grandmother* **JAP** 祖母 *soba*
HUN *apa* **ENG** *father* **JAP** お父さん / 父 *otousan/chichi*	**+2**	**HUN** *anya* **ENG** *mother* **JAP** お母さん /母 *okaasan/haha*

	EGO	
HUN *(a) fia* **ENG** *son* **JAP** 息子 *musuko* 長子 *choushi* 長男 *chounan* 次男 *jinan*	**-1**	**magyar** *(a) lánya* **angol** **daughter** **japán** 娘 *musume* 長女 *choujo* 次女 *jijo*
HUN *fiú unoka* **ENG** *grand-son* **JAP** 孫 *mago* 孫息子 *magomusuko*	**-2**	**HUN** *lány unoka* **ENG** *grand-daughter* **JAP** 孫娘 *magomusume*
HUN *dédunoka (fiú)*	**-3**	**HUN** *dédunoka (lány)*

ENG *great-grandson*		**ENG** *great-granddaughter*
JAP 曾孫 ***himago***		**JAP** 曾孫 ***himago***
HUN *ükunoka (fiú)*	**-4**	**HUN** *ükunoka (lány)*
ENG *great-great-grandson*		**ENG** *great-great-granddaughter*
JAP 玄孫　*yashago/genson*		**JAP** 玄孫　*yashago/genson*

Kinship systems are changing rapidly today as societies are increasingly exposed to other cultures around the world and new sytems of economies, not speaking about societal changes (Lévi-Strauss 1949). Japanese kinship terms have two categories: reference terms and address terms. (Suzuki 1978) The latter is used to call your family without using their name. Kinship reference terms are never used to call them directly. In this respect it is interesting to witness in modern Japanese language use the process of substituting Japanese terms by borrowed English words, and also the „perspective shift" in address terms which can be detected in the way family members called each other in the remote past, in the near past and call each other in present times.　It is namely significant to note that the traditional terms of address for family members (*otousan, okaasan, oneesan*) are increasinly being substituted by borrowed English terms (*papa, mama, shisutaa*) on the one hand, and on the other addressing in the nuclear family has also undergone great changes. In modern Japanese language use in-family addressing is recently formulated from the perspective of the child – he/she who is in the focus of the family. This is different from the traditional　perspective. These aspects – among others – are the ones that require further research.

Research will be expanded to aspects of change in Hungarian society and changes in language use. Finally the collected data with respect to the two cultures and languages could be compared for further conclusions.

References

Haga Yasushi: 1998 *Nihongo no shakai shinri.*Tokyo: Ningen no Kagakusha.
Lévi-Strauss, Claude: 1949 *The Elementary Structures of Kinship*. New York: Beacon Press.
Morgan, Lewis Henry: 1871 *Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity of the Human Family*. Smithsonian.
Nakane Chie: 1967 *Tateshakai no ningenkankei.*Tokyo: Kodansha.
Suzuki Takao: 1978 *Kotoba to bunka (Translated as Words in context by Akira Miura)*, Tokyo: Kodansha International.

（ユディット　ヒダシ・ブダペスト商科大学教授）

目次に戻る