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**LINGUISTIC CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILDREN (THROUGH SERIES “THE COLLECTION OF GOOD VIETNAMESE SHORT STORIES FOR CHILDREN”)**

**SUMMARY OF DOCTORAL THESIS OF VIETNAM LANGUAGE**

**Major: Vietnamese** **language**

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**PREAMBLE**

**1. Reasons for selecting the topic**

1.1. Language is the most important means of communication for humans. For children, language is closely tied to their growth and comprehensive development. In another aspect, with its function of reflecting society, children's language reflects the life of children connected to their psychology, way of thinking, and “social action through language” at this age, thus, children’s language has its own characteristics.

1.2. As is known, along with gender, occupation, region, religion, etc., age is a factor that contributes to social stratification in language use. This is indeed a direction of research in sociolinguistics: sociolinguistic variation, meaning that the language of social groups is also the relationship between language and social groups. Considering children as a communication community, accordingly, children’s language creates distinctiveness in children’s social interaction.

1.3. In literary works, the role of language is to depict characters; convey the thoughts the writer wants to impart and bring literary and educational values... Child characters in the work are depicted through language; through language, their characteristics, personality, and humanity are expressed; including the language to talk about children, the language used to communicate with children, and the language children use to communicate.

Short stories written for children are one of the important topics contributing to education and personality development in children. Through language, characters are illuminated from multi-dimensional perspectives - characters self-disclose and characters are revealed through interaction. Therefore, deeply understanding the language of child characters is not only necessary to affirm the literary and social values of short stories for children but also contributes to clarifying the linguistic characteristics of children in communication.

Based on the above reasons, we choose the topic “Linguistic Characteristics of Children (Through Series “The Collection of Good Vietnamese Short Stories for Children”)” as the subject of our thesis.

**2. Purposes and tasks of research**

***2.1. Purposes of research***

The purpose of this thesis is to study children’s language in two aspects: address and speech acts from the perspective of sociolinguistics (through some short stories written for children) to identify the characteristics of children's language. From there, the thesis contributes to the study of linguistic communication in general, sociolinguistic interaction in particular, and affirms the interdisciplinary relationship when studying literary works from a linguistic perspective.

***2.2. Tasks of research***

1) Establish the theoretical foundation as the research basis for the thesis; 2) Study the linguistic characteristics of children in family interactions, focusing on communication topics, communication roles, address, and speech acts; 3) Study the linguistic characteristics of children in social interactions, covering communication topics, communication roles, address, and speech acts; 4) Compare the linguistic characteristics of children in family communication and social communication to identify similarities and differences in communication.

**3. Object, scope and materials of research**

***3.1. Object of research***

The objects of this thesis are the speeches used by children in various contexts: communication topics, communication roles, address, and speech acts in communicative interactions (through series “*The Collection of Good Vietnamese Short Stories for Children*”).

***3.2. Scope and materials of research***

Scope of research: focusing on the speeches of Vietnamese children. (through series “The Collection of Good Vietnamese Short Stories for Children”).

Materials of research: The study involves collecting materials from representative Vietnamese literary works for children across various periods, specifically series “The Collection of Good Vietnamese Short Stories for Children”, consisting of 5 volumes, published by Tre Publishing House. The collection has 131 short stories written by 93 writers of many generations for children across the country, such as: Quang Dung, Vo Quang, Nguyen Nhat Anh, Lam Thi My Da, Ho Dzenh, Phan Thi Thanh Nhan, and more.

**4. Methods and procedures of research**

The methods used include description, discourse analysis, and an interdisciplinary approach. The research procedures employed include statistical – classification, and comparison.

**5. Contributions of the topic**

***5.1. For theoretical aspects***

The thesis contributes to clarifying the issues related to Vietnamese language communication in general and the communication of children from the perspective of the impact of socio-linguistic factors based on the linguistic characteristics observed in children's communicative interactions. It also contributes to researching the relationship between language and children—a multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary approach within modern linguistics.

***5.2. Practical meaning***

It contributes to the study of Vietnamese language communication under the influence of communicative factors. By understanding the linguistic characteristics of children in communicative interactions, it sheds light on the features and transformations in the cultural behavior and language of children. Additionally, it provides supplementary corpus and materials for the teaching and learning of children's literature in the primary and secondary school curriculum.

**6. Structure of the thesis**

In addition to the Introduction, Conclusion, Reference, and Appendices sections, the main content of the thesis is structured into three chapters:Chapter 1: Overview of the Research Situation and Theoretical Background; Chapter 2: Linguistic Characteristics of Children in Family Communication (Through Series “The Collection of Good Vietnamese Short Stories for Children”); Chapter 3: Linguistic Characteristics of Children in Social Communication (Through Series “The Collection of Good Vietnamese Short Stories for Children”)

**Chapter****1**

**OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH AND THEORETICAL** **BACKGROUND**

**1.1. Overview of research**

**1.1.1. In the world**

Based on our investigation, we present various research directions on children's language. *Firstly*, research on children's language from a psychological perspective, including scholars such as J. Piaget, Vygotsky, Eve V. Clark, Katherine Nelson, etc. *Secondly*, research on children's language from a literary perspective, involving Margaret R. Marshall, Jan Susin, Maria Nikolajeva, Tunnell M. O, Jacobs J. S, and others. *Thirdly*, studies on children's language in communicative interactions, drawing from the works of Vygotsky, Benjamin S. Bloom, Ervin-Tripp S., etc. *Fourthly*, research on children's language from a linguistic standpoint, encompassing figures like F. Saussure, E. Sapir, N. Chomsky, J. Lacan, R. Jakobson, S. Pinker, J. Searle, L. Strauss, Otto Beverly, and more.

**1.1.2. In Vietnam**

In Vietnam, we observe several research directions, including: *Firstly*, research on children's language from a psychological perspective, such as Declarations by the League of Nations for the Rights of the Child, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), legislation on the protection and education of children, etc. Noteworthy researchers include Do Thi Xuan, Nguyen Duc Minh, Pham Coc, Pham Minh Hac, Pham Tat Dong, Ho Ngoc Dai, etc. *Secondly*, research on children's language from a literary perspective, involving scholars like La Thi Bac Ly, Bui Thanh Truyen, Nguyen Thi Dai Trang, etc. *Thirdly*, studies on children's language from a linguistic standpoint, including Trinh Thi Ha Bac, Bui Thi Thanh, Bui Minh Yen, etc. However, we note that there is no in-depth research on the characteristics of address and speech acts of children through series “The Collection of Good Vietnamese Short Stories for Children”.

**1.2 Theoretical basis**

***1.2.1. Some theoretical issues in interactive communication and interactive sociolinguistics***

*1.2.1.1. Communication and interactive communication*

In the scope of this thesis, we agree with Diep Quang Ban’s viewpoint and believe that *communication is what is inherent in the linguistic message expressed through the plane of content and expression in the form of the message in language. Each communicative character can understand the situation, context, and themselves, expressing themselves through dialogue.*

*1.2.1.2. Speech events*

Speech events proposed by D. Hymes is a fundamental unit for studying language communication, consisting of 8 elements, abbreviated as S.P.E.A.K.I.N.G in English letters (1/ Setting and Scene; 2/ Participants; 3/ Ends ; 4/ Act sequences ; 5/ Key; 6/ Instrumentalities ; 7/ Norms of interaction; 8/ Genre. In communication, not all eight elements are necessarily present. Therefore, it is necessary to identify the main and auxiliary elements in the conversation.

*1.2.1.3. Stratification in communication*

Language is considered a reflection of society, a tool for measuring the essence and cultural norms of the communicating community as well as individuals. Therefore, the use of language in communication depends on social stratification. Social stratification based on age, gender, power, occupation, educational level, income, geographical area, religion, etc., influences human language communication.

***1.2.2. The theory of address and speech acts***

*1.2.2.1. The theory of address*

The address is “addressing to oneself and calling others something when speaking to each other”. One of the contributing factors to the diversity of address form in Vietnamese communication is the richness of address terms in the Vietnamese language. According to Nguyen Van Khang (1999), there are 13 address forms in Vietnamese. Also interested in the issue of address, author Le Thanh Kim (2002), based on the address patterns for comparison with address forms in Vietnamese and show the level of use of address patterns.

*1.2.2.2. Theory of* *speech acts*

- According to the author Do Huu Chau, speech acts are referred to as linguistic actions, and he states, “When we speak, we act; we perform a specific action with language as the medium. A speech act is performed when a speaker (or writer) Sp1 utters an utterance U to a hearer (or reader) Sp2 in context C”. In this thesis, we use the term and content about “speech act” by author Do Huu Chau.

- Classification of speech acts: In the history of speech acts research, many linguists have shown interest. The studies can be divided into two classification approaches: the utterance verb-based classification approach (represented by J. L. Austin) and the speech acts-based classification approach (represented by J. R. Searle). In this thesis, we adopt J. R. Searle's classification approach for our research.

- Performative utterance, performative expression: According to Do Huu Chau “Performative utterance is an utterance – the product of a behavior in a certain speech when this behavior is performed directly, authentically”. The performative expression is “utterance forms characteristic of an illocutionary act”.

Performative verb: Utterance verbs used correctly with the performative function are called performative verb. An utterance verb is only used as a performative verb when: In the speech, the verb is used in the first person; The complement of the performative verb is in the second person; It must be used in the present tense; It is in the active voice; It is actualized and does not have accompanying factors. Utterance verbs that are not used correctly with their performative function are not performative verbs.

***1.2.3. Some issues related to the language of children***

*1.2.3.1. Some theoretical issues regarding children*

Based on international and national legal texts on the Protection and Care of Children, such as the *International Conventions on the Rights of the Child* in 1925, 1959, 1968, 1989, and 1991, which define children as individuals under the age of 18; in accordance with the *Law on Protection, Care, and Education of Children* issued by the Standing Committee of the National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam on November 14, 1979, Article 1 states: “*Children in this Law include those from birth to 15 years old”;* according to the Law on Protection, Care, and Education of Children in 1991 and 2004, Article 1 states: *“Children specified in this Law are Vietnamese citizens under the age of sixteen”.* Considering the psychophysical characteristics of children, we determine that childhood is the first stage in the developmental process of the human body throughout life. Childhood is not uniform over a period but exhibits periodicity based on psychological development. Associated with each stage, children have distinct psychological and physiological characteristics.

*1.2.3.2. Some theories on literary works and literature for children*

“Literature is the art of using verbal expressions, written compositions (oral or written) for artistic purposes”. Based on genre characteristics, literary works are divided into three categories: autobiographical (prose), lyrical (poetry), and drama.

Child characters: Child characters in literary works are primarily those children depicted and portrayed in literary creations intended for children. Through these child characters, authors express the personalities and destinies of children in cultural, social, and historical contexts. Simultaneously, they reflect the laws governing life and childhood in society.

Character language: According to the Dictionary of Literary Terms, *“Character language is an important tool used by characters to express their lives and personalities”.*

*1.2.3.3.* *The Collection of Good Vietnamese Short Stories for Children*

“The Collection of Good Vietnamese Short Stories for Children” comprises 131 short stories by 93 authors whose names are still remembered in the literary community of Vietnam and cherished by readers. The collection is divided into 5 volumes, offering glimpses into the childhood sky with a diverse array of colors interwoven across different historical periods. Whether in moments of brightness or darkness, these stories continue to radiate enduring human values.

**1.3. Approaches of the thesis**

1) Define children as individuals aged 0 to 15. Based on psychological characteristics, age groups, and educational levels for each age group, establish three age groups: 0 to 5 years (corresponding to preschool education); 6 to 11 years (corresponding to primary education), and 12 to 15 years (corresponding to secondary education).

2) Consider the language of children (through series “The Collection of Good Vietnamese Short Stories for Children”) as a social variant of language to contribute to identifying the linguistic characteristics of children in the 20th century and understanding the language dynamics of children in different periods.

3) From the above separation, identify two main interaction environments for children: the family environment and the social environment. Simultaneously, within each communication environment, determine communication topics, communication contexts, communication roles, address, and speech acts to clarify the linguistic characteristics of children.

4) Explore the linguistic characteristics of child characters in two main directions: address and speech acts under the influence of factors such as *communication participants*, *communication topics, communication purposes, etc*. Isolating the language of children for study does not mean separating them from societal-cultural variables such as *age, gender, cultural region, cognitive abilities,*… but rather understanding them as an interactive whole.

**1.4. Summary**

In Chapter 1, we have clarified two major issues:

*Firstly*, an overview of the research situation related to the topic, covering: 1) Research status on the language characteristics of children; 2) Research status on the language of children in short stories.

*Secondly*, the establishment of theoretical foundations for the thesis, including: 1) Theories of interactive communication and sociolinguistics (communication, interactive communication, D. Hymes' communicative event, social stratification in language); 2) Some issues regarding the address and speech acts; 3) Some theoretical issues related to children, literary works, literature for children, and the Collection of Good Vietnamese Short Stories for Children.

**Chapter 2.**

**LINGUISTIC CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILDREN IN FAMILY COMMUNICATION (THROUGH SERIES “THE COLLECTION OF GOOD VIETNAMESE SHORT STORIES FOR CHILDREN**)

**2.1. Introduction**

1/ The collection of good Vietnamese short stories for children consists of 131 short stories featuring 585 characters (named and unnamed) and 47 groups of characters. Distinct area with 585 characters to identify child characters (336 characters and 33 groups). The classification results illustrate the diverse world of characters; 2/ In communicative interactions, children have three interaction scopes: family, school, and community. However, under the influence of criteria related to kinship and social relationships, the interaction scope of children can be divided into two categories: family and society; 3/ Surveying 131 short stories, classifying 683 dialogues, we determined: 325 dialogues within families among child characters and adult characters, and among child characters; 358 dialogues outside of society among child characters and adult characters, and among child characters; 4/ Within the family, kinship relations and the status of characters are strongly influenced by cultural family norms.

**2.2. Communication topics and communication roles of children in family communication**

***2.2.1. Communication topics of children in family communication***

By classifying 325 dialogues, the thesis identifies 221 dialogues between children and adults and 104 dialogues among children.

In the communicative interactions of children within the family, we observe seven groups of communication topics. In family interactions, children interact with adults and children (*those whose are same generation and the same branch of the family tree with children)* often revolving around topics of daily life, skills education, studying, etc. The topics revolve around everyday stories related to eating, living, dressing,… as well as educational stories about family traditions, events or experiences, dreams, desires, and aspirations of family. Through these topics, we initially demonstrate the culture of communication in Vietnamese people's families.

***2.2.2. Communication roles***

Within the family context, we observe that children establish a single communication role pair: the upper role - the lower role. In which the upper role is occupied by adults and those whose are same generation and the same branch of the family tree with children *(anh/chị)*, while the lower role is taken by the children. Under the influence of criteria related to blood relations and hierarchical positions in the family tree, children establish two communication role pairs: the lower role *(trẻ em (children))* and the upper role *(**ông, bà, bố, mẹ, bác, chú, cô, dì, cậu,…and anh/chị)*. In addition, blood relations regulate the status of members, so the classification results do not record the equal role pair of children.

The role pair of “*con – bố/ mẹ*” (children – children’s parents) comprises 108 out of 325 dialogues, accounting for 33.23%. For example: “*tôi – bố”* in the story *“Đêm thơm”* (fragrant night);... The role pair of “em - anh/ chị” (here is “children” – “those whose are same generation and the same branch of the family tree with children” pair) consists of 98 out of 325 dialogues, making up 30.15%. The role pair of *“cháu- ông bà” (**here is “children” – “children’s grandparent and* *those who are two generations older than children” pair)* includes 67 out of 325 dialogues, representing 20.62%. The role pair of *“cháu - bác/ cô/ dì/ chú/ mợ…”* *(here is “children” – “children’s uncle/aunt and those who are one generations older than children” pair)* has 52 out of 325 dialogues, accounting for 16.0%.

**2.3. Address characteristics of children in family communication**

***2.3.1. Frequency of occurrence of address terms used by children in family* *communication***

We conducted a survey and classified 325 dialogues of children based on address terms criteria within the family and the upper role – the lower role pairs (*ông bà – cháu; bác/ chú/ cô/ cậu/ dì,… - cháu; bố/mẹ - con và anh/chị - em).* The results recorded the address forms used by children within family role pairs as follows:

- In family communication, the number of address terms used by children (lower roles) and adults (upper roles) differed. The reasons for this discrepancy are as follows: *Firstly*, children in the family tend to actively speak and inquire information, express desires, etc., to adults. *Secondly*, adults often respond to children with explanations, encouragement, etc. *Thirdly*, in family communication, the address used by children and adults are subject to cultural norms within the family and hierarchical kinship relationships.

In the communication interaction between children and adults, the use of address terms also differs in terms of the address forms and the number of terms in each form. Specifically, when communicating with adults, children use six address forms. The frequency of address terms used by children in addressing is 532 out of 1212 times, accounting for 43.89%, and in calling, it is 680 out of 1212 times, accounting for 56.11%.

When interacting with children, adults use 7 address forms with varying degrees of formality, including: using 6 forms when addressing (excluding the address form by name) and using all 7 forms when calling. The address form by kinship nouns is the most commonly used form.

- The most frequently used address terms in interaction between children and adults in the family include: *con, cháu, ông, bà, bố/ ba, mẹ/ má* in both addressing and calling*.* In Vietnamese family communication, these address terms creat the address pairs of children - adults based on the generational relationship in blood relations. Specifically, children will address themselves as *“cháu”* and call the older generation *“ông”, “bà”,* if they are two generations apart and are the direct offspring of their father or mother.

The address terms pair *“con” – “bố”, “mẹ”* (here is “children-children’s parents” pair) is a core address pair in Vietnamese family communication, reflecting a one-generation gap in blood relations between the parent and the child. This form of addressing expresses affection, bonding, and care between family members.

***2.3.2.*** ***Address forms of children in the family*** ***communication***

*2.3.2.1. Address forms between “**cháu - ông/bà”*

Examining 325 dialogues within family communication involving children (*con/ cháu/ em*) and adults, we identified 67 out of 325 dialogues between “*cháu”* and *“ông/bà”*. In this relationship, “*cháu*” take on the lower role, while “*ông/bà*” assume the upper role under the influence of family ties. Communication between “*cháu”* and *“ông/bà”* often occurs in three- generation or four-generation families; At the same time, it is consistent with and reflects family culture - multi-generational families live together, parents often live with their sons so they can take care of them. The communication interaction between “*cháu”* and *“ông/bà*” primarily takes place within the family, focusing on topics such as *daily activities and skill education, etc.*

The address form with kinship nouns only appears in the two words *“cháu”* and *“con”* in the interaction of this role pair. This is a common form of address in the communication between children and adults within the family. If the address term “*con*” appears mainly in the family environment, the address term “*cháu”* appears in all interactive environments. Sometimes, in some cases, when the *“ông/bà”* *“*scolds*”* *“cháu”* for not completing an assigned task or request, the *“ông/bà”* will use the personal pronoun (*mày*) to call *“cháu”*. However, the word “*mày*” in this situation does not carry much of a threat to *“cháu”*, but is often just a reminder and scolding of “love”. In some families, the lower role (*cháu*) can use the word “*con*” to address “*ông/bà”*. The term “*con*” in this addressing interaction reflects the elevation of the role of the *“cháu”.* When *“cháu”* or *“ông/bà”* use these addresses, it often shows a high “*level of intimacy*”, often associated with “special” situations and topics.

*2.3.2.2. Address forms of “con-bố/mẹ”*

In family communication, interactions between children and parents occur frequently, comprising the largest portion of 108 out of 325 dialogues, accounting for 30.15%. This interaction pair vividly demonstrates the familial ties and diversity in address forms. When addressing parents, children predominantly utilize kinship nouns, specifically using *“con”* to refer to themselves and calling their fathers *“bố”* *(“ba”/ “cha”/ “thầy”/ “cậu”)* and their mothers *“mẹ”* *(“me”/ “má”/ “mợ”/ “u”)*. Thus, the diversity in the calling terms for parents reflects distinct cultural characteristics of regions, historical periods, and vivid family cultural features. The terms used include: *bố/ba/cha/thầy/cậu, mẹ/me/má/mợ/u*, *ba mẹ/bố mẹ*, *thầy me, etc.*

[28] *-* ***I******(con)*** *also wish she would come here? Can* ***I (con)*** *wish,* ***Mom (mẹ)****?*

*- Why not? But now* ***you******(con)*** *have to be good and study hard. When needed,* ***I (mẹ)*** *will tell* ***you******(con)*** *how to call. She appeared immediately. [The Pearl Island Fairy, NL 1, p. 10]*

In communication, the combined address form takes the second position. This method of addressing most clearly reflects the attitudes, emotions, etc., of the children and their parents. Examples include terms like *lũ trẻ*, *trẻ con, cả lớp*, *người mình*, *cánh ta,* *người ta, người khác, cánh mình, người lớn, đứa nào, etc.* This address form expresses the unique characteristics of the age group associated with emotional nuances expressed in various directions: it can be either intimate, narrowing the gap, or widening the distance with a rudeness or despising attitude.

The form of address using other combinations often expresses personal nuances and emotions in an intimate and familiar manner. This style often combines words indicating relationships: *Bé, con gái, con trai, em con, thằng, tên người, con,*…; proper names: *Nê, Thắm, Thanh*…; words indicating titles, characteristics, emotions, etc., such as: *tổ trưởng, đành hanh, etc.*

*2.3.2.3. Address forms of “cháu - bác/chú/cô/dì/ cậu, etc.”*

The children's communication interaction with *bác/chú/cô/dì/ cậu, etc.* is broad and intermittent. In the context of the family connections, children (lower roles) are approximately one generation apart from *bác/chú/cô/dì/ cậu, etc.* In a broader sense, interactions between this pair occur infrequently, and the level of interaction is not high because most of the *“cháu”* turns of speech interactions with *bác/chú/cô/dì/ cậu, etc.* are not explicitly expressed in communication and often combined with the words of the storyteller. Particularly, the occurrence of the *“cháu – bác”* pair, despite lacking a blood relation, is based on the *“*empathy for the situation*”* where the *“bác”* has accepted the child as family. In other words, feeling compassion for the orphaned, difficult circumstances, the “*bác*” has accepted the *“cháu”* as family and established a bond with each other through a sense of kinship. The pair of address terms *“cháu” – “bác”* is established based on age and gradually evolves toward a “*family*” relationship between *“bố -con” (father-child).*

*2.3.2.4. Address forms of “em - anh/chị”*

Within the family, the relationship between *“em”* and “*anh/chị”* falls within the same generation and the same branch of the family tree. However, under the influence of family culture regarding hierarchy and age, distinct roles and positions between the *“em”* and *“anh/ chị”* become evident. In this context, the role *“em”* is always associated with a lower age compared to the *“anh/chị”* or being born later. Throughout the survey data, we did not observe cases where the *“em”* was older than the *“anh/chị”.* However, children in the *“em-anh/chị”* role pair are divided into two trends: 1/ *“em”* (child – lower role) and *“anh/chị”* (youth (over 16 years old) – upper role); 2/ *“em”* (lower roles – children 3 years younger than upper roles) and *“anh/chị”* (upper roles – children 3 years older than lower roles).

a) The *“em”* (child - lower role) – “*anh/chị*” (youth - over 16 years old):

The relationship between the “*em*” (child - lower role) and the *“anh/chị”* (youth - over 16 years old) is one of peers, sharing similarities in psychological characteristics. Due to their peer status, interactions between the *“em”* and *“anh/chị”* are often heavily influenced by factors of familiarity. Particularly, the violation of role correlations in specific situations and conversation topics can lead to a role reversal between the characters.

b) The *“em”* (lower roles – children 3 years younger than upper roles) and *“anh/chị”* (upper roles – children 3 years older than lower roles). In family communication, it is quite common for there to be an age difference of 3 years or more between *“em”* and *“anh/chị”* in Vietnamese families. This interaction pair doesn't exhibit significant differences in psychological traits or thinking, making it easy to “shift roles” and use a variety of address terms in diverse family interactions. Specifically, in a dialogue, the *“em”* may employ various address forms, and the address pair *“mày”* – *“tao”* (you – I/me) is one of the frequently used pairs, especially in topics related to daily activities and childhood games.

**2.4. Speech acts characteristics of children in family communication**

***2.4.1. Frequency of occurrence of speech acts by children in family communication***

Surveying 131 short stories, identifying and distinguishing 325 dialogues, we investigated the types of speech acts used by children in interacting with adults within the family.

In family communication, children use 5 groups of speech acts with 51 speech acts and 1770 times, showing variations in the number of speech acts used in communication. Specifically: Directives group (*asking, requesting,* *pleading,* *seeking, etc.*) has the highest number of speech acts and occurrences (18 speech acts with 752 times). Expressives group (*missing, loving, desiring, wishing, praising, etc.)* comprises 14 speech acts with 402 times. Commissives group (*promising, swearing, apologizing, giving, offering, affirming,* *denying, etc*.) includes 13 speech acts with 359 times. Representatives group *(describing, narrating, telling, explaining, recalling)* has 5 speech acts with 221 times. Declarations group (*declaring, promoting*) has the lowest number of speech acts and times (2 speech acts with 36 times). In addition to direct actions, indirect speech acts are also used by children in family communication, and they employ indirect speech acts frequently.

- In family communication, children predominantly utilize speech acts groups related to *directives, expressives,* and *commissives*. In particular, some actions belong to *Directives* groups such as: *asking, requesting*, *seeking, pleading, demanding, etc*.; and *Expressives* groups such as *loving (thương)*, *missing, loving (yêu), fearing, etc.* in larger numbers. The *Declarations* group rarely appeared.

- The quantity of speech acts in each group varies significantly. For instance, the *Directives* group, with actions like *asking, answering, requesting, advising, seeking, demanding, etc.,* has a very high occurrence. The *Representatives* group includes actions like *narrating, describing, telling, etc.* and appears when children are presenting an issue with a “significant, ceremonial”nature, placing themselves in the citizen “responsibility” context.

- The *Directives* group appears with the highest number of speech acts, with the action of asking being the most frequent. In this group, the action of asking appeared with the largest number of turns, showing the mentality of "”iking to explore” and wanting to understand the phenomena.

The initial explanation for the difference in the number of actions within speech act groups is as follows: *Firstly*, during the development process, children experience strong physical, physiological and psychological changes. *Secondly*, children gradually form their own individual identity/social status. Along with receiving knowledge from family, school, and participating in social activities, children develop their own “personalities”. *Thirdly*, due to the psychological characteristics of the 4-15 age group, children often desire to explore, express personal opinions, describe, explain,...

***2.4.2. Case survey: Children's imperative action group in family communication***

We conducted an analysis to identify the use of speech acts within the directives group by children in family communication.

- The speech acts differ in their frequency of occurrence. The *asking* action has the highest frequency with 184 out of 752 times, accounting for 24.47%. This action holds absolute dominance among the speech act groups used by children in family communication.

- Some actions such as *prohibiting*, threatening, *obstructing, etc.,* have very low occurrences because these actions are highly causal nature. The reasons for the variation in occurrences of actions within the *Directives* group can be explained as follows: 1/ In family interactions, children occupy a lower role compared to adults. Hence, *directive* actions with a requesting nature appear with a very high frequency. 2/ In family communication interactions, children tend to use directive actions with causal nature. The use of actions with causal nature is often linked to specific situations where the child desires or is upset about wanting something. 3/ Neutral actions (combining both requesting and causal nature) have a very high occurrence. Specifically, the action of asking is prevalent with 184 times, accounting for 24.47%.

*2.4.2.1. Specific investigation: The action of* *asking*

a. The purpose of the action of asking: 1/ Gathering information; 2/ Expressing inquiry, surprise; 3/ Expressing requests, desires.

b. The components of the action of asking include: the questioner (SP1), the performative verb; the object receiving the asking action (SP2); the content of asking (P).

*c. Models of the action of asking*

We conducted a survey and classified the asking actions according to the criteria: whether there are performative verbs or no performative verbs to indicate the structural model and use value of these activities. Because the survey results did not record any corpus with asking actions made with performative verbs, we have temporarily postponed further investigation on this matter. In the scope of studying children's asking actions in family interactions, we delve deeper into understanding asking actions without performative verbs. The thesis synthesizes a number of linguistic expressions of asking actions as follows:

**Form 1:**

|  |
| --- |
| Absence of Subject (Explicit performative expression), Performative verb; Present of Object 1+Object 2 |

Variations of the asking action in form 1 include: Form 1a: Where the Object 1 is the first person. Form 1b: Where the Object 1 is the second person. Form 1c: Where the Object 1 is the third person.

**Form 2:**

|  |
| --- |
| Absence of Subject (Explicit performative expression), Performative verb; Absence of Object 1; Present of Object 2 |

**2.5. Summary**

1. In family communication, children typically engage in topics related to *daily activities, education, skills, and childhood games.* Children establish unique lower-upper roles (child-adult, child-child) under the influence of hierarchical criteria within the extended family (family tree) and age criteria. Children occupy lower roles compared to adults/their brother/sister (in the upper role).

2. In family communication, children use 6 address forms with noticeable differences and discrepancies. The address form by kinship nouns is the most frequently used. The second most commonly used address form by other combinations, expressing observations, emotions, attitudes, etc., and the development of children’s linguistic thinking, etc. Especially, the address term pairs: *“con”-“bố/mẹ”*, *“cháu”-“ông/bà”*, *“em - anh/chị”* are identified as focal points. In communication, children’s address is flexible and reflects their innocent, naive psychology, sometimes mixed with a touch of politeness, formality, and stiffness. Two prominent characteristics in children’s address in the family: 1/ Address according to the hierarchy in kinship relationships within the family; 2/ Address closes the distance in a “shifting role” direction to intimate the interaction.

3. In family communication, to achieve effective communication, children flexibly use 5 groups of speech acts with varying frequencies. The Directives group appears with the highest number and frequency. In-depth study of Directives group, we find that the asking action is the most frequently used (184/752 times, accounting for 24.47%) and is diverse in its applications. Through asking actions, children's curiosity, exploration, and personal needs about phenomena are reflected in the most adorable, innocent, and carefree manner.

**Chapter 3.**

**LINGUISTIC CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILDREN**

**IN SOCIAL COMMUNICATION (THROUGH SERIES**

**“THE COLLECTION OF GOOD VIETNAMESE SHORT STORIES FOR CHILDREN”)**

**3.1. Introduction**

1. Social communication (within the family and community) of children is one of the two communication domains reflecting multidirectional relationships as well as relationship characteristics. In social interactions, social factors such as social status, age, gender, level of expertise, attitude, etc., directly impact children's communication; 2. Surveying 131 short stories, we identified 683 dialogues involving children and classified 358 dialogues where children interacted with entities outside the family. Based on age criteria, we determined that children interact socially with two main entities: adults and other children; 3. Social communication reflects the “expansion” of interactive relationships and the “*maturation*” of children; 4. Distinguishing communication interactions, we proceed to study the interactions of children - adults and children - children in the following aspects: communication topics, communication roles, address and speech acts. 5. We compared the linguistic characteristics of children in family communication and social communication to identify similarities and differences in communication.

**3.2.** **Communication topics and communication roles of children in social communication**

***3.2.1. Communication topics***

In examining 358 dialogues involving children in society, we identified 202 dialogues between children and adults and 156 dialogues between children. Based on the interaction environments of children in society, we categorized them into two interaction scopes: school and community. By classifying dialogue topics, the interaction scopes of children were categorized into two pairs of communication roles: 1) adults - children, and 2) children - children.

- In 202 dialogues between children and adults, the thesis identified two main interaction scopes of communication for children, each associated with specific topic groups: 1/ Interaction between children and teachers in schools, consisting of 98 dialogues, classified into three topic groups: *learning; education of skills; assistance and sharing difficulties*. 2/ Interaction between children and adults in the community, consisting of 104 dialogues, classified into four topic groups: *learning, livelihood activities, assisting others, and playing*.

- In classifying 156 dialogues in the communication interaction between children, we identified two interaction scopes of children: school and community. In schools, children interact with each other within four topic groups of communication. In the community, children interact with each other around four topic groups.

***3.2.2. Communication roles***

In the study of 358 dialogues involving children in society, we identified 202 interactions between children and adults and 156 interactions between children. These role pairs were established as two main categories: Lower role - upper role (*children - adults; children - children with an age difference greater than 3 years*) and equal role (*children - children/friends*). The results are as follows: 1/ The communication interactions of children in society established two main role pairs: Lower role-upper role and equal role. Lower role-upper role pairs were specified by pairs such as *học sinh – thầy/ cô giáo; cháu – ông, bà, bác, chú, cô, etc.; em – anh, chị*. 2/ The lower role-upper role pair between children and adults in society established relationships based on social status, age, familiarity level, etc. 3/ Equal role pair among friends between children appeared in both interaction scopes: school and community. Equal roles between characters of similar age, interests, aspirations, and mutual agreement occurred only when characters shared the same age, interests, aspirations, and concurred to become friends.

**3.3. Address characteristics of children in social communication**

***3.3.1.*** ***Frequency of*** ***occurrence of children’s address terms in social communication***

*3.3.1.1. Frequency of occurrence of address terms between children and adults in social communication*

In social interactions, children establish lower role (children) and upper role (adults) pairs, specifying pairs such as *học sinh – thầy/ cô giáo, cháu-ông bà; cháu - bác/ chú/ cô/ cậu/ dì,…; em - anh/ chị*

- In social communication, the address terms used by children (lower roles) and adults (upper roles) exhibit some differences, though the disparity is not significant.

The types of address terms used by children in both addressing and calling adults differ in quantity. Specifically, when addressing, children use 7 address forms and within each type, the quantity of address terms used during addressing and calling varies. The address form using other combinations is used most frequently – during addressing (147/1274 times, accounting for 11.54%) and during calling (209/1274 times, accounting for 16.41%). The use of personal pronouns is the second most common type – during addressing with 134/1274 times, accounting for 10.52%, and during calling with 169/1274 times, accounting for 13.27%. The use of absence of address terms is employed by children during addressing with 95/1274 times, accounting for 7.46%, and during calling with 118/1274 times, accounting for 9.26%. The use of kinship nouns is employed during addressing with 61/1274 times, accounting for 4.79%, and during calling with 176/1274 times, accounting for 13.81%. The use of titles is employed during addressing with 17/1274 times, accounting for 1.33%, and during calling with 43/1274 times, accounting for 3.38%. The use of names employs the lowest number of address terms – during addressing (5/1274 times, accounting for 0.39%) and during calling (21/1274 times, accounting for 1.65%).

- The most frequently used address terms in social communication between children and adults are: *cháu, em, con, chúng cháu, thầy giáo, bác, chú, anh, chị,* *etc*. This aligns with their social roles and positions in both society and children’s communication.

*3.3.1.2. Frequency of occurrence of address terms between children and children in social communication*

In social interaction, children-children establish equal role pairs (friend role pairs). The survey results and classification of address terms used by children in friend role pairs are as follows:

In social interaction, children use 7 address forms, and these forms vary significantly.

Equal role pairs appear in both contexts: school and community. However, within these contexts, under the influence of factors such as gender, familiarity, initial emotional connection, and social status within the class/community, children employ different address forms and address terms in their interactions. The most frequently used address terms in friensdship role pairs include: *tớ, mình, cậu, bạn, chúng mình, chúng ta*, *tao, mày*… These address terms mainly belong to the address forms using personal pronouns and other combinations. The frequent appearance of these address terms in large quantities demonstrates the assertiveness of individual children in peer communication within the school and community. If, within the school context, the address term pair *“tớ” – “bạn”/“cậu”* is used most frequently under the influence of school regulations and rules as well as the affection and respect of school-age peers, then within the community context, the address term pair *“mày” – “tao”* appears most frequently. The address term pair *“mày*” – *“tao”* tends to be used with intimacy, informality, and reflects the innocence and simplicity of children in community interactions.

***3.3.2. Address forms of children in society communication***

*3.3.2.1. Address forms of students – teachers*

Interaction between students and teachers occurs not only within the school environment but also extends in the community (outside of class hours). The survey results recorded 62 out of 358 dialogues between students and teachers, covering various interaction topics such as learning, skills education, and helping and sharing difficulties. In communication, the student holds the lower role and the teacher holds the upper role. Power relations govern communication between students and teachers. However, friendly relations always tend to replace.

In communication interactions with teachers, children play the role of students and use 5 address forms: *with kinship nouns, with other words, with other combinations, with words denoting titles, and the absence of address terms.* The address form by kinship nouns is the most frequently used form, with kinship nouns like “*em*” and “*con*” appearing with high frequencies. These are also two words of address: *“em”* is prescribed in the address or “*con*” due to the “consensus” between students and teachers.

*3.3.2.2. Address forms of* *“cháu – ông bà”*

The address forms of *“cháu – ông/bà”* in social interaction are established based on the factor of age, expressing respect, reverence, and gratitude towards the elderly. *“Cháu”* are two generations younger than *“ông/bà”.*

In social communication with *“ông/bà”,* children use 4 address forms: kinship nouns (*cháu, ông, bà, con, ông bà,…*), personal pronouns (*ta, chúng ta, mình, …*), other words (*lão*...), various combinations *(ông Hai, ông Sáu, lão bán chim,…)* and the absence of address terms. The address terms used by children in their interaction with old people are not diverse in terms of words but have a high repetition rate.

The address form with kinship nouns includes words such as *cháu, chúng cháu, con, ông, bà, cụ*. The term “*cháu*” appears frequently, reflecting the child’s awareness of their position, recognizing the status of the interlocutor, and the interpersonal relationship between the child and the elderly. The address pairs *“cháu” – “ông”, “chúng cháu” – “ông”* have a high frequency and clearly illustrate the address form characteristics of children with old people in social communication. Besides the “cháu” form of addressing, children also use other combined address forms in communication interactions with the elderly such as *cụ Hai/ ông Hai, ông Sáu, bà Sáu, ông này, ông Lão Đá, bà ấy*, …

In response to the address forms of children (*cháu*), the roles of old people (*ông, bà*) depend on the situation, communication topic, level of familiarity, etc. They use a variety of address forms such as kindship nouns in addressing *“ông”/“bà”/“ông bà”* and calling using one of the forms: using kinship nouns (*cháu, con, chị em*); using nick names (*Bé*) using various combinations (*con giun không mắt, mấy cháu, thằng Còn/ cháu Còn,…);* Addressing with personal pronouns (*ta, chúng ta, tao*) – calling using styles: by name (*Mèo mướp/ mèo Mướp, Lười,…);* using various combinations *(hai con, thằng Hùng/ thằng Lười, con Mướp,…)*

*3.3.2.3. Address forms of “cháu” –* *“bác/ cô/ chú/ dì/ cậu, etc.”*

Social interaction between *“cháu*” and *“bác/ cô/ chú/ dì/ cậu, etc.”*  a pair of lower - upper roles with *“cháu”* belonging to the lower role and *“bác/ cô/ chú/ dì/ cậu, etc.”*  belonging to the upper role**.** The generational gap between “*cháu*” and *“bác/ cô/ chú/ dì/ cậu, etc.”*  is one generation - an age difference of 10 years or more. The typical pair in the interaction between *“cháu*” and *“**bác/ cô/ chú/ dì/ cậu, etc.”*  and the pair of address terms that often appear in this context are the pair: addressing *“cháu”* and calling “*bác/ cô/ chú, etc”.* However, in social communication, depending on the communication topic, communication context, and communication content, the address form of “cháu” with “*bác/ cô/ chú/ dì/ cậu, etc.”*  can be flexible in combining different address forms.

Some typical address expressions for this pair include: ***“thằng + proper name”*** is a address form that child characters use perlocutionary act to express themselves more clearly in response. The address form by combining different elements is expressed with some expressions such as: the expression ***“Kinship nouns" + “name”*** (*bác Cu Muôn, bác Cừ, bác Nhã*,…); address expression ***“******Kinship nouns” + “job”; “Kinship nouns” + “job” + “geographical location”; “Words indicating title” + “position”*** (*chú bộ đội, anh du kích, cô đỡ đẻ của đảo, tiên gốc gạo,..*.) are also common address forms of children when calling *bác/ chú/ cô, etc.* These address terms are descriptive address forms to identify objects.

*3.3.2.4. Address forms of*  “*em – anh/chị”*

In social interaction, children *(em)* in relation to their elders (*anh/chị)* are in the lower roles, while elders are in the upper roles. This pair establishes the superior position based on age criteria. Therefore, the age difference between *“em”* and *“anh/chị”* is generally less than 10 years. Under the influence of circumstances, communication topics, cultural aspects, etc., children often express humility and calling the interlocutor in a respectful manner, placing them in a higher position. This follows the principles of social communication within the community.

Children use various address forms in social communication. However, depending on familiarity, emotions, attitudes, etc., the address forms may vary. The address form using kinship nouns *(em, anh, chị, anh chị, ...)* is the most commonly used, especially in pairs of address terms like *“anh” – “em”.*  The address form using personal pronouns (*ta, chúng ta, mình, chúng mình, ...)* is used in formal situations, especially in topics related to the common fight against a common enemy. The address form using names *(Trường Đại, Thủy, Tâm, Khếnh, ...)* is used when addressing “*anh/chị*” and often appears at the beginning of the dialog to introduce names, usually accompanied by expressions like ***“Em tên là…/ Em là…”*** *(My name is…).* When calling, there is only one case where the *“em”* calls the elder by name *(Sơn)* after an explanation. The address expression ***“Kinship nouns” + “name”*** appears in large numbers in children's calling. *(e.g., anh Bát, anh Huề, chú Tâm, chị Gái, anh Trung, ...).* The address form using titles is not used when addressing but is used when calling. This adheres to the social address rules under the influence of social status and professions (*bộ đội, bác sĩ,…*). The absence of address terms is also a form used by *“em”* in their interaction with *“anh/chị”.*

*3.3.2.5. Address forms of children in the* *friend role pair*

The friend role pair involves children of the same age or within a similar age range. This is the only pair of children's roles that establishes an equal communication relationship and is not affected by criteria of age, status in the family as well as social rules that separate the role pair into the upper – lower role pair. At the same time, this is the only pair of roles that is not subject to the rules and regulations of power relations along the hierarchical axis (*blood relations, social status, age,...*). This role pair appears in two major situations: school and the community.

When addressing, children use all 6 address forms: by name (*khỉ cái, khỉ đột, Việt gian,...);* by personal pronouns *(tôi, tớ, chúng tớ, tao, mình, chúng mình, ta,...)*; by other words (*bạn, đàng mình, người ta, bồ/ các bồ, bọn này,...);* by other combinations *(bạn Bé, chị em chúng mình, chị Minh, nhóm mình, Người yêu nước, Phe tướng cướp Bảy Lì, phe tụi tao, thiện xạ bắn bắn vịt, nhóm Tứ quái này, Đội ta, …);* by word denoting titles *(tướng quân, thần,…)* and the absence of address terms. In addressing, children do not use kinship nouns when addressing. The reasons are as follows: firstly, because children are the same age, live, study and play in the same area, so children have understanding and “sympathy for each other”; Secondly, the type of address by other combinations appears in large numbers and shows the diversity of the objects being named.

When calling, children use diverse address forms: by name (*Hoan, An, Lười, khỉ đột, Việt gian,…);* by personal pronouns *(mày, chúng mày, cậu (bạn bè),…);* by other words *(bồ, các bồ, bọn này, các ngươi, oắt con,…)*; by various combinations *(thằng quỷ, đàng mình, khỉ cái, nhà thiện xạ, thằng Húc ở Đình Bảng, thằng Lười,…)*; by word denoting titles (*tướng quân, du kích, học sinh,…);* and the absence of address terms. The types of address terms used by children are diverse in calling and especially using names in calling to emphasize and also create love.

The pair of address term “mày” – “tao” is the most used by children in social interactions as friends. This is an informal, intimate form of address and is often used between friends or relatives.

**3.4. Speech acts characteristics of children in social communication**

***3.4.1. Frequency of occurrence of speech acts***

Based on 358 dialogues, we examined five groups of speech acts (*Representatives, Directives, Commissives, Expressives, Declarations*) that children use in interaction with adults and with children (at the same age) in the context of social communication.

- In children’s social communication, they use five groups of speech acts: representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, declarations. There are differences in the quantity and frequency of these speech acts among the groups.

- The quantity of speech acts in each group varies significantly. For example, the directives group with actions such as *asking, responding, requesting/suggesting, advising, pleading, seeking, inviting, tempting, threatening, begging, etc*., has a large quantity, accounting for 21 out of 62 speech acts and appearing 1057 out of 2675 times. The Representatives group includes actions like *narrating, describing, storytelling, explaining, and recalling*, with 5 out of 62 speech acts and appearing 325 out of 2675 times;…

An initial explanation for the differences in the quantity of speech acts in these groups is as follows: 1/ Children in the age range of 4-15 undergo significant physical, physiological, and psychological changes. The expansion of communication scope, targets, content, and personal experiences before the phenomenon of socialization has influenced language ability and abstract thinking. 2/ Children are gradually forming their own personal/social status. 3/ Due to age characteristics, children like to express personal opinions, describe, explain, etc. because of the psychology of “worrying that the other person will not understand”.

***3.4.2. Case survey:*** ***Children’s*** ***directives action group in social communication***

*3.4.2.1.**Directives group*

Based on the meaning of imperative and the degree of imperative as outlined in the communication of children in social contexts, we compiled statistics on the use of speech acts within these role pairs. The results are as follows:

In the social communication interaction of children, the use of actions belonging to the Directives group is the highest in both quantity and frequency compared to other groups. Based on the meaning of imperative, the actions in the Directives group can be categorized into three types: actions with a causal nature *(threatening, interrogating, blaming, chasing, challenging, demanding, prohibiting, etc.*), actions with a requesting nature (*asking, pleading, begging, requesting, coaxing, inviting, tempting, etc.*), and actions with a neutral nature (i.e., intermediate actions between actions with a causal force and actions with a requesting force: *asking, advising, etc*.).

The reasons for the differences in the occurrence of actions within the Directives group can be explained as follows: *Firstly*, in social interactions, children are in the lower role compared to adults who are in the upper role; *Secondly*, children in social interactions use causal directive actions. When using highly causal actions, it is often associated with special circumstances; *Thirdly*, neutral actions (with both causal and requesting) appear in very large numbers.

*3.4.2.2. Detailed survey: The* *action of asking*

a. Purpose of the action of asking: In social communication, children use the action of asking for the following purposes: 1/ To gather information; 2/ To express praise or criticism; 3/ To express a probing or surprised attitude; 4/ To express requests or desires.

b. Components of the action of asking include: the questioner (SP1); the performative verb; the recipient of the action of asking (SP2); the content of the asking (P).

c. Models of the action of asking

Based on the survey and classification, we present structural models of the action of asking in the social interaction of children:

\* Model of the action of asking with the performative verb

|  |
| --- |
| Subject (Explicit performative expression), Performative verb; Present of Object 1+Object 2 |

\* Model of the action of asking without the perfomative verb

This action is manifested through the following structural forms:

**Form 1:**

|  |
| --- |
| Absence of Subject (Explicit performative expression), Performative verb; Present of Object 1+Object 2 |

Variant forms of Form 1 include: Form 1a: Object 1 is the first person; Form 1b: Object 1 is the second person; Form 1c: Object 1 is the third person.

**Form 2:**

|  |
| --- |
| Absence of Subject (Explicit performative expression), Performative verb; Absence of Object 1+ Present of Object 2 |

**3.5. Comparing the language characteristics of children in family and social interaction**

***3.5.1. Similarities***

*Firstly*, the language of children demonstrates respect and politeness in any environment, whether in the family or social interactions. Specifically: children’s address in communication always shows correctness and politeness towards adults such as: using kinship nouns (in both family and society). The speech acts performed by children in communication are explicit, or if using indirect expressions, they do not pose difficulties for the listener to infer the hidden meaning.

*Secondly*, the language of children shows creativity and flexibility in any situation. This is evident through the flexible use of words when creating unique combinations of address terms in their own way, such as *nhà thiện xạ, nhóm “tứ quái”, thằng quỷ sứ, đội ta, etc.*

*Thirdly*, under the influence of the interaction environment, family culture, regional culture, age, etc., the language of children exhibits dynamism according to each age group.

***3.5.2. Differences***

*Firstly*, in the family, under the influence of regulations and rules within the family, where the main relationships are blood relations, it has impacted the vocabulary and the use of address terms by children. The language of children develops from simplicity with a limited vocabulary, basic grammatical structures, and straightforward expression. This is evident in the address terms used by children within the family, which are usually simpler and more stable than the address terms used in the community.

*Secondly*, in the community, due to extended interactions and multi-directional interaction objects, children are more flexible in absorbing and using language. Furthermore, under the dominance of the legal regulations and rules of society, language development is stronger and more extensive.

**3.6. Summary**

1. In social communication, children interact in two contexts: school and community. In communication, children often mention 7 topics in two pairs of roles: lower role (children) - upper role (adults) and equal role pair (friends).

2. In social communication, children use 7 address forms in both addressing and calling. The address form by other combination predominates. The address form with personal pronouns takes second position (134/486 times, accounting for 10.52% when addressing; 169/788 times, accounting for 13.27 times when calling. Especially, address terms using kinship nouns are less used in addressing (61/486 times, accounting for 4.78%) but rank second in frequency when calling (176/788 times, accounting for 13.81%). The address term pair: *“cháu/con” – “bác/cô/chú,... anh/chị”* is identified as “focal” in children’s address terms in social communication. The social interaction environment of children consists of school and community, so there will be main address pairs associated with each environment. Through address terms children use, their psychology, attitudes, etc., are reflected, displaying a two-way movement: either very intimate or very condescending. Prominent characteristics in children’s address in social: *Firstly*: The address according to hierarchical social status *(position, age, education, etc.);* *Secondly*: the tendency to “shifting role” occurs between children and interacting individuals, depending on the communication content, communication purposes,...

3. In social communication, children use 5 groups of speech act. Influenced by communication roles and topics, children's speech act in social communication tends to use the Directives group with high frequency. In-depth study of the Directives group and asking action, we found that children’s use of the Directives action group reflects curiosity, eagerness to explore, learn, and desire for support and sharing from the interlocutor.

4. In communication, under the influence of social factors and communication factors, children's language displays flexibility and creates similarities and differences. Regarding similarities, children's language exhibits: 1/ respect and politeness regardless of the environment; 2/ creativity and flexibility in using language in various situations; 3/ language maturity corresponding to age. Differences: 1/ in the family, children's use of address terms and speech acts tends to be simpler and more stable compared to those used in the community; 2/ in the community, due to a wider range of interacting individuals, children absorb and use language more flexibly. The similarities and differences in children's language use in communication are not separate but dialectically intertwined, reflecting innocence, naivety, yet also strength and resilience when facing adversaries or when fulfilling the duty of protecting the homeland for Vietnamese children.

**CONCLUSION**

Studying on the topic “Linguistic Characteristics of Children (Through Series “The Collection of Good Vietnamese Short Stories for Children”)”, we draw some conclusions

1. Children are identified as ranging in age from 0 to 15 years old. The language of children (through series “The Collection of Good Vietnamese Short Stories for Children) is considered a variation of language used to indicate the linguistic characteristics of children and understand the language dynamics of children aged 4 to 15 years old. From this separation approach, we study the language characteristics of children in two main interaction environments (within the family and in society).

2. In family communication, the communication topics of children typically revolve around: *daily activities, skill education, and childhood games,...* and the lower-upper role pair is the only established role pair.

Children use 6 address forms in family communication, and they vary in frequency of appearance. For example: The address form using kinship nouns (*con, cháu, em, ông, bà, bố, mẹ,...)* is the most frequently used. Especially, some address term pairs are identified as “focal” such as: *“con” – “bố/mẹ”, “cháu”, “ông/bà”, “em – anh/chị*”. The address form by other combinations is used the second most and show differences in perspectives, attitudes and reflect the development of children’s linguistic thinking. The address form by name is not used by children. Explanation: Children in the family “hesitate” to address by name because it is considered impolite and disrespectful. In communication, children flexibly apply various address forms and create diverse address term pairs suitable for situations and interacting objects. The phenomenon of “shifting role” indicates that children are consciously and maturing cognitively according to age.

In family communication, children use 5 groups of speech acts. The number of these groups and speech acts within each group differ. The Directives group stands at the forefront. Speech act groups such as Representatives, Commissives, Expressives and Declarations appear with average to low frequency. This can be explained by children's inherent curiosity and desire for information. In the Directives group, we conducted an in-depth study of asking actions (184 out of 752 times, accounting for 24.47%). Through analyzing the expressions of the asking action, it's affirmed that children are inherently curious, enjoy exploring phenomena, and express their individual needs in the most endearing, innocent, and carefree manner.

3. In social communication, children use 7 address forms. Specifically, the address form with other combinations has the largest number. The address form with personal pronouns occupying the second position. The address form by kinship nouns are rarely used when addressing but account for the second number when calling... In social communication, associated with each environment (family, community), children prefer to use address pairs such as  *“em”/ “con” – “thầy/ thầy giáo/ cô/ cô giáo”; “cháu”/ “con” – “bác/ chú/ cô,... anh/ chị”.* Children use address forms flexibly, thus the interaction roles of children are flexible in maintaining stability, elevating or lowering the role to bring closer or create distance. Social interaction among children is strongly influenced by social factors such as *age, status, gender, education level, and background.*

In social communication, children employ speech acts belonging to 5 groups (Representatives, Directives, Commissives, Expressives and Declarations). Under the influence of communication roles and topics, children frequently use the Directives group. A deeper study into the Directives group and the asking action reveals that children use Directives group to express curiosity, eagerness to explore, and a desire to learn. At the same time, it reflects the psychology of children who always want to be provided with information immediately with curiosity, love to explore and be “involved” in society.

4. Similarities and differences in the use of language by children in the family and in society: 1) Regarding similarities, children follow the usual way of using address terms; their language reflects respect, politeness, innocence, and creativity in various contexts; they are creative and flexible in using language in different situations; their language shows a level of “maturity” corresponding to their age and is suitable for different interaction environments. 2) Regarding differences: within families, children's use of address terms and speech acts tends to be simpler and more stable compared to their usage in society; in society, children are more adaptable in their language use, showing flexibility in learning and using language.

5. The study of Linguistic Characteristics of Children (Through Series “The Collection of Good Vietnamese Short Stories for Children”) illustrates the dynamic nature of their mental lives, social interactions, and language abilities from ages 4 to 15. Social factors influence communication and reflect children’s lives from family to society. With this understanding, we believe that there are still many aspects related to this topic that need further research, such as *Studying the Linguistic Characteristics of Primary School Students in Hai Phong City,...* which will reveal more about the dynamics of children's language in daily life. This is considered the next direction for research in this thesis.

**LIST OF WOKS PUBLISHED**

**OF THE AUTHOR RELATING TO THE THESIS TITLE**

1. Luu Thi Lan (2022), Address forms of children in communication (through the corpus “The collection of good Vietnamese short stories for children"), Journal of Language and Life, No. 6B (327), p. 50-58
2. Luu Thi Lan (2022), Linguistic characteristics of children's characters in communicative interactions (through the corpus "The collection of good Vietnamese short stories for children"), Proceedings of the 2022 National Linguistics Conference / Applied linguistics in the trend of international integration, p. 836 -843
3. Luu Thi Lan (2022), *Vocatives in children’s communications seen through communication roles (study of the book “collection of good Vietnamese stories for children),* The first international conference on the issues of social sciences and humanities, pp.1198 - 1218
4. Luu Thi Lan (2023), *Linguistic features about the behavior, gestures of children’s characters used by the narrator (Through the corpus “the collection of good Vietnamese short stories for children"),* International Journal of Education and Social Science Research, 2023, Volume 6, Issue 1 pp. 44-59

5. Luu Thi Lan (2023), *Speech acts of children with adults in communication: Through “The collection of good Vietnamese short stories for children”*, International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Growth Evaluation, 2023, Volume: 04, ISSN (online): 2582-7138, Page No: 01-08