

# COMPARISON OF CHILDREN'S ADDRESSING FORMS IN VIETNAMESE AND ENGLISH

(Through the English-Vietnamese Bilingual Story “*The Little Prince*”)

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**Abstract:** This study applies the theoretical framework of the vocative and the forms of address to investigate and categorize the terms of address used in the English-Vietnamese bilingual story “The Little Prince”. Based on this categorization, a comparative analysis is conducted on the terms of address in Vietnamese and English. The findings reveal three key points: first, the terms of address in Vietnamese exhibit greater diversity and richness compared to English; second, the use of terms of address in both Vietnamese and English is influenced by cultural factors, which shape societal norms, behaviors, and language choices; third, the comparison highlights the psychological, cognitive, and cultural characteristics between the Vietnamese and English-speaking communities.

**Keywords:** comparison, forms of address, children, Vietnamese, English.

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## SO SÁNH CÁC KIỂU XUNG HÔ CỦA TRẺ EM TRONG TIẾNG VIỆT VÀ TIẾNG ANH

(Qua ngữ liệu truyện song ngữ Anh - Việt “*Hoàng tử bé*”)

**Tóm tắt:** Bài viết dựa trên lý thuyết về xung hô, các kiểu xung hô để tiến hành khảo sát và phân loại từ ngữ xung hô trong truyện song ngữ Anh - Việt “*Hoàng tử bé*”. Từ việc phân loại, tiến hành so sánh các từ ngữ thuộc các kiểu xung hô trong tiếng Việt và tiếng Anh. Kết quả so sánh cho thấy: thứ nhất, từ ngữ trong các kiểu xung hô trong tiếng Việt đa dạng và phong phú hơn tiếng Anh; thứ hai, xung hô trong tiếng Việt và tiếng Anh đều chịu sự tác động của các yếu tố văn hóa tác động lên chuẩn mực xã hội, hành vi và việc lựa chọn sử dụng ngôn ngữ; thứ ba, thông qua việc so sánh các kiểu xung hô chỉ ra đặc

trung tâm lí tư duy và văn hóa dân tộc của người Việt và người Anh.

**Từ khóa:** so sánh, kiểu xưng hô, trẻ em, tiếng Việt, tiếng Anh.

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## 1. Introduction

Terms of address in communication vary greatly among different cultures worldwide, including Vietnamese, due to the influence of various social factors (such as age, gender, power, profession, region, religion, etc.) and linguistic factors (such as specific communicative contexts). As a result, terms of address have long been considered a “communicative strategy” in languages [6].

In the context of cultural exchange and globalization, the use of English in communication is becoming increasingly common in Vietnam. Culturally, Vietnam and England possess distinct traditional values. However, exposure to English culture has influenced the lifestyle, working style, and mindset of some Vietnamese people, particularly the younger generation. Values such as individualism, freedom of thought, and the entrepreneurial spirit inherent in Western culture are gradually being accepted and adopted by Vietnamese society. Linguistically, during this process of cultural interaction, the Vietnamese have incorporated elements of English to meet communicative needs.

literature, particularly short stories, plays a crucial role in educating and shaping children's personalities. In other words, short stories are not only a source of

entertainment but also an inspiration, allowing children to immerse themselves in beloved characters, express attitudes, and learn lessons through various situations. Through these stories, children are transported into a rich and diverse world of characters, fostering their innocence and imagination. One of the critical elements contributing to the success of children’s literature is language.

This paper focuses on examining and comparing children’s terms of address in Vietnamese and English, utilizing data from the bilingual English-Vietnamese edition of “The Little Prince”, reprinted for the third time by the Vietnam National University Press in 2023.

## 2. Theory of address

**2.1.** In any form of communication, terms of address and addressing practices are indispensable. Addressing is defined as “how one refers to oneself and addresses others when conversing” [8]. According to this definition, addressing involves two roles in communication: self-reference (addressing oneself) and referring to the role of the interlocutor (addressing the other). Thus, in communication, two types of relationships can be observed:

a) Corresponding relationship between self-reference and address: When I address myself as X, I will address the interlocutor as Y in a corresponding

manner. For example: “*anh-em*” (brother-younger sibling), “*chị-em*” (sister-younger sibling), “*bố-con*” (father-child), “*chú-cháu*”(uncle-niece/nephew).

b) Non-corresponding relationship between self-reference and address: When I address myself as X but refer to the interlocutor as Z. For example: “*chú-em*” (uncle-younger sibling), “*tôi-ông*” (I-mister). Nguyen Van Chien [8] referred to (a) as “precisely corresponding address” and (b) as “non-corresponding address”.

**2.2.** The diversity of terms of address in Vietnamese is one of the essential factors contributing to the richness of Vietnamese addressing practices. According to Nguyen Van Khang [6, p.326], there are 13 types of addressing in Vietnamese, categorized as follows:

A. Addressing by surname and name:

(1) Addressing by given name; (2) Addressing by surname; (3) Addressing by middle name + given name; (4) Addressing by surname + given name; (5) Addressing by full name (surname + middle name + given name).

B. Addressing with any terms usable for addressing:

(6) Personal pronouns; (7) Kinship terms used as addressing terms; (8) Other words used for addressing.

C. Addressing by title:

(9) Addressing with a single title; (10) Addressing with multiple or all titles.

D. Addressing by names of

relatives:

(11) Referring to relatives such as the names of spouse or children (role substitution).

E. Addressing by combinations of (1), (2), (3), (4):

(12) Using various combinations (e.g., title + name, title + full name, addressing term + name/full name).

F. Addressing through omission of addressing terms:

(13) Absence of addressing terms in communication (implicit addressing).

Especially, Nguyen Van Khang noted that even when no explicit terms of address are used (i.e., implicit addressing), it still constitutes a form of addressing and carries semantic functions (conveying information) in communication [6, p.326].

This study adopts Nguyen Van Khang’s perspective as the basis for analysis and research.

### **3. Survey Results and Discussion**

**3.1.** An examination of the characters in “The Little Prince” [12] reveals a diverse world, encompassing both human and non-human entities. Each chapter presents a “microcosm” reflecting various aspects of social life. The characters include figures such as *the king, the subject, the switchman, the geographer, the conceited man, the businessman, and the lamplighter*; and non-human characters such as *the rose, flowers, the small flower, and the snake*. The storyline follows the journey of “The Little Prince - the Little sovereign” - as he

traverses through different planets, ultimately arriving on Earth. On each planet, the Little Prince encounters and interacts with unique characters. For instance, the narrator first meets the Little Prince in the desert, where he is asked to draw a sheep; on another planet, the Little Prince meets an authoritarian king on a sparsely inhabited asteroid; on the fourth asteroid, he encounters a businessman so engrossed in his calculations that he cannot even lift his head.

Each communicative situation involving the Little Prince and the characters he meets on different planets bears its own distinct mark. In every scenario, the Little Prince uncovers peculiarities that puzzle him about the “grown-up world.” The themes explored range from scientific fields (such as geography and astronomy) to the everyday aspects of life.

An analysis of the dialogues shows a single hierarchical dynamic: the interaction between a superior role and a subordinate role. Depending on the conversation, the Little Prince alternates between these roles. For example, he assumes a subordinate role when interacting with adult characters (such as *the king, geographer, or businessman*) but takes on a superior role when interacting with smaller or less dominant characters (such as *the flower, the small flower, or the snake*).

### 3.2. Comparison of Addressing Terms in Vietnamese and English (Through the English-Vietnamese Bilingual Story “The Little Prince”)

#### 3.2.1. Results of the Addressing Terms Survey

The analysis of addressing terms in the bilingual text of The Little Prince yielded the following results:

**Table 1. Comparison of self-vocal words in Vietnamese and English**

No.	Vietnamese terms of address	English terms of address	No.	Vietnamese terms of address	English terms of address
1	<i>anh, mình, ta, tớ, tôi, Trẫm</i>	<i>I</i>	15	<i>Bệ hạ</i>	<i>Sire</i>
2	<i>anh, Bệ hạ, cậu, chú em, người, chủ, em, người, ông, ta, nhà người</i>	<i>you</i>	16	<i>Bậc đế vương</i>	<i>The presence of a King</i>
3	<i>Bệ hạ</i>	<i>Sire</i>	17	<i>các người lớn</i>	<i>the grown up</i>
4	<i>cáo</i>	<i>a fox</i>	18	<i>cậu bé</i>	<i>my little mane</i>
5	<i>Người</i>	<i>approach</i>	19	<i>người đẹp nhất</i>	<i>the handsomest</i>
6	<i>Các anh, các nàng, em</i>	<i>You</i>	20	<i>cái ông ny</i>	<i>that mane</i>
7	<i>Chúng ta, ta, chúng em</i>	<i>we</i>	21	<i>cô nàng này</i>	<i>this flower</i>

No.	Vietnamese terms of address	English terms of address	No.	Vietnamese terms of address	English terms of address
8	<i>Các em</i>	<i>Children</i>	22	<i>con vật buồn cười</i>	<i>a funny animal</i>
9	<i>Anh, ông, chú, em</i>	<i>Zero</i>	23	<i>Đại sứ</i>	<i>Ambassador</i>
10	<i>nhà bác học</i>	<i>a scholar</i>	24	<i>gã ngưỡng mộ</i>	<i>an admirer</i>
11	<i>nhà địa lý</i>	<i>a geographer</i>	25	<i>ông này</i>	<i>this man</i>
12	<i>nhà thám hiểm</i>	<i>an explorer</i>	26	<i>Thượng thư</i>	<i>Minister</i>
13	<i>những đóa hoa hồng</i>	<i>a roses</i>	27	<i>Thượng thư bộ tư pháp</i>	<i>Minister of Justice</i>
14	<i>thần dân</i>	<i>a subject</i>			

Comments: Table 1 has a total of 27 groups of pronouns in Vietnamese and 27 corresponding words in English. This shows that both languages have rich ways of addressing, although the expressions and contexts of use may be different. However, the number of pronouns in each pair is not equal. Specifically:

Vietnamese has more pronouns, showing a rich differentiation of relationships and social positions, for example: the words “anh”, “mình”, “ta”, “tớ”, “Trẫm” all have different nuances of meaning and emotions. The words “Bệ hạ” and “Thượng thư” clearly show social status, showing respect in communication. Words such as “các em”, “các anh”, “các nàng” show closeness, creating intimacy in daily communication. These pronouns show a diversity of emotions and social

relationships, from intimate to formal. The use of many different terms of address shows that Vietnamese communication culture attaches great importance to the expression of feelings and status. English tends to use fewer terms of address but more frequently in everyday contexts, such as “I” and “you”. However, words such as “Sire” and “Ambassador” show formality, often used in official contexts. Words such as “you” and “children” are general and do not clearly distinguish relationships or ages like Vietnamese. Forms of address are simpler and more direct. Although English also has words expressing social status, their usage is somewhat less rich than in Vietnamese.

### 3.2.2. Results of classifying pronouns according to Vietnamese language types

**Table 2. Children's pronouns according to types in Vietnamese**

No.	Child pronouns	Self-reference		Address		Example
		Number (turns)	Ratio (%)	Number (turns)	Ratio (%)	
1	Addressing by name	0	0.00	4	1.24	<i>A fox</i>
2	Addressing by personal pronouns	32	9.91	15	4.64	<i>I, We</i>
3	Addressing by kinship terms	118	36.53	74	22.91	<i>You</i>
4	Addressing by other terms	2	0.62	8	2.48	<i>Approach</i>
5	Addressing by titles	29	8.98	35	10.84	<i>I, Sire, the scholar, the geographer, the explorer, the subject, The presence of a King, the boy, the handsomest, that mane, the funny animal, this ambassador, the Minister, the Minister of Justice,...</i>
6	Addressing through combined forms	2	0.62	4	1.24	<i>You, a roses</i>
<b>Total</b>		<b>183</b>	<b>56.66</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>43.34</b>	

Comments: From the survey results and classification in Table 2, it can be seen that:

*Firstly*, the number of pronouns in Vietnamese is not equal in the types of address and pronouns. Specifically:

- Addressing by name: 0 times of address and 4 times of pronouns (1.24%).

Addressing by personal name is quite rare in this table.x This may indicate that children are not familiar with or do not like calling each other by name, possibly due to the education method or communication context.

- Addressing by personal pronouns: 32 times of address (9.91%) and 15 times of pronouns (4.64%). Addressing by

personal pronouns such as: “ta”, “tớ”, “tôi”, “mình”, “chúng ta” shows that children have begun to form awareness of themselves and their relationships with others. However, the rate of pronouns is still low. This indicates that children may not feel the need to use pronouns in daily communication. For example:

[1] *Tôi biết được nét mới đó vào buổi sáng thứ tư, khi em bảo tôi:*

*“Tôi rất thích cảnh mặt trời lặn. Ta đi xem mặt trời lặn đi”.*

*“Nhưng phải đợi chứ...”* [12, pg. 16]

The words “Tôi” and “ta” are the personal pronouns used by the Little Prince in his interactions with “tôi”.

- There were 118 times of addressing by kinship nouns (36.53%) and 74 times of calling (22.91%). This is the form of addressing with the highest percentage, showing that children are very familiar with kinship nouns such as: “Anh”, “Cậu”, “Chú”, “Em”, “Ông”,... These words show the closeness and affection in family and friendship relationships, and also show that children tend to rely on close relationships to communicate.

[2] *Ông hoàng nhỏ lại làm sao lãng những suy nghĩ của tôi:*

*“Còn ông, ông tưởng rằng hoa.”.*

*“Ồ! Không! Tôi có tưởng gì đâu! Tôi trả lời đại thế thôi. Tôi đang bận những việc hệ trọng!”* [12, pg. 18]

- There were 2 times of using other

pronouns (0.62%) and 8 times of using pronouns (2.48%). This number is very low, showing that using other pronouns such as: “người”, “nhà người” is not popular in children's communication.

[3] *“Tôi muốn được xem cảnh mặt trời lặn... xin bệ hạ hãy làm tôi vui lòng, hãy ra lệnh cho mặt trời lặn...”*

*“Nếu ta ra lệnh cho một võ tướng bay từ đoá hoa này sang đoá hoa kia như một con bướm, hay lệnh cho ông ta viết một vở bi kịch, hay biến thành chim biển, và nếu vị võ tướng ấy không tuân lệnh, thì lỗi ấy ở ông ta hay ở ta?”* [12, pg. 29].

- There were 29 times of addressing by title (8.98%) and 35 times of calling (10.84%). The use of title words such as “Trẫm”, “Bệ hạ”, “nhà bác học”, etc. shows that children have the ability to perceive social roles and show respect to adults. The rate of addressing by title is also quite high, demonstrating the richness of expression and the ability to understand seniority.

[4] *“Tâu bệ hạ” em nói, “cúi xin bệ hạ cho tôi được hỏi..”*

*“Ta ra lệnh cho người hỏi” vua vội vàng nói.*

*“Tâu bệ hạ, ngài trị vì trên cái gì?”*

*“Trên tất cả.” Nhà vua đáp, hết sức giản dị.* [12, tr. 27]

- Addressing with other combinations accounts for 2 occurrences (0.62%) of addressing and 4 occurrences (1.24%) of calling. These combinations,

such as “chú em” (young uncle) and “những đóa hoa hồng” (roses), demonstrate creativity in children's use of language. However, the low frequency indicates that this is not a common form of addressing.

[5] “*Các nàng là ai?*” *Em hỏi họ, sững sờ kinh ngạc.*

“*Chúng em là những đóa hoa hồng.*” *các hoa hồng nói.* [12, tr. 47]

Thus, children utilize a variety of addressing terms, particularly kinship

terms, which reflect the closeness of social relationships. They tend to focus more on self-addressing than calling others, indicating an awareness of self-identification and relational dynamics. The use of titles further demonstrates their understanding of social hierarchy, which is a positive indicator in fostering polite and cultured communication practices.

### 3.2.3. Results of classifying pronouns according to English types

**Table 3. Children's pronouns according to types in English**

No.	Child pronouns	Self-reference		Address		Example
		Number (turns)	Ratio (%)	Number (turns)	Ratio (%)	
1	Addressing by name	0	0.00	5	1.18	<i>a Fox, a roses</i>
2	Addressing by personal pronouns	163	67.08	92	21.75	<i>You, I</i>
3	Addressing by kinship terms	6	2.47	13	3.07	<i>we</i>
4	Addressing by other terms	16	6.58	19	4.49	<i>Children, an adminer, a scholar, a geographer, an explorer, approach, a subject,...</i>
5	Addressing by titles	19	4.40	25	5.91	<i>Sire, the presence of a King, Minister, Minister of Justice</i>
6	Addressing through combined forms	26	6.15	39	9.22	<i>a funny animal, the grown up, that mane, my little mane, this flower, the handsomest, this man,</i>

No.	Child pronouns	Self-reference		Address		Example
		Number (turns)	Ratio (%)	Number (turns)	Ratio (%)	
						<i>the grown up, my little mane, this flower,...</i>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>54.37</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>45.63</b>	

Comments: The results in Table 2 indicate:

The frequency of personal pronoun usage in self-reference (“xung”) and addressing others (“hô”) is nearly balanced, reflecting that children use both types of expressions equally in communication. Specifically, for self-reference: 230 out of 423 occurrences (accounting for 54.37%); for addressing others: 272 out of 423 occurrences (accounting for 45.63%). However, there is a noticeable discrepancy in the usage frequency within each category. Details are as follows:

- Addressing others by name appears 0 times in self-reference (0%) and 5 times in addressing others (1.18%). Using names for self-reference or addressing others is rarely employed by children, with no occurrences of self-reference. This suggests that children tend not to use personal names either to refer to themselves or to address others, likely due to the closeness of relationships and the lack of necessity to distinguish individuals by specific names.

[6] *“Who are you?” he demanded, thunderstruck.*

*“We are roses,” the roses said.*  
[12, tr. 47]

- Addressing others using personal pronouns occurs 163 times in self-reference (67.08%) and 92 times in addressing others (21.75%). This is the most common term of address, particularly for self-reference. Pronouns such as “You” and “I” are frequently used in children’s daily communication. This reflects the familiarity and convenience of personal pronouns in conversations.

[7] *I was very surprised to see a light break over the face of my young judge:*

*“That is exactly the way I wanted it! Do you think that this sheep will have to have a great deal of grass?”*

*“Why?”* [12, pg. 7]

- Addressing others using kinship terms occurs 6 times in self-reference (2.47%) and 13 times in addressing others (3.07%). These figures are relatively low, indicating that children rarely use kinship terms for communication. It is possible that

kinship terms (e.g., “we”) are not as common in children's daily interactions compared to personal pronouns.

- Addressing others with other terms appears 16 times in self-reference (6.58%) and 19 times in addressing others (4.49%). Alternative terms such as “Children,” “a scholar,” or “an explorer” are used to a certain extent but remain uncommon. These terms typically occur in specific contexts or situations that are more formal in nature.

[8] “*What is that big book?*” said the little prince. “*What are you doing?*”

“*I am a geographer,*” the old gentleman said to him. [12, tr. 39]

- Addressing others using titles occurs 19 times in self-reference (4.40%) and 25 times in addressing others (5.91%). Titles such as “Sire,” “Minister,” “Minister of Justice,” or “a subject” predominantly appear in addressing others. This indicates that children are aware of and use titles, but primarily when referring to others rather than in self-reference.

[9] *The first of them was inhabited by a king. Clad in royal purple and ermine, he was seated upon a throne which was at the same time both simple and majestic.*

“*Ah! Here is a subject,*” exclaimed the king, when he saw the little prince coming.

[12, pg. 25]

- Addressing others using mixed combinations occurs 26 times in self-reference (6.15%) and 39 times in addressing others (9.22%). Combinations

such as “a funny animal,” “the grown-up,” or “my little man” demonstrate children's creativity and ability to combine diverse expressions in communication. This relatively high proportion in both self-reference and addressing others reflects the diversity of children's language skills and their imaginative capacity.

[10] “*My friend the fox--*” the little prince said to me.

“*My dear little man, this is no longer a matter that has anything to do with the fox!*”

“*Why not?*” [12, tr.55].

Thus, in English, children use a diverse range of address terms, with personal pronouns being the most commonly used. This indicates that children have developed a natural way of communicating with others through familiar and easily understood words. The use of mixed combinations also highlights children's creativity in expression and communication. Titles are less frequently used, and when they are, they primarily appear in addressing others, reflecting that children are gradually developing an awareness of titles and social roles.

### 3.2.4. Comparison of Similarities and Differences Between Vietnamese and English (Based on the Bilingual Story “The Little Prince”)

#### 3.2.4.1. Similarities

From the comparison of children's address terms in Vietnamese and English

based on the data table, the following fundamental similarities can be observed:

*First*, the use of personal pronouns is the most common. Both languages show that children frequently use personal pronouns in communication. In Vietnamese, personal pronouns account for 32 occurrences of self-reference (9.91%) and 15 occurrences of addressing others (4.64%). In English, this rate is significantly higher, with 163 occurrences of self-reference (67.08%) and 92 occurrences of addressing others (21.75%). Personal pronouns are easy to use and suitable for daily communication.

Vietnamese personal pronouns, when translated into English, often correspond to numerous first-person pronouns (I) in English, such as *tôi/ mình/ tớ/ ta/ chúng ta*....—all rendered as “I”. Conversely, the English pronoun “I” can be translated into various Vietnamese address terms such as “*em, anh, trẫm*”, and others, depending on the context.

[11] “*Tớ đây này*”, giọng nói cất lên, “*ở dưới cây táo*”

“*Cậu là ai thế?*” Ông hoàng nhỏ nói, “*Cậu thật là xinh.*”

“*Tớ là một con cáo,*” con cáo nói.

“*Đến chơi với mình đi.*” Ông hoàng nhỏ rủ cáo. “*Mình buồn quá.*”

“*Tớ không chơi với cậu được. Tớ chưa được cảm hoá.*”

“*À! Xin lỗi,*” ông hoàng nhỏ nói.

(“*I am right here,*” the voice said, “*under the apple tree.*” “*Who are you?*”

*asked the little prince, and added, “You are very pretty to look at.”*

“*I am a fox,*” said the fox.” Come and play with *me,*” proposed the little prince. “*I am so unhappy.*”

“*I cannot play with you,*” the fox said. “*I am not tamed.*”

“*Ah! Please excuse me,*” said the little prince) [12, tr. 48].

*Second*, both Vietnamese and English incorporate mixed combinations of terms for addressing others. In Vietnamese, there are 2 occurrences of self-reference (0.62%) and 4 occurrences of addressing others (1.24%), while in English, there are 26 occurrences of self-reference (6.15%) and 39 occurrences of addressing others (9.22%). This demonstrates that children in both languages utilize their imagination in communication.

*Third*, addressing others using titles is less common. In both languages, titles are not a prevalent form of address. In Vietnamese, there are 29 occurrences of self-reference (8.98%) and 35 occurrences of addressing others (10.84%). In English, there are 19 occurrences of self-reference (4.40%) and 25 occurrences of addressing others (5.91%). Children rarely refer to themselves or others using titles unless in specific situations.

[12] *Rồi em cảm thấy hơi buồn vì chợt nghĩ đến cái tình cậunhỏ bị bỏ rơi của mình, em đánh bạo xin nhà vua một ân huệ:*

“Tôi muốn được xem cảnh mặt trời lặn... xin bệ hạ hãy làm tôi vui lòng, hãy ra lệnh cho mặt trời lặn...”

“Nếu ta ra lệnh cho một võ tướng bay từ đóa hoa này sang đóa hoa kia như một con bướm, hay lệnh cho ông ta viết một vở bi kịch, hay biến thành chim biển, và nếu vị võ tướng ấy không tuân lệnh, thì lỗi ấy ở ông ta hay ở ta?”

(And because he felt a bit sad as he remembered his little planet which he had forsaken, he plucked up his courage to ask the king a favor:

“I should like to see a sunset... do me that kindness... Order the sun to set...”

“If I ordered a general to fly from one flower to another like a butterfly, or to write a tragic drama, or to change himself into a sea bird, and if the general did not carry out the order that he had received, which one of us would be in the wrong?” the king demanded. “The general, or myself?” [12, tr.27-28].

Fourth, addressing others by name is uncommon. In both Vietnamese and English, using names as a form of address is very rare. In Vietnamese, there are no occurrences of self-reference and only 4 occurrences of addressing others (1.24%). Similarly, in English, there are no occurrences of self-reference and only 5 occurrences of addressing others (1.18%). This indicates that children seldom use names to address one another, possibly due to the closeness in their relationships,

which reduces the need for distinguishing individuals by name.

In conclusion, despite differences in the specific usage of address terms, children in both Vietnamese and English employ a variety of similar address forms. Notably, personal pronouns are the most commonly used, and creativity plays a significant role in their communication styles.

#### 3.2.4.2. Difference

Use of Personal Pronouns: In Vietnamese, the use of personal pronouns is relatively low, accounting for only 9.91% in self-reference and 4.64% in addressing others. Pronouns such as “ta,” “tớ,” “tôi,” and “mình” are used but not commonly. This may be due to Vietnamese cultural emphasis on kinship and social hierarchy, leading children to use kinship terms more frequently.

In English, personal pronouns dominate, accounting for 67.08% in self-reference and 21.75% in addressing others. Terms such as “I” and “you” are commonly used in communication. This suggests that children in English-speaking contexts tend to use pronouns more frequently for direct interaction with others.

[13] “Cuốn sách bự này là cuốn sách gì vậy?” Ông hoàng nhỏ hỏi. “Ông làm gì ở đây?”

“Ta là nhà địa lý,” tôn ông già nói. “Nhà địa lý là người như thế nào?”

“Đó là một nhà bác học biết rõ đâu là sông biển, núi non, thành phố và sa mạc”

“What is that big book?” said the little prince. “What are you doing?”

“I am a geographer,” the old gentleman said to him.

“What is a geographer?” asked the little prince.

“A geographer is a scholar who knows the location of all the seas, rivers, towns, mountains, and deserts.” [12, tr. 39].

Use of Kinship Terms: In Vietnamese, addressing others with kinship terms is very prevalent, particularly in self-reference (36.53%) and addressing others (22.91%). Terms such as “anh,” “chú,” and “em” indicate that children commonly rely on family relationships in daily communication.

In English, kinship terms are less frequently used, accounting for only 2.47% in self-reference and 3.07% in addressing others. Children in English-speaking contexts tend not to rely heavily on family relationships for daily forms of address.

[14] *Và nàng, vốn đã công phu đến như thế, bây giờ vừa ngáp vừa nói:*

“Ôi! Em chỉ vừa thức dậy... Em xin lỗi anh... Tóc tai em còn rũ rượi thế này...”

Thế là ông hoàng nhỏ không nén nổi sự ngưỡng mộ:

“Ôi! Nàng thật là đẹp!”

“Thật vậy sao?” hoa trả lời một cách nhẹ nhàng “Và em lại cùng sinh ra với vàng dương...”

(And, after working with all this painstaking precision, she yawned and said:

“Ah! I am scarcely awake. I beg that you will excuse me. My petals are still all disarranged...”

But the little prince could not restrain his admiration:

“Oh! How beautiful you are!”

“Am I not?” the flower responded, sweetly. “And I was born at the same moment as the sun...” [12, tr. 21].

Use of Titles: In Vietnamese, the use of titles such as “Trẫm” and “Bệ hạ” accounts for 8.98% in self-reference and 10.84% in addressing others. Children often perceive social status through titles, reflecting respect for adults or individuals of higher rank.

In English, the rate is lower, with 4.40% in self-reference and 5.91% in addressing others. The use of titles such as “Sire” and “Minister” primarily appears when speaking about others, reflecting children's awareness of social roles, but is not as prevalent. [15] *Và rồi em cũng hơi thấy chán:*

“Tôi chẳng có gì làm ở đây nữa,” em nói với nhà vua, “tôi sẽ đi.” “Ngươi chớ đi,” nhà vua vừa mới kiêu hãnh xiết bao vì có được một thần dân, đáp lời ông hoàng nhỏ. “Chớ đi, ta phong ngươi làm thượng thư!”

“Thượng thư bộ gì?”

“Bộ... bộ tư pháp!”

(And then, too, he was already beginning to be a little bored.

*“I have nothing more to do here,” he said to the king. “So I shall set out on my way again.”*

*“Do not go,” said the king, who was very proud of having a subject. “Do not go. I will make you a Minister!”*

*“Minister of what?”*

*“Minster of-- of Justice!” [12, tr.28]*

Other Combinations: In Vietnamese, the use of combinations such as “chú em” and “những đóa hoa hồng” is quite rare, accounting for only 0.62% in self-reference and 1.24% in addressing others. This suggests that children use fewer creative terms in daily communication.

In English, children tend to be more creative, with 6.15% in self-reference and 9.22% in addressing others. Phrases such as “a funny animal” and “the grown-up” reflect the creative potential of children in their communication.

Thus, Vietnamese children tend to rely more on kinship relationships and social status when addressing others, while English-speaking children primarily use personal pronouns and creativity in their expressions. The communication culture of Vietnamese children clearly emphasizes the importance of social relationships and status, whereas children in English-speaking contexts tend to communicate more naturally through the use of pronouns and creative expressions.

### **3. Conclusion**

In communication, the term of address is a way of indicating the person, thereby

referring to the characters participating in the communication. Term of address becomes the first and most important condition in identifying, establishing the communication role and contributing to expressing the characteristics of the communication character. Through comparing the terms of address in Vietnamese and English from the bilingual story “The Little Prince”, it can be seen that both languages possess a richness of term of address, but the way of expression and scope of use are different. Vietnamese is more diverse with many terms of address showing a clear differentiation in social status and sentiment, from intimate to formal terms of address. Meanwhile, English tends to be simpler, with a high frequency of using personal pronouns, more direct and general. This difference reflects the cultural characteristics of the two peoples: Vietnamese people value hierarchy and social relationships; British people emphasize equality and individuality in communication. This also shows that language is an inseparable part in shaping and reflecting the cultural characteristics of each nation.

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