

Abstract

Kinship appellation is the way that people call their relatives. Of the basic vocabularies in a language or dialect, kinship appellation terms are used frequently and have a strong stability. Their expressions have unique functions and emotional color. When talking about the cross-combination and association relations, Saussure pointed out that the relationship between words can be displayed in two ways: one is the syntagme, which is the combination of symbols; while the other is association, each group having some meanings formed a series of potential memories. On the association sense, kinship appellation terms can reflect quite adequately. At the same time, kinship appellation is a special kind of language symbols. In addition to the referential functions possessed by general linguistic symbol, but also embodies the social relations of both communication and its social and cultural ideas, it also reflected the social relations of both communications parties and the social and cultural ideas. With the rise of social linguistics, kinship appellation has attracted more and more attentions by linguists, and has become a hot spot in the field of social linguistic research.

From the perspective of cultural studies, kinship system itself is a practical embodiment of the cultural system. Appellation is an essential social behavior in human life. Kinship terms are the terms about closeness of kinship and age and social status. It not only reflects person's status and role in the network of kinship relationship, but also reflects that people's social attributes, interpersonal relationship and values are closely related to culture, political background and traditional customs.

Language is a product of the transformation of the objective world. It is the key to the creation and development of culture. Meanwhile the development of language contributes to richness and perfection of language. That is to say, they promote each other and relatively independent. The languages of different nations reflect and record the specific cultural outlooks of different nations. Kinship appellation, depending on marriage relationship and descent principle, is a reflection of the complex structure of human society through the process of language. Also it belongs to language system. The structure and characteristics of every kinship system reflects the socio-cultural psychology of the people there. Studying it can help us deepen the understanding of the social and cultural characteristics in this area.

In addition, with the development of society and culture, kinship appellation system is developing and changing. Studying the changes of kinship appellation can reflect the changes of social structure, socio-cultural and people's attitudes, etc. Studying kinship appellation in the view of culture can decipher the various deep cultural codes, so as to grasp its essential characteristics more accurately. If not, it also can interpret some personality characteristics of national culture.

Basing on the previous studies, this essay compared Xianju Wu dialect kinship appellation with Mandarin kinship appellation, and explored Xianju Wu dialect kinship appellation system structure, vocabulary, usage and other related issues.

Chapter one is the introduction to clarify basic concepts, the significance of the research, recent study on this subject, and briefly stated the phonological features of Xianju Wu dialect, sources of research materials and research methods.

In chapter two, I described the specific Xianju Wu dialect kinship appellation system structure. In order to state kinship appellation systems of Xianju Wu dialect clearly and concisely, I split Xianju Wu dialect kinship appellation system into nine systems, and compare them with Mandarin kinship appellation system respectively. Meanwhile I charted Xianju Wu dialect kinship appellation system. Based on this, established a basic kinship appellation system of Xianju Wu dialect.

The main issue of chapter three was to analyze the characters of the vocabulary of Xianju Wu dialect kinship appellation and the use of face-to-face address forms and back address. Although kinships are mainly used in spoken language, the forms of the kinship words are obtained from the additional prefixes, overlaps and sound changes, etc. In this chapter, I emphasized the overlaps, tones, rhythms and other inflections in Xianju Wu dialect. Different voices represent the phenomenon of different semantic. In practice, the forms of back address are more flexible than that of face-to-face address forms. For the same kinship, on the basis of personal subjectivity, there are generally more than two ways of appellation behind one's back. On the one hand, addresses from others' perspective simplified the appellation system. While on the other hand, it brought chaos in practice.

Chapter four analyzed and compared the differences and similarities of kinship appellation in Mandarin and Xianju Wu dialect. Four features about the kinship appellation in

Xianju Wu dialect had been found: “uncle” could indicate “father”; “son-in-law” was widely used; “aunt” (father’s sister) differed between the young and old, but there was no difference between the young and old for “aunt” (mother’s sister), “nephew”, “niece”, “grandson” and “granddaughter”. The kinship appellation both in Xianju Wu dialect and Mandarin are addressed from others’ perspective. It is very common to see that different appellation may refer to the same person, and that the same appellation might refer to different people in both languages. The two languages were of strong stability.

In chapter five, I discussed other issues related to Xianju Wu dialect. On the one hand, I discussed cultural psychology refracted by using Xianju Wu dialect kinship appellation. On the other hand, with the development of the society, Xianju Wu dialect kinship appellation appeared to have changes and development in three areas: Appellations decreased within the system, called “Simplified”. Some are changed into the social kinship appellation, called “Generalization”. Some kinships are evolving to Mandarin, called “Assimilated”.

The final chapter is the conclusion, summarized the view of the article.

Key words: Xianju Wu dialect, Mandarin, Kinship appellation, Addresses from others’ perspective