

SOCIAL DISTANCE AND VIETNAMESE TRADITIONAL ART DECORATION

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ABSTRACT

The goal of this analysis is to apply the Systemic Functional Linguistics theory (SFL) to analyzesocial distance and visual sign in the context of Vietnamese art decoration. Based on the concept of social semiotics, social distance between interactants in this analysis is analyzed through a register description of tenor system within the context of situation. From a social point of view, this analysis applies the five lines of human thought based on Bogardus divided into motivational relevancies, including (i) human life, (ii) the natural world, (iii) mythology, (iv) philosophy, (v) religion, and (vi) culture and tradition, to describe the relationship between context of situation and meaning interpretation of Vietnamese traditional art decoration. The findings suggest that social distance generally plays an important role among interactants through Vietnamese traditional art decoration and functional meaning interpretation. The findings further suggest that the tenor system reflects some levels of social distance through a configuration of power, contact, and affective involvement of language usage. As a result, the levels of social distance could be realized by functional and social meaning interpretation, called socio-functional meaning system, through three perspectives: (i) art interpretation and art appreciation, (ii) social beliefs, faiths, and respect, and (iii) features and properties of art decoration. Some benefits of this study can be applied to other fields of human communication such as film, advertising, and art aesthetics.

Keywords: Tenor System, Social Distance, SFL, Social Semiotics, Vietnamese Traditional Art Decoration

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