

Diversity in the form of some verbs in Ho Chi Minh City Sign language and its application in education for deaf people

Hoa Thi Nguyen
Dr. Isaak Papadopoulos

Abstract

HCMCSL, the most widely used in Viet Nam, differs greatly in grammar from Vietnamese (Woodward et al, 2015). While research has pointed out such differentiations can be detected in verbs which signify “eating”, which have not received much of research attention, “opening” which depends on the object which is opened, “giving” depending on what is given and “going” the sign of which depends on the vehicle that is referred to. There is limited research activity in Viet Nam related to sign linguistics and education for deaf people. Recently, the legislation requires the implementation of SL in education with such deaf student populations should be made. Thus, these phenomena need to be studied further to provide more information for society to understand about the SL of deaf people.

This study combined quantitative and qualitative research methods, in-depth descriptive study of verb lexicalization of HCMCSL, Various instruments were developed to collect free conversational data, elicitation of specific grammatical examples. The study provides best practice for teachers, educators, SL interpreters, parents.s, and judgments of grammaticality.

The findings should result in significantly improved understanding of the complexity of HCMCSL, could improve communication with deaf students in classrooms, and will result in better SL interpretation.

Introduction

The Medical Model (followed by most hearing Vietnamese):

Deaf people are isolated pathological individuals and should learn to speak. → Traditional beliefs about sign language, “*sign is an inferior communication system that is not worthy of studying, let alone that it would lend itself to linguistic analysis*” (Harry van der, 2022, p. 285).

The Cultural Model (followed by most Deaf Vietnamese):

Deaf people are members of a linguistic and cultural minority, and they should learn the local sign language and the local written. → Linguistics ‘view “*The Linguistic Society of America affirms that sign languages are full-fledged languages with all the structural characteristics of spoken languages*” (Perlmutter, 2001)

The conflict of the 2 models leads to profound differences in the design of programs recommended for deaf people (Woodward & Lee, 2023).

Problem Statement

- Importance of semantics & lexicon: There are great differences in verb lexicalization in HCMCSL and spoken/ written Vietnamese.
- Little research on the semantics and lexicon of HCMCSL in the previous research.
- Hearing teachers of deaf students and SLIs often make mistakes in their verb lexicalization of HCMCSL, which confuses logical thinking in the recognition and education of deaf people.

Purpose

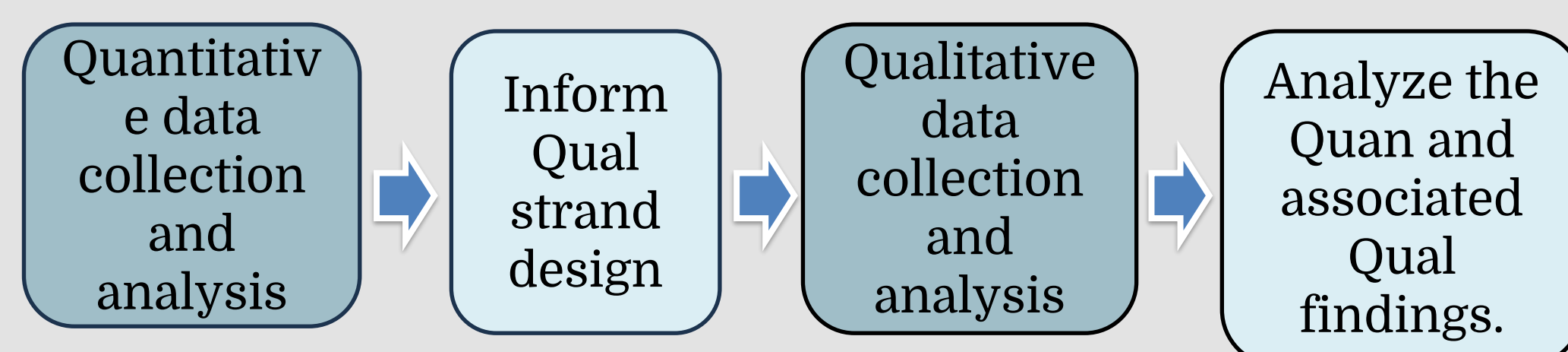
- To explore and demonstrate the unique differences of HCMCSL compared to Vietnamese.
- To provide crucial information about SL, to describe and explain HCMCSL verb lexicalization, and how it is used in everyday conversation and education.
- To increase parents’, SLIs’, and educators’ awareness and help inform the recent burgeoning of SL interpretation in Viet Nam.

Materials/ Instruments

- Background Questionnaire to collect non-linguistic variables.
- 107 pictures to collect info about specified verb forms of eating, giving, opening, and going.
- Elicitation technique to interview verb lexicalization and to verify data from pictures
- Follow-up qualitative interviews to verify quantitative information

All materials and instruments were developed specifically for this project, as it is the first study of its kind. There were no modifications to any existing tools.

Research Methodology and Design



The Sequential Explanatory design

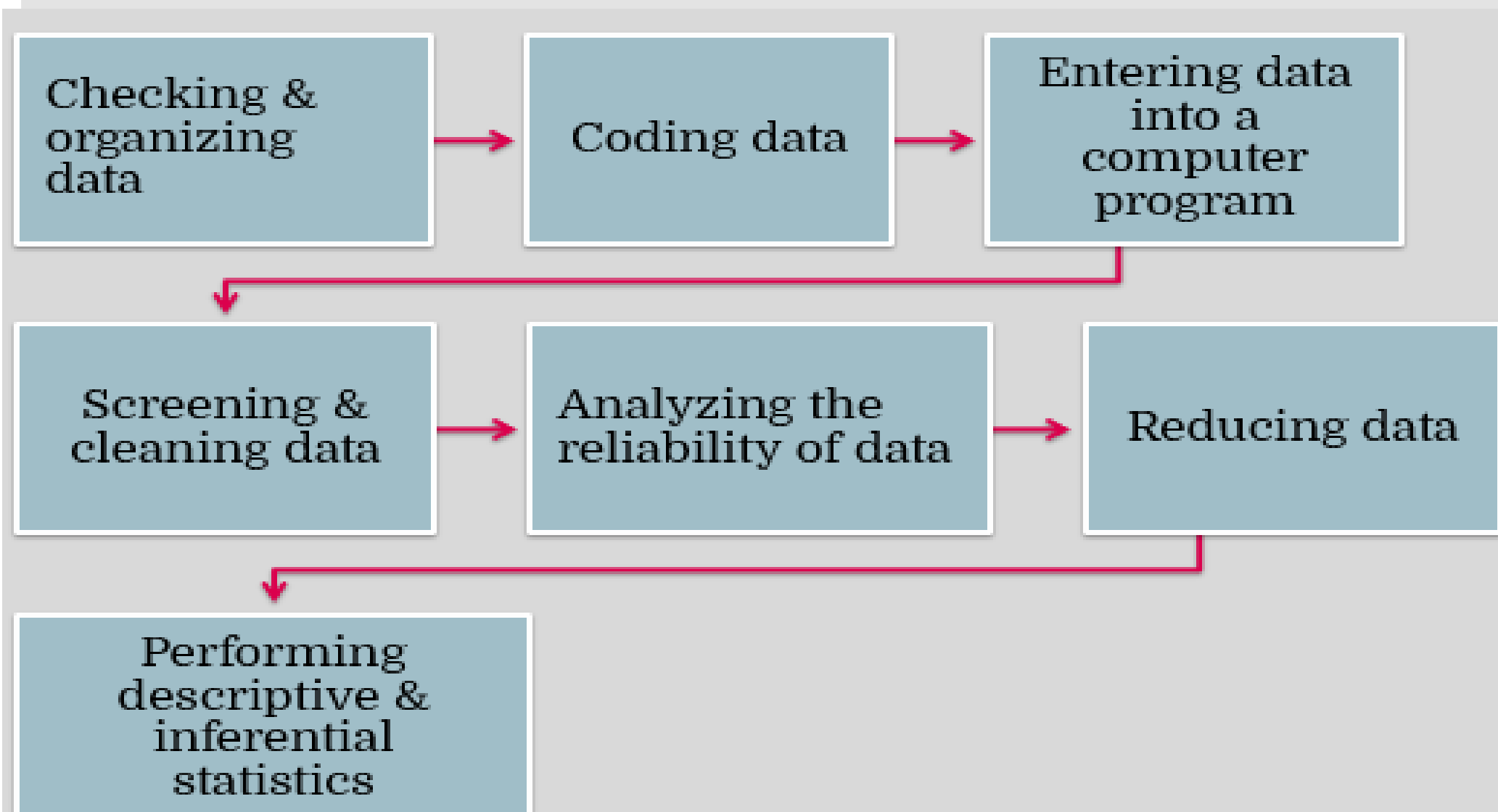
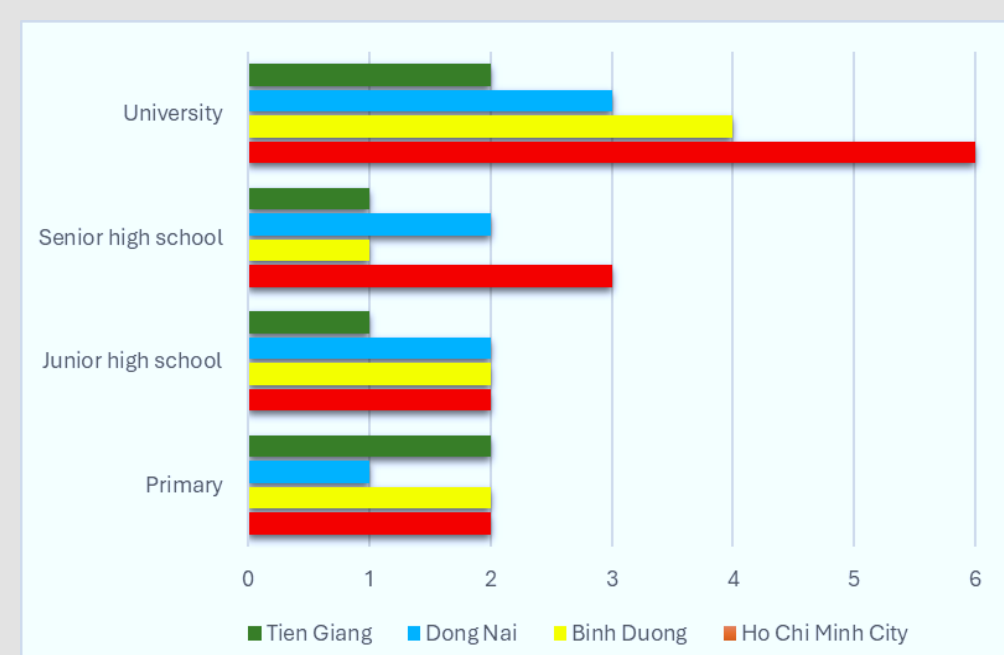
Population and Sampling

- Population aged 20-34 of the 4 selected provinces = 2,705,649 (KHV, 2021).
- 1/1000 prelingually deaf people (Eberhard, Simons, & Fennig, 2022) = 2,706
- Only 26% of deaf people in Viet Nam are attending special schools (General Statistics Office, 2018), where it is possible to learn SL = 704 deaf users of HCMCSL.

Sample

There were 37 deaf people in HCMC and 3 provinces near HCMC.

Participants were divided into the stratum followed the level of education, then were randomly picked

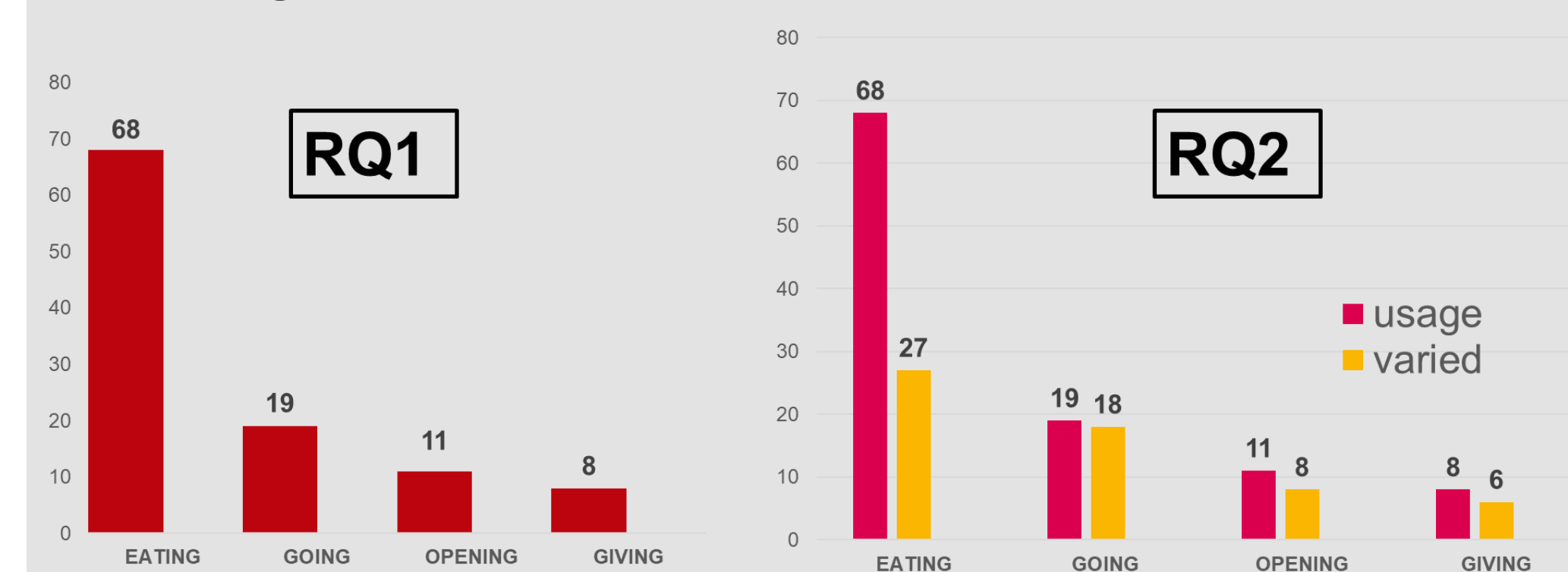


Research Questions and Hypotheses

Research questions	Hypotheses
Which verbs can undergo specified verb lexicalization in verbs of eating, giving, opening and going?	There is no variation in lexicalized verbs in HCMCSL.
Do all signers use the same number of specified lexicalized verbs or is there variation in the number of verbs?	There is no variation in the number of lexicalized verbs used by signers.
What is the relationship of the social background variables to the use of specified verb lexicalization in HCMCSL?	There is no relationship between the social variables and the use of specified verb lexicalization in HCMCSL.

Results

Findings



Distinctly different specified verb forms of HCMCSL

Variation in the verb forms of HCMCSL is considerable

RQ3 : Insufficient number of HOH and HI participants to perform Chi-square Tests and Fisher Exact Tests.

- Region and gender were not significant variables in this study of specified verb lexicalization.

- Level of Education: Educational level was the only statistically significant predictor.

- Eating: 2 out of the 68 have significant relationships.
- Going: 1 out of the 19 has a significant relationship
- Opening: no significant relationships out of the 11
- Giving: 1 out of the 8 has a significant relationship.

Evaluation of findings

- **RQ1:** The results are expected. HCMCSL has a large number of specified verbs of eating, giving, moving, and opening, with an especially large number of verbs for eating.

- **RQ2:** The results of the study are expected. it has a great deal of variation in the number of lexicalized verbs among deaf users of HCMCSL.

- **RQ 3:** None of the statistical tests of hearing status, region, gender, and verb forms were significant. Educational level is related to variation in verb forms. More highly educated signers used more specified verb forms.

Significance

Linguistics: Provide valuable new information on an understudied endangered language, HCMCSL (Woodward & Lee, 2023).

Research: Encourage researchers to conduct further linguistic and educational studies on the Vietnamese language and SLs.

Education: Provoke an application of a Bilingual education program for deaf students in Viet Nam.

Society: Reduce the obstacles of integration into society and contribute to the social well-being of deaf people (Nguyen & Woodward, 2019).

Conclusion

- First in-depth study focusing on lexicon/semantics in HCMCSL.
- First sociolinguistic study of HCMCSL.
- Study demonstrates that HCMCSL lexicon/semantics in verb lexicalization is distinct from Vietnamese verb lexicalization.
- Linguistic relativity is a possible explanation of HCMCSL verb lexicalization, since visual salience is very important in Deaf culture in VN
- The findings of this study have the potential to improve attitudes towards Sign Languages in Viet Nam, improving sign language teaching, sign language interpretation, and the educational situation for deaf students in Viet Nam.
- However, more research is urgently needed.

Recommendations

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

- Advocacy and training programs for deaf/HoH people.
- Recognition of/awareness about SL, language policy, and education of deaf students by the government.
- Recognition of/awareness about SL, education of deaf students, and SL training programs in schools for deaf people and parents

FUTURE RESEARCH

- Determining if more verbs in HCMCSL undergo specified verb lexicalization.
- Determining if there are users of HCMCSL who classify their hearing status as HoH or hearing-impaired.
- Determining regional boundaries of HCMCSL
- Establishing a database of HCMCSL.

Acknowledgements

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