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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF INVITATION EXPRESSIONS IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE FROM A CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract: This study was conducted to investigate the expressions of invitations in English and Vietnamese from the perspectives of linguistics and intercultural communication. The author employed a qualitative method, utilizing data collection tools including two open-ended survey questionnaires with the same content and number of questions for two participant groups: native English speakers and native Vietnamese. To ensure more reliable and effective survey results, personal observations were implemented during the data collection process. The findings revealed the notable similarities and differences in how invitations were expressed between the two languages. Additionally, the author discussed the cultural factors that influence these similarities and differences. This paper is presented in the hope of providing useful references and suggestions in expressing invitations in both English and Vietnamese to become better communicators.

Keywords: invitation expressions, cross-cultural perspective, comparative study

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NGHIÊN CỨU SO SÁNH CÁCH BIỂU ĐẠT LỜI MỜI DƯỚI GÓC ĐỘ GIAO VĂN HÓA ANH - VIỆT

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Tóm tắt: Nghiên cứu này được thực hiện nhằm điều tra cách diễn đạt lời mời trong tiếng Anh và tiếng Việt. Tác giả đã sử dụng phương pháp định tính với các công cụ thu thập dữ liệu bao gồm hai bảng hỏi khảo sát có cùng nội dung và số lượng câu hỏi cho hai nhóm người tham gia: người bản ngữ nói tiếng Anh và người Việt. Để làm cho kết quả khảo sát đáng tin cậy và hiệu quả hơn, tác giả cũng kết hợp quan sát thực tế cá nhân trong quá trình thu thập dữ liệu. Kết quả nghiên cứu chỉ ra những điểm tương đồng và khác biệt đáng chú ý trong cách thể hiện lời mời giữa hai ngôn ngữ, đồng thời tác giả cũng thảo luận các yếu tố văn hóa ảnh hưởng những điểm tương đồng và khác biệt này. Bài viết này hy vọng cung cấp các tài liệu tham khảo hữu ích cho độc giả khi muốn thể hiện lời mời bằng tiếng Anh và tiếng Việt để có thể trở thành người giao tiếp thông minh.

Từ khóa: biểu đạt lời mời, góc độ giao văn hóa, nghiên cứu so sánh

1. Introduction

Language and culture are closely related and dependent on each other. Language functions as a fundamental tool for communication and cultural expressions, reflecting and shaping social reality (Susianti et al., 2024). The correlation between language and culture is often described as inseparable, like conjoined twins or two sides of a coin (Rabiah, 2018). Language not only represents a nation but is also strongly connected to the attitudes and behaviors of its speakers (Sepora et al., 2012). It plays an important role in preserving and transmitting cultural elements, namely values, beliefs, and traditions (Susianti et al., 2024). It is generally agreed that every language reflects each culture of a country including customs, traditions and rituals. Therefore, it is crucial to have a wide knowledge of different cultures to get effective communication.

Daily communication always involves invitations which are social activities that foster rapport, social solidarity and good relationships. People employ various pragmatic and linguistic strategies when making invitations, including modality, imperatives, and interrogatives (Hussein et al., 2022). Invitations are undoubtedly expressed in many different ways in a language, typically in English and Vietnamese. Invitations in English and Vietnamese share similarities with the purpose of establishing and maintaining relationships and in terms of making invitations in social interactions. However, there are also some contrasts between English and Vietnamese invitations due to the distinctions of culture, thought and lifestyle in these two countries (Le & Huynh, 2021; Soucy, 2014). In the context of globalization, when cultural interactions are becoming more and more common, identifying and handling language barriers plays a key role in minimizing misunderstandings in communication (Quang, 2020). Mastering how to use invitations appropriately in each specific situation not only contributes to improving the effectiveness of intercultural communication but also actively supports the

language teaching process. This knowledge helps learners and language users avoid errors in understanding and communicating messages. For those reasons, the researcher decided to carry out this study to find out the similarities and differences of how invitations are expressed in English and Vietnamese in terms of cross-cultural perspective. It is hoped to be valuable reference and suggestions to make good invitations in order to become successful communicators.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Invitations as Speech Acts

Speech acts are utterances that perform actions and serve communicative functions, such as requests, apologies, suggestions, refusals, invitations and greetings (Jabber, 2020; Katz, 2015; Valipour & Jadidi, 2014). For example, the utterance “Would you like a cup of coffee?” performs an act of inviting more than a question. Making invitations is a speech act used very often both in English – Vietnamese spoken and written forms in different ways. According to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, an invitation means the act of asking somebody to do something or go somewhere. Similarly, Vietnamese Dictionary (2016) defines “lời mời” as a wish or a polite request that a person is asked to come to a social event or to perform some tasks. From these above-mentioned definitions, invitations are speech acts that involve inviting or requesting someone to participate, be present, or take part in an event. They also convey the speaker's friendliness, politeness, respect, and hospitality toward the hearer.

2.2. Politeness and Face Theory in Invitations

In addition to serving as a gesture of goodwill, an invitation can significantly influence the face of the communicator. In social communication, the face is recognized as the social image that each individual wishes to maintain in the others' eyes. This represents a positive social value that individuals cultivate based on how they are perceived in their interactions with others. This concept has been developed in sociological research and introduced into linguistic analysis as a central element in explaining communication strategies to protect the face of participants in interactions (Goffman, 1967, as cited in Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 61). Brown and Levinson (1987) developed the Politeness Theory based on Goffman's concept of face. Politeness theory considers face protection as the center of communication strategies. Speakers typically select appropriate expressions to soften the risk of pressuring or threatening the listener's face. Two common groups of strategies are: positive politeness, which conveys friendliness and a desire to maintain social relationships; and negative politeness, which demonstrates respect for the listener's choices and personal space. These strategies are particularly adopted in potentially face-threatening speech acts, including invitations, offers or requests (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

2.3. Categories of Inviting in English and Vietnamese

Since the study is centered on investigating ways of expressing invitations in English and Vietnamese in terms of cross-cultural perspective, it is necessary to take a look at some basic information on categories of inviting in English and Vietnamese. Invitations can be direct or indirect utterances (Al-Hamzi et al., 2020; Nguyen & Ho, 2012). The author grouped forms of invitations in English and Vietnamese from a number of English and Vietnamese studies on invitations by Nguyen and Ho (2012), Le and Huynh (2021), Tillitt and Bruder (1999), and Al-Hamzi et al. (2020) in the following table:

Table 1*Forms of Invitations in English and Vietnamese*

Types of Invitations	Form	Examples in English	Examples in Vietnamese
Direct invitations	1. Invitations in forms of performative sentences	- <i>I want to invite you to have dinner with me this Sunday.</i>	- <i>Con mời thầy xơi cơm!</i> - <i>Mời chú uống nước!</i>
	2. Invitations in forms of declarative sentences	- <i>I just thought it would be nice to invite you over for dinner.</i>	- <i>Mình rất vui nếu cậu đến ăn tối đấy.</i>
	3. Invitations in forms of imperative sentences	- <i>Hey, come here and have a drink</i> - <i>Let's have a cigarette.</i>	- <i>Em uống nước đi</i>
Indirect invitations	4. Invitations in forms of Wh-questions	- <i>Why don't you come on holiday with us?</i>	
	5. Invitations in forms of Yes/No questions	- <i>We have a party on Saturday. Can you join us?</i>	- <i>Anh có muốn uống một tách cà phê không?</i>
	6. Invitations in forms of tag questions	- <i>You will come to my birthday party, won't you?</i>	- <i>Chủ nhật lại nhà mình chơi, được không?</i>
	7. Invitations in forms of conditional sentences	- <i>We would be delighted if you could join us for dinner on Saturday.</i>	- <i>Nếu chị rảnh thì đến nhà em chơi chị nhé.</i>

From this table, it can be clearly found that expressing invitations are varied in English and Vietnamese. However, both direct and indirect invitations in English and Vietnamese have seven specific forms. Based on that, the collected data were analyzed in the light of cross-cultural perspective to explore differences and similarities in making invitations in these two languages.

2.4. Previous Studies

Research on speech acts, particularly invitations, revealed cultural influences and differences between English and Vietnamese. Vietnamese students' invitations were affected by age and power relations, with formal and indirect approaches used for older or authoritative invitees (Nguyen & Ho, 2012). Similarly, Vietnamese learners frequently employed indirect strategies when refusing invitations, influenced by social contexts and cross-cultural differences (Bui, 2024). A comparison of Moroccan Arabic and American English showed both similarities and differences in invitation strategies, with shared indirect and direct approaches (Choraih, 2022). When examining directives, another speech act category, similarities in structure, emotion, and intonation were found between English and Vietnamese, despite some differences (Tran, 2023).

It can be seen that previous studies have highlighted the importance of understanding cultural nuances and pragmatic aspects of speech acts, especially invitations, to improve communication and language teaching effectiveness in diverse contexts. These works have also clarified the influence of factors such as culture, society and language on the expression of invitations in various settings. However, there is still a lack of direct comparative studies between English and Vietnamese, particularly in relation to elements such as gender, power

and age. Therefore, this study aims to fill that gap and contributes to a deeper understanding of speech acts from a cross-cultural perspective.

Addressing the identified research gap, this study investigated the expression of invitations in English and Vietnamese. Furthermore, an analysis was conducted on the influence of socio-cultural factors, including gender, power dynamics, and age, on the similarities and differences between the two languages. In order to achieve these objectives, the following research questions were formulated:

(1) What are the differences and similarities in the expression of invitations in English and Vietnamese?

(2) What socio-cultural factors contribute to those differences and similarities?

3. Research Methodology

The qualitative method was used in this study to explore the expression of invitations in English and Vietnamese in real-life communicative contexts. This method was chosen because it allows the researcher to gain in-depth access to linguistic strategies and socio-cultural factors that influence invitation behavior, which are difficult to measure with quantitative tools (Creswell, 2013; Dörnyei, 2007). Additionally, although sample sizes are often smaller, this approach offers a rich, detailed understanding of the phenomena being studied, making it a valuable method across various fields (Wolff et al., 2019).

The researcher collected data from two groups of participants: sixteen native Vietnamese individuals, and sixteen native English speakers from the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, and Canada, residing or working in Hanoi for a short time and with limited exposure to Vietnamese culture. Each group comprised an equal number of males and females, aged 18 to 60 with various professions, including students, teachers, and business professionals. The selection of native English speakers living in Vietnam was intended to ensure accessibility and ease of data collection. However, this group may be subject to acculturation, which will be discussed in the study limitations.

In this study, the survey questionnaires were designed in the form of open-ended questions, covering four specific communication situations:

Situation 1: inviting someone to have dinner with you

Situation 2: inviting someone to join your graduation party

Situation 3: inviting someone for a cup of tea

Situation 4: inviting someone to attend your wedding

Each situation of the questionnaire was designed for a certain purpose. Situation 1 was to find out the effect of gender on the way of expressing invitation. Situation 2 focused on discovering the effect of power relation on inviting. Situation 3 was to investigate the influence of age to make an invitation. The effect of age and power relation would be investigated in situation 4.

To ensure language equivalence, the questionnaires were carefully created with two versions: one in English and the other in Vietnamese. Both versions contained the same content and number of questions, organized into two sections. The first section gathered personal information from participants, including nationality, age, gender, and occupation, all of which significantly influence their invitation expressions. The second one presented four scenarios, as described earlier. Prior to the official survey, these versions were reviewed by a lecturer in

English Intercultural Communication to ensure semantic accuracy and appropriateness in the communicative context, then pre-tested with a small group of participants to assess clarity, relevance, and responsiveness. It should be noted that the pre-test participants were selected based on their similarity to the target population; however, they were not included in the main data collection phase. Minor adjustments to wording and phrasing were made based on feedback from the test group. For example, in Situation 3, “invite him a cup of tea” was revised to “offer him a cup of tea” in English. Then, these surveys were distributed to sixteen native English and sixteen native Vietnamese respondents. To ensure research ethics, all participants were clearly informed about the purpose of the study, their right to refuse or withdraw at any time, and the commitment to absolute confidentiality of personal information as well as no known risks to participants before the survey. Participation was entirely voluntary and free from any form of force.

Each participant in each was delivered a survey. Therefore, a total of 128 responses with 64 from each were obtained. Each response was coded from S1 to S64 for organizational and analytical purposes. Then, all responses were content analyzed and categorized into seven invitation forms in the light of cross-cultural communication as summarized in Table 1. The results were shown in tables containing numbers of participants choosing each form of inviting and the equivalent percentage. It is important to note that the numbers and percentages of each form are presented to illustrate trends and support content analysis, rather than for statistical inference purposes.

In addition, during the distribution and collection of the survey, the researcher made informal observations to record some of the following elements: the participants' willingness to cooperate, their seriousness in responding, their initial reactions and their level of familiarity with the cultural situation. However, the surveys were conducted in written form and there was no audio or video recording, so phonetic factors such as sound, stress, and intonation were not recorded during the observation. Notes were recorded in the form of a research diary, which was not quantitatively coded, but played an important role in interpreting the survey results and assessing the reliability of the data.

4. Results and Discussions

4.1. Results

The major results of the study are summarized below:

Research question 1: What are the similarities and differences in the expression of invitations in English and Vietnamese?

Based on the results of data analysis, lots of similarities and differences were observed in the ways of expressing invitations between English and Vietnamese participants.

The first similarity was that both English and Vietnamese included the performative verb in some forms of invitation: “invite” in English and “mời/xin mời” in Vietnamese. The verb “invite” and “mời/xin mời” mainly appeared in forms of performative sentences. For example:

(S3) *I'd like to invite you to dinner tomorrow.*

(S18) *Mời thầy cô đến dự tiệc liên hoan với lớp chúng em ạ!*

Invitations in both English and Vietnamese were often phrased without using performative verbs like “invite” or “mời/xin mời.” Instead, they frequently took the form of requests, suggestions (using imperative sentences), or questions. For example:

In English:

(S25) *We are going to hold a party this Saturday evening, so please come and have fun with us!*

(S1) *Can I take you out to dinner tonight?*

In Vietnamese:

(S5) *Đi ăn tối với anh em nhé!*

(S17) *Ngày mai lớp em có bữa tiệc nhỏ chúc mừng lễ tốt nghiệp, cô tham gia cùng lớp em được không ạ?*

Besides, to make more polite invitations and show respect to the hearers, some words like: “please” (in English) and “kính, hân hạnh” (in Vietnamese) were added in inviting speech acts. These are proved by the answers from the participants as below:

(S30) *This Sunday morning, we are having a party to celebrate finishing the course, please come and join our party if you have free time!*

(S23) *Kính mời thầy đến dự tiệc liên hoan với chúng em ạ!*

On the basis of the categories of invitations in English and Vietnamese as mentioned above, the table of invitation forms used by English participants and Vietnamese ones was designed as follows:

Table 2

Forms of Invitations Used by English and Vietnamese Participants

Inviting forms	Native speakers of English		Native speakers of Vietnamese	
	Number	Percentage (%)	Number	Percentage (%)
Form 1	11	17	28	43.75
Form 2	4	6.25	0	0
Form 3	5	8	25	39
Form 4	8	12.5	0	0
Form 5	24	37.5	4	6.25
Form 6	0	0	5	8
Form 7	12	18.75	2	3
Total	64	100	64	100

As shown in Table 2, the direct inviting form (including form 1, 2 and 3) made up 82.75% in Vietnamese, but only 34.25% in English. However, the percentage of indirectness inviting form (consisting of form 4, 5, 6 and 7) used by English native speakers (65.75%) were more overwhelming than that used by Vietnamese ones (17.25%). Overall, the survey data indicated that Vietnamese respondents were generally more direct in making invitations, with about 82.75% expressing themselves directly, compared to 65.75% of their English counterparts. Here are some specific differences between the two groups. The first notable difference lay in the nature of the performative verbs “invite” in English and “mời” in Vietnamese. While both verbs conveyed the same meaning, they served different functions. In English, the verb “invite” typically appeared only in full performative sentences. For example:

(S13) *I would like to invite you to have dinner with me.*

Meanwhile, in Vietnamese, “mời” was used flexibly in forms of performative sentences, with or without a subject. Here are some instances:

(S18) *Mời thầy cô đến dự tiệc liên hoan với lớp chúng em ạ!*

Moreover, in Vietnamese, the word “mời” is formally polite. Its politeness level can be further enhanced when combined with some additional phrases such as: “xin”, “thân”, “kính” and “lấy làm vinh dự”. In this study, S25 and S64 served as typical examples.

(S25) *Hôm nay lớp em có tổ chức một buổi tiệc cho lễ tốt nghiệp, lớp em kính mời thầy cô đến chung vui!*

(S64) *Tuần sau chúng em đám cưới sắp ạ. Vợ chồng em rất vinh dự nếu sắp tham dự cùng chúng em.*

In contrast, in almost any English context, the verb “invite” appeared only in some limited sentences to make polite invitations like: “would like to”. S18, S57 and S61 were considered illustrative examples.

(S18) *Our class would like to invite you to our party this Sunday.*

(S57) *We would like to invite you to our wedding ceremony. Kindly come and bless our married life.*

(S61) *I would like to invite you to come to our wedding ceremony.*

The analysis highlighted key similarities and differences in how invitations were expressed between English and Vietnamese speakers. Both languages utilize performative verbs (“invite” and “mời/xin mời”) and can omit these verbs in requests or suggestions. However, a major difference is that Vietnamese native speakers tended to make invitations more directly, using performative and imperative sentences (about 82.75%), while English speakers preferred indirect invitations, often in the form of Yes/No questions and conditional sentences (accounting for 65.75%). Informal observations showed that Vietnamese men are more likely to respond quickly and decisively to intimate situations, which reflects familiarity and confidence in using direct invitations. Additionally, “mời” in Vietnamese is more flexible, can be used without a subject, and conveys a higher level of politeness, often enhanced by phrases like “xin” and “kính.” Overall, this indicated that Vietnamese speakers expressed invitations more directly than their English counterparts.

Research question 2: What socio-cultural factors contribute to those differences and similarities?

In this part, some of factors including: gender, relative age and relative power that lead to the differences and similarities in the expression of invitations in English and Vietnamese will be mentioned.

Effect of gender on the expression of invitations in English and Vietnamese

Situation 1 reflected clearly the effects of gender in the choices of participants to make invitations.

Table 3

The choices of males and females in making invitations in situation 1

Gender	English native speakers		Vietnamese native speakers	
	Direct	Indirect	Direct	Indirect
Male	25%	75%	75%	25%
Female	12.5%	87.5%	37.5%	62.5%

As can be seen in Table 3, in situation 1 to make invitations, male participants were more direct than female ones (with the percentage of 25% English male and 75% Vietnamese ones) in expressing invitations. However, English participants used direct invitations in forms of performative sentences like “I’d like to invite you to dinner tomorrow” while Vietnamese

ones often invited in forms of imperative sentences. For example: “*Đi ăn tối với anh, em nhé!*”.

In addition, both male and female English participants preferred using indirect ways to invite. For instance: “*Can I take you out to dinner tonight?*” Meanwhile, Vietnamese females tended to use indirect invitations (62.5%) while almost all Vietnamese male used direct ways (25%).

Effect of relative power on the ways of expressing invitations in English and Vietnamese

The effect of relative power on the ways of expressing invitation in English and Vietnamese were revealed in situation 2 and situation 4 in which the inviter has less power than the invitee. Based on the result of data analysis in these two situations, Vietnamese participants used form 1 with the performative verb “mời” for inviting in the high percentages (68.75% in situation 2 and 75% in situation 4). For instance:

(S18) *Mời thầy cô đến dự tiệc liên hoan với lớp chúng em ạ!*

(S50) *Vợ chồng chúng em mời sắp tuần sau đến uống chén rượu mừng với chúng em ạ.*

Whereas, English participants used “invite” in forms of performative sentences (with the phrase “would like to”) in lower percentage (37.5% in situation 2 and 18.75% in situation 4). For example:

(S28) *We are having a party this weekend, so we'd like to invite you to join us.*

Furthermore, English participants were likely to show their respect to the invitee by using some forms which are more polite such as imperative sentences with additional word “please” and conditional sentences. Take S24 as an example, “*please come and join us for the party next Sunday afternoon!*”. Meanwhile, Vietnamese often added the phrase like: “kính” or “lấy làm vinh dự” in formal situations: “*Kính mời thầy đến dự tiệc liên hoan với chúng em ạ!*” (S23). Observations indicated that Vietnamese individuals had a tendency to take more time to respond when inviting elders or superiors, reflecting their careful consideration of etiquette and social status.

Effect of relative age on the expression of invitations in English and Vietnamese

Situation 3 and situation 4 demonstrated the impacts of relative age on ways of giving invitations in these two languages. In situation 3, English participants chose sentences in forms of questions (Wh and Yes/No questions) to make an invitation. Some very short questions like: “*a cup of tea?*” were used to show friendliness that did not pay attention to the differences of age. However, in formality (situation 4), to show the inviter’s respect to the invitee, English native speakers often added some phrases: “my pleasure”, “my honor” in declarative sentences and “please” in imperative ones. Here are some typical instances:

(S52) *It is my honor to welcome you to my wedding next week.*

(S64) *It is my pleasure to welcome you to my wedding next week.*

In Vietnamese invitations (in both situation 3 and 4), participants often used the performative verb “mời” to show their respect to the invitee who is older than them. For example: “*Mời anh uống trà!*”- S36. Moreover, invitations in forms of imperative sentences seemed to show more hospitality and sincere feelings of the inviters such as:

(S51) *Tuần sau sắp sắp xếp thời gian đến chúc phúc cho vợ chồng chúng em sắp nhé.*”

If the inviter had said: “*tuần sau sắp có sắp xếp thời gian đến chúc phúc cho vợ chồng em không?*”, it would not have been considered polite, hospitable or enthusiastic.

In brief, it can be found that several factors underlay the similarities and differences in the way invitations were expressed between English and Vietnamese, including gender, relative

power, and age. In terms of gender, men tended to use more direct invitations, while women were inclined to utilize indirect ones. In terms of power, Vietnamese were likely to use the verb “mời” in situations with less power, showing respect, while English speakers applied more polite structures. Age also influenced the way invitations were worded; English participants employed short questions to convey friendliness, while Vietnamese participants commonly opted for the verb “mời” to show respect to elders. Furthermore, informal observations during the survey revealed that English speakers demonstrated initial hesitation when responding to scenarios involving hierarchical relationships, such as inviting a boss or an elder. This suggested that familiarity with cultural contexts might significantly influence their choice of invitation strategies. These factors also implied that the way invitations were worded not only reflected culture but also contained deep social values in each language.

4.2. Discussions

The results of the current study on the expression of invitations between English and Vietnamese speakers showed clear similarities and differences, reinforced and extended the findings from previous research. As Nguyen & Ho (2012) pointed out, the influence of age and power on the invitations of Vietnamese students was also confirmed in the current analysis, suggesting that social factors still play an important role in speech behavior. However, the emphasis on the direct approach of Vietnamese speakers (82.75%) is somewhat inconsistent with the assumption of politeness theory, which suggests that speakers can prefer the indirect form to minimize the risk of face-threatening. This may reflect the cultural nuances of Vietnamese communication in contexts, where closeness and maintaining social relationships are prioritized, aligning well with the strategy of positive politeness. In contrast, the use of the verb “mời” in Vietnamese without a subject showed a linguistic adjustment to reduce pressure on the listener, especially in ceremonial or hierarchical situations. This clearly illustrates the use of negative politeness strategies. As Bùi (2024) pointed out, Vietnamese people tended to use indirect strategies when refusing invitations, reflecting the influence of social context and cultural differences.

Findings also illustrated that native English speakers were likely to use more indirect invitations, consistent with negative politeness theory in minimizing face-threatening behavior. They often avoided stating the action or subject directly, instead using polite structures. A comparison of the two languages revealed that both Vietnamese and English employed politeness strategies, but in distinct ways. English tended to favor indirectness to minimize face-threatening acts, while Vietnamese demonstrated respect through a flexible approach, utilizing directness to convey intimacy and indirectness to express respect. These factors not only emphasized the diversity in speech acts but also reflected deep cultural values, showing the need to understand cultural nuances when communicating in a multilingual environment.

5. Conclusion and Limitations

In conclusion, invitations are an important linguistic aspect in every culture, expressing care and sharing, thereby strengthening relationships and enriching life. This study analyzed the similarities and differences in the way invitations are expressed between English and Vietnamese speakers, and highlighted the cultural and social factors that influence speech behavior.

Both languages use performative verbs, but Vietnamese speakers tended to make invitations more directly, while English preferred indirect invitations. Factors such as gender,

power, and age also influenced the way invitations are made. Men often invited directly, while women chose indirect invitations. Vietnamese used the verb “mời” to show respect, while English adopted polite structures. Age is also an important factor affecting how to express invitations in these two languages. English employed short questions to show friendliness, while Vietnamese used “mời” to show respect to elders. Based on the insights presented above, the author hopes that this contrastive analysis will prove beneficial for individuals in effectively communicating in both English and Vietnamese.

However, this paper focuses solely on the written language aspects of expressing invitations, and does not take into account other phonetic factors such as sound, stress, which could affect how it is received in real-life communication. Additionally, the results would likely have been more accurate and reliable if the survey questionnaires had been distributed to a larger participant pool. Ultimately, although the participants were native English speakers with limited access to Vietnamese culture, their experience living in Hanoi may have influenced how the invitation was phrased, reflecting potential cultural adaptation.

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APPENDICES

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