Statistical distribution of Vietnamese surnames

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Everyone has his or her own name. In most cultures, a person’s name is composed of a surname and a first name. These two components have quite different characteristics. Usually, the person’s surname is inherited from his or her parents and in most cases from his or her father. Thus, a family share the same surname and it is also called the family name. The first name or the given name is given by free choice as opposed to the inherited surname, so it can be recognized as an individual symbol of one person.

Surname, as one of the lineages of Vietnamese culture, is a social and humanistic symbol based on blood inheritance. In most cultures, a person’s name is composed of a surname and a first name. Commonly, the person’s surname is inherited from his or her parents and in most cases from his or her father. Thus, a family share the same surname and it is also called the family name.

Since one’s surname is inherited from his or her ancestor mostly, it thus has many genetic, demographic or cultural characteristics. Surnames are used to study the genes and genetics migration [1, 2] the human population growth [3, 4] the demographic structure and the cultural evolution [5, 6].

Usually, in those works, some meaningful inferences are drawn from the statistical analysis, which are necessary for further investigations. In fact, some researchers concentrate on the statistical characteristics of names. Many of them look into the distributions of the surnames in different countries and regions including the United States, [13] Japan, [14] Republic of Korea, [15] and some European countries [16]. It is found that the surnames follow a power-law distribution in those cases. Those empirical studies have triggered considerable theoretical attempts [17, 18].

The "Civil Code of the People's Republic of China", which came into effect on January 1, 2021, clearly stipulates that natural persons enjoy the right to name and have the right to decide, use, change or permit others to use their own names in accordance with the law, but they must not violate public order and good customs. This is of great significance to standardize citizen name registration, inheritance and development of Chinese name culture.

In recent years, the Household Administration Research Center of the Ministry of Public Security has thoroughly implemented the strategic deployment of public security big data, promoted the construction of population informatization and achieved leapfrog development in application services, and built the largest population information management system in the world, realizing 1.4 billion household registration Information service management for the whole life cycle of the population and the full range of migration. Since 2018, relying on the national population information management system, the household registration center has conducted statistical analysis on the surnames, first names and newborn names of the national registered population (excluding Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan regions). The 2020 National Name Report is now released as follows.

1. Surname

China is the first country in the world to use surnames, with a history of more than 5,000 years. Chinese surnames are numerous and complex. According to the "Dictionary of Chinese Surnames", there are as many as 24,000 surnames recorded in Chinese characters by various ethnic groups from ancient times to the present. During the development and evolution of these surnames, some have disappeared in the long river of history, while others have been passed down from generation to generation, gradually forming more than 6,000 surnames currently in use.

(1) Ranking of "Hundred Surnames" in 2020

Ranked by the number of household registration population, the "hundred family surnames" in 2020 have not changed much compared with 2019. "Wang", "Li", "Zhang", "Liu" and "Chen" are still in the top five, and the total population of the five surnames accounts for 30.8% of the total registered population in the country. (Table 1)

As of December 31, 2020, a total of 10.035 million newborns were born in 2020 and have registered with the public security organs, including 5.29 million boys, accounting for 52.7%, and 4.745 million girls, accounting for 47.3%. Among the "Hundred Surnames" in 2020, "Li" is the most registered surname for newborns, with a total of 726,000 people, and "Gu" is the least, with only 17,000 people. (Table 2, Table 3)

(2) Common compound surnames

Fu surname, also known as Fu surname, refers to a surname composed of two or more Chinese characters, which is a special branch of Chinese surnames. There are many sources of compound surnames, such as "Taishi" comes from the official name, "Linghu" is named after the feudal city, "Dongguo" is set according to the place of residence, and other surnames are derived from occupation, ancestor name, clan, and ethnic minorities. Or self-created and so on. Although double surnames are rare, everyone is familiar with them because they are often "preferred" by martial arts novels or film and television works. At present, "Ouyang" is the largest compound surname, with 1.112 million people. Other common double surnames are: 88,000 "Shangguan", 64,000 "Huangfu", 55,000 "Linghu", 48,000 "Zhuge", 47,000 "Situ", 23,000 "Sima", There are 19,000 people in Shentu, 11,000 people in "Xiahou", 10,000 people in "Helan", 6,000 people in "Wanyan", 5,000 people in "Murong", 4,000 people in "Yichi", and 3,000 people in "Changsun".

(3) Surname Selection

Article 1015 of the "Civil Code" clearly stipulates that a natural person shall take his father's or mother's surname, but under any of the following circumstances, he may choose a surname other than his father's or mother's surname: (1) choose the surname of other immediate elder relatives; (2) The parent's surname was chosen because he was raised by someone other than the legal parent; (3) There are other legitimate reasons that do not violate public order and good customs. The surnames of natural persons of ethnic minorities may follow the cultural traditions and customs of the ethnic group.

Chinese surnames have formed the traditional custom of "children (female) follow their father's surname" in the thousands of years of historical evolution and national cultural accumulation. The number of children taking their mother's surname has increased, and the surname of their grandparents and maternal grandparents also frequently appears. Judging from the selection of newborn surnames in 2020, the ratio of the mother's surname to the father's surname is 1:12.

2. Name situation

"The choice of the name is rooted in the mind, followed by fashion, and changed with time." Everyone's name has a unique meaning, some entrust their parents' expectations, some reflect popular culture, and some are imprinted with a distinctive brand of the times.

(1) The 10 most used names in different eras

The changes in names in different eras reflect the economic and social development, the improvement of living standards and the innovation of ideas. When the People's Republic of China was founded, in order to commemorate this historical moment of great significance, many men were named "Jianguo" and "Jianhua", and many women chose "Ying" and "Lan". In the 1960s and 1970s, people's names such as "jun", "yong", "ying" and "li" were relatively common, and the continuity of the times was more prominent. In the 1980s, many people used "Wei", "Lei", "Jing" and "Li" in their names, reflecting people's pursuit of a simple, peaceful and simple life mentality. The names in the 1990s were infused with elegant cultural elements, and characters such as "Jie", "Hao", "Ting" and "Xue" were more often used. After entering the 21st century, "literary and artistic" names such as "Tao", "Haoyu", "Haoran", "Ting", "Xinyi" and "Zihan" have become very popular. (Table 4)

(2) Changes in the length of names in different ages At present, except for some ethnic minorities in my country, the names of most people are mostly two-character (single surname and single name), three-character (single surname and double name or compound surname and single name) or four-character (complex surname and double name), and more than four characters are relatively rare. . From different ages, three-character names have always been the mainstream. Especially before the 1960s, the culture of clan and family names was deeply rooted in the hearts of the people, and names were often accompanied by characters that marked seniority, so there were fewer two-character names. After the reform and opening up, modern cultural thoughts have continuously affected the way of naming. The concept of seniority has gradually been weakened. People pursue simple and easy to remember names. The proportion of the number of people with two-character names has increased from 7.6% in the 1960s to 1990s. 27.6%. Since the 21st century, with the rapid growth of the population and the increasingly frequent population movements, the phenomenon of duplicate names has increased. In order to reduce the rate of duplicate names, three-character names have gradually increased. At present, three-character names account for more than 90%, and two-character names The proportion was reduced to 6.3%. Although the number of people using four-character and other character-number names is small, they have maintained a growth trend, increasing from 0.3% and 0.4% in the 1950s to the current 1.6% and 1.7%.

3. Situation of newborn baby names

2020 is the birth year of the first batch of "post-20s". Apart from being happy, parents are most concerned about giving their children a good name. In order to effectively reduce the probability of duplicate names and help parents provide references for naming their children, in recent years, the Ministry of Public Security has launched convenient functions such as national population name checking on the "Internet + Government Services" platform. Beijing, Jilin, Heilongjiang, Jiangsu, Henan, Public security organs in Chongqing, Sichuan, Ningxia and many other places also provide local name duplicate checking services for the masses.

(1) The 50 most used names of newborns in 2020

Among the names of newborns born in 2020 and registered with household registration, the 50 most frequently used characters are "梓", "子", "Yu", "晨", "一" and so on. Compared with 2019, words such as "Yue", "Yi", "Xin" and "Ke" are favored by parents of newborns. (table 5)

(2) The top 10 names used by male newborns in 2020 Among male newborns born in 2020 who have registered household registration, the 10 most frequently used names are: "Yichen", "Yuxuan", "Haoyu", "Yichen", "Yuchen", "Zimo", "Yuhang" "" Haoran" "Zihao" "Yichen". Compared with 2019, "Yichen" was shortlisted for the first time and topped the list, becoming the first choice for parents of male newborn babies. "Yichen", "Yuchen" and "Yichen" also entered the top ten. (Table 6)

(3) The top 10 names used by female newborns in 2020 Among female newborns born in 2020 who have registered household registration, the 10 most frequently used names are: "Yinuo", "Yinuo", "Xinyi", "Zihan", "Yutong", "Xinyan", "Ke Xin", "Yuxi", "Yutong" and "Mengyao". Compared with 2019, "Yinuo", "Yinuo" and "Xinyi" are still in the top three, and "Yutong", "Kexin", "Yuxi" and "Mengyao" are in the top ten. (Table 7)

4. Small knowledge of names

Our country's name culture has a long history. In ancient times, "surname" and "shi" were two different concepts at first. The origin of "surname" can be traced back to the matrilineal clan period in primitive society. At that time, only a mother was known, but a father was not known. Therefore, "surname" is composed of "female" and "sheng". Si", "Ying", "妘", "妫", "Yao" and "姞" are all from the female side, indicating that the earliest surname was the mother's surname. The "clan" was born in the patrilineal clan society. As the scale of the clan became larger and larger, part of the population was divided out for the convenience of management, so a "branch" was created on the basis of the "surname", which was called "clan". It was not until the Han Dynasty that the surname and family name were merged into one and passed down from generation to generation in the pattern of father to son.

In ancient times, "name" and "character" were also two different concepts. A person usually has a "name" first, followed by a "character". Some people also have a number. In the traditional customs of our country, the "name" is determined a hundred days after the baby is born. "Character" is produced out of the ethical needs of avoiding taboos and respecting the elders. The ancients took names, and the names and characters complement each other and serve as the exterior and interior of each other. Such as Qu Yuan, the word Ping, the original name, Ping is the character, and the two characters Ping and Yuan are connected. Many ancients still had nicknames. In a broad sense, nicknames can be divided into nicknames, nicknames, and posthumous nicknames, while in a narrow sense, nicknames only refer to nicknames. There are self-selected numbers, and others give them. For example, Su Shi was called "Dongpo Jushi", Li Bai was called "Qinglian Jushi", and he was also called "Exiled Immortal".

After the end of the Qing Dynasty, especially after the rise of the New Culture Movement, the complex names and names of the ancients, as symbols of feudal culture, gradually disappeared in the long river of history. However, many literary and historical allusions and traditional cultural knowledge contained in the names of the ancients have important reference significance for modern people to name. 2021 is the Year of Xin Chou, and it is also the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China. On the occasion of the Lunar New Year, a traditional festival of the Chinese nation, I sincerely wish the people of all ethnic groups in the country auspicious and happy New Year! I wish our great motherland prosperity, prosperity and peace for the people! [I want to correct mistakes]

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