

SYMBOLIC CONSTRUCTS AND THEMATIC DEPTH IN ANTOINE DE SAINT-EXUPÉRY'S *THE LITTLE PRINCE*

Nurul Hasanah, M. Manugeran

Universitas Islam Sumatera Utara
E-mail: nurulhasanah2049@gmail.com

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Abstract

This study explores the symbolic constructs and thematic intricacies in Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's *The Little Prince*, with a particular focus on the novel's most significant symbols and their interpretive depth. Recognizing that literary symbolism often transcends literal meaning, the research aims to analyze how specific symbols in the novel function not only as narrative devices but also as representations of broader philosophical and emotional themes. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach, the study contrasts the denotative meanings of selected symbols with their connotative and symbolic significance, using direct textual evidence from the novel. The analysis reveals that *The Little Prince* is rich in symbolic imagery—such as the fox, the rose, the baobab tree, the desert, and the stars—all of which serve as allegorical elements reflecting themes of love, loss, connection, responsibility, and existential insight. Ultimately, the study demonstrates that these symbolic elements contribute to the novel's enduring emotional resonance and its philosophical depth, inviting readers to engage with its meaning on multiple interpretive levels.

Keywords: *domestication; enlightenment; loneliness; symbolism*

1. Introduction

Symbolism in literature functions as a powerful narrative device, enabling authors to communicate layered meanings and evoke deeper emotional resonance in readers. Through symbolic constructs, writers can express abstract ideas, moral values, and philosophical reflections in a way that transcends literal interpretation. As Green (2013) observes, symbolism intensifies the expressive potential of literary messages, while O'Neal (2013) emphasizes its role in revealing an author's underlying philosophies. A simple statement—such as “The best part of you is your eyes because I can see myself in them”—illustrates how symbolic meaning enhances communication. While one reader may interpret “eyes” literally, others may view them as metaphors for intimacy, reflection, or soul connection (Bayley, 2009).

This research endeavors to explore the symbolic dimensions within Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's *The Little Prince*, a narrative often categorized as a children's book yet celebrated for its philosophical richness and universal appeal. First published in French and English in the United States in 1943, the novel draws from the author's own experiences as a pilot and as a reflective observer of human nature. Despite its simple narrative style, the book contains a wealth of symbolic elements that reflect themes of

love, loneliness, responsibility, and the meaning of life. Critically acclaimed and translated into more than 250 languages, *The Little Prince* has become a literary classic recognized for its allegorical depth and the resonance of its symbols with adult audiences.

This research aims to identify and interpret key symbolic elements in *The Little Prince*, guided by the following objectives:

1. To identify the major symbols used in the novel;
2. To interpret the thematic meanings these symbols convey;
3. To explore how these symbolic elements enhance the narrative's philosophical and emotional depth.

To achieve these aims, the study is directed by the following research questions:

1. What are the major symbols employed in *The Little Prince*?
2. What thematic meanings do these symbols represent within the context of the novel?

By addressing these questions, the research seeks to contribute to a deeper literary understanding of Saint-Exupéry's symbolic framework and its role in shaping the novel's enduring significance.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Symbol

A symbol is an object, person, or idea that represents something else beyond its literal meaning. Authors create symbols to facilitate a deeper and more direct understanding of complex concepts. An expression can also function as a symbol, conveying individuals' beliefs or feelings about life and death. For example, the Ankh is an Egyptian symbol representing immortality and life (Mark, 2016). Symbols are also prevalent in everyday life, such as a red traffic light signifying "stop" for road safety. Even personal names can serve as symbols for broader concepts. However, symbols are particularly prominent in literary works such as poems, songs, and films (McCormack, 2020).

2.2 Symbolism

Symbolism refers to the literary and artistic movement, theory, or practice associated with the Symbolists of the late 19th century (Akter, 2013). The term "symbolism" was initially applied to the visual arts before its adoption in literary studies. According to Ostashchuk (2017: 88), symbolism is a literary device employed by authors to aid readers in comprehending their works.

2.3 Kinds of Symbol

Sylvan Barnet, in *Literature: Thinking, Reading and Writing Critically* (1997: 906), distinguishes between two primary types of symbols: natural symbols and conventional symbols. Natural symbols derive their meaning from nature and can have varying interpretations across different cultures. For instance, the moon might symbolize wisdom in one culture while representing strength and perseverance in another. In contrast, conventional symbols are widely understood within a particular culture or across many civilizations to represent something beyond their literal form. The traditional interpretation of the heart as a symbol of love is a prime example of a conventional symbol.

Symbols manifest in diverse forms and can be categorized in various ways based on their significance. Christian symbolism, for example, comprises symbols whose meanings are rooted in biblical contexts. An apple, in this tradition, often symbolizes temptation or original sin. Chevalier and Gheerbrant (1996) have compiled an extensive study of conventional or traditional symbols. According to their work, some examples include:

- a. **Colors:** (1) Blue: calmness, coolness, peace. (2) Red: vitality, the life principle, bravery, and blood, often associated with fire.
- b. **Nature:** (1) Summer: maturity, knowledge. (2) Oak tree: strength, wisdom. (3) Moon: a feminine symbol.
- c. **Directions:** (1) West: the land of evening, old age, and the setting sun. (2) South: the side on the Sun's left, associated with fire, warmth, and comfort.
- d. **Weather:** (1) Winds and storms: violent human emotions. (2) Thunder: the voice of God or gods.
- e. **Animals:** (1) Fox: slyness, cleverness. (2) Salmon: instinct, sacred wisdom.
- f. **Walls:** (1) Barriers: separation between people, isolation from the world.
- g. **Human body parts:** (1) Bones: the framework of the human body; containing bone marrow, they symbolize strength and virtue. (2) Eyes: windows to the soul.
- h. **Clothing:** (1) Mask: externalized demonic tendencies. (2) Cloak: a symbol of human trickery.
- i. **Objects:** (1) Ladder: symbols of ascension and realization of potential. (2) Chain: symbolizes bonds connecting heaven and earth, uniting extremes and beings.
- j. **Journeys:** (1) Quest: often represents the search for truth, peace, or immortality.
- k. **Settings:** (1) Forest: a place of evil or mystery. (2) An isolated place: loneliness.

3. Research Method

The researchers employed a qualitative research method to identify and interpret the symbolic meanings within Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's novel, *The Little Prince*. This approach is suitable for gaining an in-depth understanding of the subject matter, as qualitative research focuses on gathering and interpreting non-numerical data to explore human and social contexts (Adedoyin, 2020). According to Creswell (2007), qualitative methods are valuable for developing theories when existing ones are limited or fail to capture the complexity of the problem, situations where quantitative research with its numerical and statistical analysis is not appropriate.

Data collection involved several key steps. Initially, the researchers engaged in a close reading of the novel, *The Little Prince*, by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, which served as the primary data source. This thorough reading process allowed for an initial immersion in the text and the identification of potential symbolic elements. Subsequently, the researchers identified specific data relevant to the study's focus on symbolism. This involved highlighting and categorizing information from both the primary source (the novel itself) and secondary sources to distinguish pertinent data from non-relevant material. The primary data consisted of words, sentences, and dialogues extracted directly from *The Little Prince* that exhibited symbolic qualities. Complementing this, the researchers gathered secondary data from various books, e-books, magazines, e-journals, dictionaries, and articles that were related to the study of symbolism and provided supporting context.

The process of data analysis, a crucial step in research, involved making sense of the textual data obtained from the novel (Creswell, 2007). The researchers analyzed the collected data, which is presented in a subsequent chapter of this study. This analysis was conducted by classifying the identified symbolic elements into subcategories that directly addressed the research questions of this study. The researchers began by questioning the specific symbols present in *The Little Prince* and their corresponding meanings. To answer these questions, the researchers systematically examined the novel to uncover and interpret the intended symbolism.

4. Discussion

4.1.1 Types of symbols found in *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupery

After analyzing Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's novel, *The Little Prince*, the researchers identified two major categories of symbols: Animal Symbols and Natural Symbols. Drawing upon Jean Chevalier and Alain Gheerbrant's (1996) theory of symbols, the researchers individually describe each of these categories. The Animal Symbol primarily focuses on the Fox, while the Natural Symbols encompass the Desert, Stars, Baobabs, and the Rose. To ensure readers grasp the fundamental meaning of these symbols, the researchers initially discuss the denotative meaning of each within the first one or two paragraphs of the analysis. Subsequently, the significance of these two symbol categories is explored in the following section. Finally, the researchers categorize each symbol according to Chevalier and Gheerbrant's theory. These are the two primary types of symbolism found in Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's *The Little Prince*.

4.1.2 Symbols of Animal

4.1.2.1 Fox

Foxes, small to medium-sized omnivorous animals belonging to the Canidae family, are characterized by their long, bushy tails, pointed, slightly upturned noses, upright, triangular ears, and flattened skulls. The red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), with approximately 47 recognized subspecies, is the most widespread and prevalent species (Lloyd, 1981). Found across the globe, foxes' reputation for cunning has made them prominent figures in popular culture and mythology in numerous countries. While a fox can live up to 10 years in the wild, their average lifespan is typically between one and three years. Unlike many canids, foxes are not always pack animals; they often live in small families, although some species, such as Arctic foxes, are known to be solitary.

Despite its brief appearance, the fox plays a crucial role in *The Little Prince*, imparting wisdom to the prince, which is then shared with the readers. The little prince's initial encounter with the fox is marked by the following words:

"You are very pretty to look at." (Saint-Exupery, 1943: 5).

One of the most crucial things he says to the young prince is:

"It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye." (Saint-Exupery, 1943: 36).

The fox approaches the young prince and asks him to "tame" him the first time they meet. When the prince asks what the word means, the fox explains that 'taming' means 'making a connection'. In the process of their "taming," he continues, they will begin to depend on each other and develop a sense of each other's importance. This can be seen in the following monologue:

“To me, you are still nothing more than a little boy who is just like a hundred thousand other little boys. And I have no need of you. And you, on your part, have no need of me. To you, I am nothing more than a fox like a hundred thousand other foxes. But if you tame me, then we shall need each other. To me, you will be unique in all the world. To you, I shall be unique in all the world...” (Saint-Exupery, 2943: 58)

The fox describes what being tame is and how it transforms the ordinary into the extraordinary through lengthy rituals. The little prince concurs with the fox's assertions, so he starts the routine of visiting the fox's home daily to form close bonds. The Little Prince occasionally uses different rituals to tame the fox. The Little Prince simply wants to tame the fox; the fox does not desire the Little Prince. The Little Prince is unaware of the consequences of taming the fox for the fox. This can be seen in the following monologue:

“... but if you tame me, it will be as if the sun came to shine on my life. I shall know the sound of a step that will be different from all the others. Other steps send me hurrying back underneath the ground. Yours will call me, like music, out of my burrow. And then look: you see the grain-fields down yonder? ...”
(Saint-Exupery, 1943: 58)

And when the hour of his departure drew near, the fox said that he would cry. The Little Prince had never wished for the fox to suffer harm. But the fox explained that every time he missed the little prince, he would see a cornfield as bright as his hair. Additionally, he claimed that the Little Prince's footsteps would forever be heard in his heart. That is why, in *The Little Prince*, the fox symbolizes cleverness.

In the novel *The Little Prince*, according to Chevalier and Gheerbrant's theory, the fox symbolizes slyness and cleverness, and the fox is categorized as a symbol of nature (1996: 50). This is because the fox was the one who taught the little prince an understanding of what it means to have a connection with someone. The fox tells him that this interaction creates a vital link between the tamer and the tamed; rather than being like anything else, a thing's or a person's relationship to another thing or person makes it special.

4.1.3 Symbols of Natures

There are 4 symbols that the researchers found in *The Little Prince* novel, such as:

4.1.3.1 Desert

In the novel, the desert represents an environment that is both beautiful and desolate. The word "desert" originates from an Egyptian hieroglyph pronounced "tésert" and the Latin verb "deserere," meaning "to abandon." This etymology informs our current understanding of the word "desert" (Middleton, 2009: 1-2). In *The Little Prince*, the Sahara Desert serves as the story's primary setting. Covering nine million square kilometers in North Africa, the Sahara is the world's largest hot desert. Due to its vast size and location spanning ten North African countries, different regions of the Sahara are known by various names, such as the Ténéré desert, the Libyan desert, the Egyptian desert, the Nubian desert, and the Bayuda desert (Middleton, 2009: 7). The term "Sahara" itself comes from the Arabic word for "desert." Located in North Africa, the

Sahara Desert experiences extreme temperature fluctuations, with daytime highs reaching 50 degrees Celsius and nighttime lows dropping to 0 degrees. Consequently, the desert is intensely hot during the day and bitterly cold at night.

The aviator narrator of *The Little Prince* experiences a plane crash in the Sahara Desert. Unfortunately, he was flying alone when his plane's engine failed. To survive, the pilot works independently to repair his aircraft. The harsh temperatures of the Sahara limit the flora and fauna that can survive there, resulting in scarce food and water resources for humans. Prolonged exposure to this environment can lead to death from thirst and hunger. While humans can survive without food for an extended period, water is essential for survival. In a typical climate, a person cannot survive without water for more than a week (Burch, 2021), but in an environment as extreme as the Sahara, survival without water would only be a matter of days. This is evident in the following monologue:

“It was a question of life or death: I had barely enough drinking water to last a week.” (Saint-Exupery, 1943: 7)

In this first section, the aviator declares that he is stranded in the Sahara Desert. Because it is nearly impossible to find water supplies nearby, he will not survive if he cannot complete his repair work in less than a week. The pilot believes that by fixing the engine, he can at least escape a terrifying region like the Sahara Desert and seek assistance elsewhere. Given that virtually no living creature can survive in such harsh conditions as the Sahara Desert, the desert serves as a metaphor for death in this context.

As the pilot is all by himself in the Sahara Desert with little chance of encountering other people, the desert in this scene is a metaphor of both loneliness and death. It can be seen through this monologue:

"On the first night, then, I went to sleep on the sand a thousand miles from all human habitation I was more alone than..."
(Saint-Exupery, 1943: 8)

The narrator expresses his loneliness. When the aviator is stranded on his own in the desert, he demonstrates his desperation. In the opening of the story, the narrator repeatedly uses the phrase "a thousand miles away from all human habitation" to highlight his feelings of isolation. The narrator wishes to convey his fear of being trapped in an unfamiliar environment like the Sahara Desert and facing death. The narrator prompts the reader to consider the possibility that humans can become lost and perish alone in the Sahara Desert, with no one to discover their remains. They also long for their loved ones and their home. One day after sleeping in the Sahara Desert, the Little Prince surprises the narrator by waking him up.

The narrator describes not only how he became lost in the Sahara Desert but also the first time the little prince arrived on Earth and settled there. The snake that the little prince encountered upon his arrival on Earth informed him that he had landed in a desert where no one lived, even though he had not yet seen any humans. The little prince expresses his loneliness by asking the snake,

"Where are the people?... It's little lonely in the desert..."
(Saint-Exupery, 1943: 59)

The Little Prince and the Aviator spend time together in the Sahara Desert after an unsettling encounter when they are both on the verge of death. The Little Prince slowly tells the Aviator about himself, his origins, his voyage, and the type of planet he comes from. When they initially arrived in the Sahara Desert, they both felt lonely, but once they met, they experienced a different kind of loneliness. The Little Prince fears being alone, while the aviator fears death. This can be seen in the following dialogue:

“It is a good thing to have had a friend, even if one is about to die. I, for instance, am very glad to have had a fox as a friend... ”
“He has no way of guessing the danger,” I said to myself. “He has never been either hungry or thirsty. A little sunshine is all he needs...” (Saint-Exupery, 1943: 65)

The aviator later develops a love for the desert, much like the Little Prince, and ceases to view it as a place of death, instead describing it as a stunning location that bestows upon him something potent in stillness. This can be seen in the following dialogue:

I replied, “Yes, that is so.” And, without saying anything more, I looked across the ridges of sand that were stretched out before us in the moonlight ...“Yes,” I said to the little prince. “The house, the stars, the desert– what gives them their beauty is something that is invisible!” (Saint-Exupery, 1943: 66)

Ever since the aviator met the Little Prince, luck has been on his side. In the Sahara Desert, they unexpectedly discover a well with water. The pilot then successfully completes his repair work the following day. As the aviator prepares to share the good news with him, the Little Prince is bitten by a snake. The Little Prince must be bitten by the snake on the day he returns home, to his star, in order to travel back to his origins. Since that time, the Sahara Desert has changed; it is no longer the Aviator's place of death or loneliness; rather, it is the saddest location because it is where he lost his one and only friend. Because of his lovely recollections with the Little Prince, it is also the most cherished place.

The author uses the aviator's initial experience of being lost in the desert to represent death and loneliness. However, when the little prince's voice awakens the aviator the following morning and asks him to draw a sheep, the meaning of loneliness is transformed. The aviator recounts his encounter with the Little Prince. Even after seeing the Little Prince, he repeatedly emphasizes how far away from any human environment he is. After spending a considerable amount of time together, the aviator eventually seems to forget the threat of death. With the Little Prince around, good things happen.

The author aims to demonstrate at the outset that the desert represents loneliness and death. According to Michael Ferber's *A Dictionary of Literary Symbols*, a forest, which is "traditionally dark, labyrinthine, and filled with dangerous beasts" (1999: 78), or simply full of mystery and frightening elements, has the same connotation as a desert. It implies that when individuals become lost in a desert or a forest, their survival is precarious. In reality, while the desert is not labyrinthine, those who wander there often have no sense of direction. Deserts feature harsh temperatures and venomous snakes, whereas woodlands are overrun with creatures.

According to Chevalier and Gheerbrant's theory, the desert is a symbol of nature, representing a remote area seldom visited. The desert symbolizes loneliness (1996: 45). Typically, the desert represents a mysterious and dangerous location. Therefore, when a reader of *The Little Prince* imagines a desert, they imagine death. However, the desert as a symbol of loneliness is disrupted by the Little Prince's presence, and the desert as a symbol of death is countered by the good fortune that arises from the Little Prince's presence.

4.1.3.2 Rose

The Rose represents a lover. The rose is a flowering plant belonging to the family Rosaceae. Its extensive use in various aspects of human life distinguishes the rose from an average plant, evident in celebrations, supplements, and cosmetics. This widespread application elevates the rose's value. The stem of the rose plant bears thorns. Certain roses, such as "Rosa indica L.," possess pleasant scents and are utilized as room fresheners or in perfumes (Leghari, 2016). People have traditionally cultivated roses in their gardens due to their lovely flowers in a variety of colors and tones. The Rose makes its first appearance in *The Little Prince* before the little prince arrives on Earth, on his own planet, B612.

The Little Prince harbors a deep fondness for his rose plant—specifically, the single, unique rose on his planet, not roses in general. The Little Prince inquires:

“A sheep— if it eats little bushes, does it eat flowers, too?”

(Saint-Exupery, 1943: 21)

As a result, the aviator is aware of the Little Prince's rose. The Aviator then responds by saying that sheep consume whatever they come upon, including thorny flowers. The Little Prince is shocked and asks what purpose the thorns serve if they cannot shield the rose from the outside world. The pilot, still fearing death, is attempting to repair his aircraft and is irritated by the Little Prince's incessant questions about the thorns, which, in his opinion, are less significant than his repair work.

The Little Prince discovers Rose after tending to and tidying his planet. He keeps a close eye on the small sprout that has begun to bloom. Rose is unique among the flowers that bloom on the Little Prince's planet. The rose that the Little Prince finds is a representation of a feminine lover; she develops more slowly because she wants to blossom flawlessly. The Rose does indeed awaken in a wonderful way. The delicacy of the Rose astounded the Little Prince, who recognized her allure. Despite how much the Little Prince adored his Rose, he eventually began to doubt her. Rose's naive falsehoods and the way she speaks demonstrate her perceived invulnerability, but she is reluctant to acknowledge it. She consistently makes the Little Prince feel guilty and depressed.

Before landing on Earth, the Little Prince is unaware that the flower he adores most is a common rose. When he learns that his flower is just an ordinary flower, he is inconsolably unhappy. When he visits the rose garden, he discovers that his rose is not unique; it is simply like all the other roses. The Little Prince is still uneasy about Rose's behavior and begins to recall how bothersome she was. The Little Prince then grows more depressed as he contemplates the situation. He cries a lot because he believed he was a magnificent prince due to his rare flower, but he is not. The Little Prince encounters the fox by chance, and the fox teaches him about the process of taming or building connections, which subsequently causes him to rethink his opinion of his beloved Rose.

Rose represents a lover in *The Little Prince*. Rose is blooming on the Little Prince's planet, and the Little Prince was drawn to her beauty. The Little Prince falls in love with the Rose from the moment she blossoms, and the Little Prince must take care of the Rose since she cannot survive without him. The Little Prince occasionally finds Rose's behavior irritating, which leads him to decide to leave Rose and set off on his quest to discover new things. The Little Prince eventually understands the significance of his Rose after traveling to Earth. Since meeting the Fox, who teaches him a lesson about always being accountable for what one loves, the Little Prince learns how to love his Rose. The Little Prince leaves his lone friend, the Aviator, in order to return to his planet because he misses his rose so much.

In the novel *The Little Prince*, according to Chevalier and Gheerbrant's theory, the rose symbolizes love and is part of the symbol of nature (1996: 78). The rose is the plant that recurs until the end of the story. The flower language of the rose is not only the plant that the prince wants to protect but also the plant that the prince loves the most.

4.1.3.3 Baobab trees

Baobabs symbolize problems. *Adansonia digitata* is the scientific name for the baobab tree. The genus name *Adansonia* was given in honor of Michel Adanson, a French naturalist who traveled to Senegal in Africa in the eighteenth century and documented baobabs in 1771. The name was provided by Linnaeus. Baobabs can reach heights of 18 to 20 meters, with stiff-looking branches and roots that extend 10 meters into the earth. The Baobab tree's size is evident from this description. Baobab trees naturally thrive south of the Saharan Desert and have since spread both within and beyond Africa. Due to its hollow trunk, the enormous Baobab tree is used as a water storage facility. It is important to consider the amount of water that can be obtained from a Baobab's hollow.

If the hollowed trunk is completely sealed, individuals can conserve 200 to 4000 gallons of water and keep it fresh for years. A baobab's hollow not only conserves water but also serves as a refuge or storage space for humans and small animals. Aside from their longevity and water-conserving properties, every part of the baobab tree offers health benefits. Baobab leaves are a significant source of iron and various minerals, often consumed cooked or raw by native Africans. The fruit pulp of the baobab, rich in vitamins and seeds that can improve protein digestion, is another beneficial component of the tree. The value of every part of the baobab creates an ecosystem that sustains life all around it. It is understandable why the Baobab is considered the true Tree of Life for Africans.

The Little Prince depicts baobabs as enormous trees that grow on the little planet where the Little Prince originates. In contrast to African beliefs, the tree carries a different connotation in the novel. The aviator learns about baobabs on the third day of being stranded in the Sahara Desert. Baobabs are exceptional plants in this story. This is highlighted when the Little Prince inquires whether sheep eat small bushes. The aviator agrees that sheep do consume bushes. But the little prince added:

“Then it follows that they also eat baobabs?”
(Saint-Exupery, 1943: 15)

The aviator finds this assertion odd because he is aware that baobabs are not little shrubs. People are aware that baobabs are enormous plants, larger than elephants, hence

it is not conceivable for sheep to consume baobabs. The baobabs cannot be consumed in their whole, not even by an elephant. The Little Prince is reminded of it by The Aviator. The Little Prince, however, responds cleverly:

"Baobabs, before they grow big, start off small."
(Saint-Exupery, 1943: 19)

The Little Prince wants the sheep to consume the young baobabs, but the aviator is still baffled by this. As baobabs are a significant issue on the world of the Little Prince. The true baobab, however, is a large plant that grows enormously over many years without destroying the land with its roots. The baobab tree's roots infiltrate the world of the Little Prince and obliterate it. Bad plants grow from bad seeds, and Baobab seeds, which are abundant on the Little Prince's world, produce bad plants.

While the baobab is an essential part of African culture, it represents a significant issue in *The Little Prince* novel. The Little Prince removes young baobabs and cleans up to prevent calamity on his world. The Aviator clarifies that there are good plants and evil plants when the Little Prince refers to baobabs as terrible plants. It can be seen through this monologue:

"...good seed come from good plant and bad seed from bad plant."
(Saint-Exupery, 1943: 16)

Both in real life and in the novel, baobabs are large plants that have a lifespan of 100 years and are difficult to destroy. The Little Prince uses baobabs to represent troubles, yet in Africa, they serve as the source of all life. According to Chevalier and Gheerbrant's Theory (1996), baobabs in *The Little Prince* classifies as nature symbol and it stand for generative power, and constancy. The author alters the picture of the baobab throughout the entire novel and labels it as a harmful plant. The author's message is that people should not ignore a tiny issue since it will only get worse. No matter how little the issue, people must resolve it before it destroys their lives. Problems are similar to baobab trees, which grow in tight spaces and destroy their pots. The planet might then be destroyed as the trees get larger. The Little Prince informed that after people wash and dress themselves up, they should wash and dress their planet. It demonstrates the need of having self-control for both oneself and others in order to prevent tiny problems from growing into larger ones.

4.1.3.4 Stars

Stars represent the abode of purer spirits. Stars are spheres of gas that produce energy through nuclear fusion, resulting in the emission of light. The sun is another star, formed from fused hydrogen and helium, making it heavier. A dying star might have dispersed dust into the universe. The hues of stars indicate their temperatures; for instance, red denotes the coldest stars, and blue, the warmest. A supernova explosion is the most significant way a star can die, as it releases its heavier elements into space. Currently, the exact number of stars in our cosmos is unknown, as is the number visible to the naked eye on a clear night. Many civilizations consider the stars in the sky to be heavens because they shine brightest at night.

Although stars have multiple meanings in this book, there is only one meaning that the author wants to emphasize. The Little Prince expresses his awe upon landing on Earth for the first time by asking:

“...does the stars glow so that someday everyone can find a way back to their own?...”
(Saint-Exupery, 1943: 58)

The Little Prince's story explains that each person's interpretation of the stars is unique. However, the Little Prince, the story's primary character, never shares other people's viewpoints. Stars hold significant meaning for the Little Prince. His home is one of the stars in the sky. He believes that the stars are shining so that people might find their way home afterward. People may understand that stars are the dwelling place of purer souls in *The Little Prince*; that souls will return to the stars and that bodies will pass away and return to earth. By declaring:

“... , I send back to the earth from whence he came e,” the snake spoke again. “But you are innocent and true, and you come from a star. . .”
(Saint-Exupery, 1943: 50)

The serpent seems to be talking just about the Little Prince, but it matches what the Little Prince says that everyone will reach that stage when they die, and that stars are the home of all purer souls. It can be seen through this following monologue:

And he took me by the hand. But he was still worrying.
“It was wrong of you to come. You will suffer. I shall look as if I were dead; and that will not be true. . .”(Saint-Exupery, 1943: 74).

According to Chevalier and Gheerbrant's Theory (1996), stars in *The Little Prince* are a type of natural symbol, representing guidance and enlightenment. As previously mentioned, stars have historically represented spirits or connections between the earth and other worlds. According to the author, stars stand for the homes of purer spirits. The book's interpretation of stars aligns with the idea that they are souls from another realm. Although the author emphasizes how the "home" in the narrative feels, it depicts people's belief that the universe is the other world, and that souls or spirits originate from stars. That is the unique significance of stars as explained by the author to the audience. The author again underlines that stars in the story also represent the residence of purer souls.

5. Conclusion

In the story *The Little Prince*, the researchers identified two major categories of symbols: Animal Symbols and Natural Symbols. The researchers use Chevalier and Gheerbrant's (1996) theory of symbols to describe each of these categories individually: Animal Symbol is the Fox, and Natural Symbols include the Desert, Stars, Baobabs, and the Rose. The researchers' initial symbol discovery was the animal symbol, the fox. Foxes are small, cunning creatures in the Canidae family, with 25 extant or extinct species. They are important in mythology and popular culture, with an average lifespan of one to three years. In *The Little Prince*, the fox teaches lessons about domestication and rituals, while the Little Prince spends time daily at the fox's home to develop strong relationships. The fox represents nature and slyness, emphasizing the importance of relationships and connections.

Second, the researchers discover the symbol of nature, the desert. In reality, the desert is a desolate region with unfavorable weather where nobody wishes to reside. However, in contrast to its actual meaning, the desert in *The Little Prince* represents the most

beautiful yet depressing region. According to Jean Chevalier, the Desert is included in Nature Symbols and represents loneliness. The third symbol is the rose. Roses are flowering plants with a wide variety of colors and pleasant aromas and can also be used as perfumes. In *The Little Prince*, the rose symbolizes the lover who falls in love with the Little Prince. According to Jean Chevalier, roses are included in Nature Symbols and represent love. The fourth symbol in the story is the baobab. The baobab is a desert tree whose enormous size allows it to survive for hundreds of years in harsh terrain, potentially offering survival for people living in deserts. In *The Little Prince*, the baobab tree becomes a problem because it is too large for the Little Prince's planet. According to Jean Chevalier, the baobab is included in Nature Symbols and baobab trees represent growth, generative power, and constancy. The final symbol is the stars. Stars are part of the celestial bodies of the universe, and they can burn up, shine, and eventually disappear. In *The Little Prince*, the star symbolizes the home of a purer soul. According to Jean Chevalier, stars are included in Nature Symbols and represent guidance and enlightenment.

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