1. Background & Objectives

Research questions
- What are possible relationships between different forms of nominal expressions and (in)definiteness/non-specificity?
- How does the positioning of the nominal expression in a sentence affect their interpretations?
- How do the different interpretations of the nominal expressions appear in?

Problem

Results of previous studies on different languages are often difficult to compare due to different research methods.

Objectives
- To determine similarities and differences in the distribution and interpretation of different forms of nominal expressions in Hmong and Vietnamese using the same methodology.
- To present results of a preliminary study making use of parallel Hmong and Vietnamese folktale data.

2. Method

Procedure
- Identify all nominal expressions in the Hmong and Vietnamese folktale data.
- Categorize them by their syntactic types:
  a. Bare N
  b. Num-Cl-N
  c. Cl-N

Determine their interpretation in context:
- Definite
  - The intended referent is uniquely identifiable by the speaker and the hearer.
- Non-specific indefinite
  - The intended referent is uniquely identifiable by the speaker.
- Specific indefinite
  - The referent is not uniquely identifiable.

3. Results

Excerpts of folktale

Hmong
Tus neeg txiav taws, nws tus lau qaib thiab nws poj niam [The man went to gather wood. Only the wife was at home alone.]

Vietnamese (translation)
Nhóm� đi rừng để lấy củi, nhưng chỉ khi ông trở về, bà mới biết(re)v Even though the man was out in the forest gathering wood. Only the wife was at home alone.

Notes
1. All instances are interpreted as definite or non-specific.
2. All instances are interpreted as definite or non-specific.
3. Only one instance is observed, i.e. lex wu n (Cl) what

4. Generalizations from the Hmong and Vietnamese folktale data

Bare N
- E V occur with definite interpretations in all positions.
- E V have non-specific indefinite interpretations in Object and Object-of-preposition positions.

Num - Cl - N
- E V occur with indefinite interpretations (specific or non-specific) in Object positions.
- Num - Cl - N-Det: also occur with a definite interpretation in Object-of-preposition position.
- Num - Cl - N: also occur with indefinite interpretations in Subject and Object positions.
- Pass - Cl - N: also occur with definite interpretations in Subject position.

Object of preposition
- H & V: interpreted as definite or non-specific.
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)
- Specific (non-specific)