

MỘT SỐ CÁCH THỨC SỬ DỤNG LỜI CHÚC CỦA NGƯỜI VIỆT TRONG GIAO TIẾP

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Sử dụng phương pháp nghiên cứu định tính, trên cơ sở tổng hợp các dữ liệu thu được từ giao tiếp nói và giao tiếp viết, bài viết trình bày sáu cách thức sử dụng lời chúc của người Việt trong giao tiếp. Có thể nhận thấy cách thức sử dụng lời chúc của người Việt là khá linh hoạt. Lời chúc có thể kết hợp với các hành vi ngôn ngữ khác như khen, chào, cảm ơn, thăm hỏi, động viên và dặn dò và được coi là một bộ phận cấu thành, một nhân tố tăng tính lịch sự cho các hành vi ngôn ngữ kể trên, nâng cao hiệu quả giao tiếp. Bài viết góp phần nghiên cứu lời chúc trong ngôn ngữ nói chung và tiếng Việt nói riêng.

Từ khóa: lời chúc, phép lịch sự dương tính, lời chúc của người Việt Nam.

This study adopts qualitative research methods to obtain data from oral and written communication and presents six methods of expressing wishes by Vietnamese people. The findings show that Vietnamese people use flexible methods of expressing wishes. A wish can be combined with other speech acts such as praise, thanks, greetings, regards, encouragements and reminders. A wish can also be included to enhance courtesy in spoken language and improve the effectiveness of communication. This study is expected to make contribution to research on wishes in languages in general and in the Vietnamese language in particular.

Keywords: wish, positive politeness, Vietnamese wishes.

A NUMBER OF WAYS TO USE VIETNAMESE WISHES IN COMMUNICATION

1. Introduction

Wishes are one of the speech acts most commonly utilized in all cultures in Eastern and Western societies. Wishes are used for the purpose of showing joy, care, attachment, agreement, support, admiration, and goodwill to other people. Wishes have a distinct purpose for communication, a clear subject, and a

specific audience and communication context.

Through the resources used in our research, we have found that wishes have globally been studied according to certain major trends. Oraiby (2011) and Svetlana (2013) focused on describing sentence structure as well as lexical and grammatical meanings expressed in wishes. Among those who studied wishes from the perspective of a communication strategy, we can mention authors such as Elwood (2004), Allami, and Nekouzadeh

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(2011). Wishes are also considered in the comparison of different languages and cultures. This fairly popular focus of research is of interest to many authors such as Pishghadam and Moghadam (2011), Ali et al. (2016).

In Vietnam, Tinh (2015) studied the marriage wishes of Southerners. Dao (2010) compared and contrasted the wishes of the British versus the Vietnamese on such occasions as birthdays, weddings, and New Year. Hang and Chuyen (2011) compared congratulatory idioms in Chinese and Vietnamese. The writings of the above-mentioned Vietnamese authors aim mainly at studying wishes used in a specific communication context and approach wishes from a cross-cultural perspective.

Based on the theory of linguistic behavior by Austin (1962) and the theory of wish strategies proposed by Elwood (2004), this article focuses on understanding how to combine wishes with other linguistic acts, as well as the role of wishes in some Vietnamese rituals and certain situations of communication.

The following questions were addressed in the article:

1. In Vietnamese communication, in which ways are wishes used?
2. Do those ways of using wishes contribute to enhancing the effectiveness of communication?

2. Research and data collection methods

The study used the descriptive method to describe how to combine wishes with other linguistic acts. The discourse analysis method has been used to analyze documents containing wishes in relation to the communication context. In addition, the author also used some research methods such as statistical classification and statistical synthesis in the current study.

The study used material collected from two sources: oral and written communication. For oral communication, we collected materials by observing and recording conversations in daily communication as well as from a number of TV programs broadcast on VTV1 and VTV3 channels of Vietnam television from 2017 to the present.

For written communication, the article's author collected data from several modern Vietnamese literary works, some electronic newspapers, and from reader feedback on online forums.

3. Some ways to use wishes in Vietnamese communication

Communication etiquette refers to “a set of rules accepted for communication by a community speaking a certain language. This etiquette implies a strict sequence of concrete actions, either verbal or nonverbal, to which both speaker and listener must adhere.” (Tam, 2008, p.37). With this in mind, wishes can be seen as a component of effective communication in certain situations, such as when one is greeting, thanking, or complimenting.

3.1. *Wishing in combination with complimenting*

In daily communication, wishes are naturally combined with compliments. According to Huong (2017), the mixed use of compliments and wishes is often observed in cases where achievements or joys are celebrated or shared. Wishes are expressions of the speaker's joy and approval when an interesting event occurs (quoting Marki-Tsilipakou (2011)).

Wishes are habitually combined with praises as these two acts are closely related. While wishes are expressions of joy, hopes for fortune and goodwill to others, compliments denote positive attitude, praise, admiration, and approval. Thus, wishing and complimenting are flattering acts and manifest the utmost politeness. Examples include:

- *Congratulations to the Vietnam futsal team. You guys have played excellent football. Wishing you good luck in your upcoming matches.*

(VnExpress).

- *I wish you to nurture this dream for you to become a true artist. You are a very special boy, the pride of all the teachers and students at the schools you were once enrolled in.*

(The 7th Wish Program, Episode No. 126 VTV3- Father and Son Concert).

- *That's brilliant, congratulations! - The representative of the Provincial Cultural Affairs Department Dang Xuan Tong whispered in Quat's ear - your village of Nguyet Ha has a typical folk culture of a Vietnamese village.*

(Life full of strangers - Duong Huong)

Complimenting and wishing are both used to establish and maintain group relationships and harmony. According to Behnam and Amizadeh, "Praises and wishes have the same purpose as both are used to 'grease the social wheels', creating and maintaining social relationships". (Quoting Pishghadam & Moghadam (2011)).

In some contexts, complimenting is commensurate to wishing. Based on the taxonomy of wishing strategies proposed by Elwood (2004), complementing is one of the 14 wishing strategies. For example, in response to a remarkable achievement or performance, utterances like: "Great! Well done!" can be considered a congratulatory act.

3.2. *Wishing in combination with thanking*

In some communication etiquettes, wishes are often linked with thanks. There are some commonalities between these two acts: 1) The central point of both acts is to show a positive emotional response; 2) The purpose of both acts is to indicate an action involving the listener or performed by the listener; 3) Both are used to ensure no loss of face to the listener.

The difference between "wishing" and "thanking" lies in the interests of the speaker and the listener. While "wishing" expresses the speaker's happiness towards something beneficial to the listener, "thanking" is an expression of the speaker's gratitude for something the

listener has done and is beneficial to the speaker.

Examples include:

- *Congratulations and thanks to the officers and soldiers of the Thang Long group and Dong Bang group of the Central Highlands legion for your collaboration with us in the successful and memorable "We are soldiers" show.*

(MC Bui Duc Bao - We are soldiers show on October 27, 2017).

- *Thank you very much, Doctor, I wish you good health!*

(MC Thao Van - Happy, health and helpful aging show on October 14, 2017)

- *Thank you and congratulations to Garcia and his players for being the first Vietnamese football team to play in an international tournament.*

(Zing.vn)

Through the above examples, it can be seen that the wish expression has a quite flexible position when combined with thanks. It can come before or after an expression of thanks.

In responding to wishes, the wishes are expressed alongside thanks. Examples include:

- *Man 1: Wish you and your family a happy and prosperous New Year!*

- *Man 2: Thank you, I wish you good health too...!*

The thank-you note in this example enhances the courtesy of the response,

contributing to narrowing the gap between the participants in the communication.

3.3. Wishing in combination with greeting

Greeting is the initial ritual when two people meet and provides opening-closing address functions. Greeting is also a positive politeness strategy aimed to establish a friendly relationship between the speaker and the listener. Greeting can be combined with wishing to form a very distinctive type of "welcome" ritual:

- *Welcome, Professor Vu Ba, Rector of Guangxi University for Nationalities, on the occasion of your visit to Hai Phong University!*

(Banner to welcome international missions to HPU)

- *Welcome students to the National High School Exam at Kien An High School...*

(Banner at Kien An High School, Hai Phong)

"Welcome" often appears on slogans and banners. In addition, this expression is used in formal communication contexts as well as in some formal ceremonies.

In some contexts, wishes are used as greetings. For example, after the Tet holiday, two teachers who bump into each other in the schoolyard might say: "Happy New Year!". In this case, this serves as a greeting.

Wishes and greetings are often combined in formal rituals such as those seen in opening remarks of ceremonies and conferences. Examples include:

- *First of all, allow me to extend my greetings and good wishes for perfect health to all participants, teachers, fellow comrades, officials and employees of the University. I wish you a successful congress.*

(The 7th Trade Union Congress of Hai Phong University, term 2017-2022).

In addition to its mixed-use with salutations, wishes are also often used with farewells. Examples include:

- *It's time to leave, I wish you peace!*

(The last tragic song - Chu Lai)

- *Please give my regards and best wishes to everyone in our village.*

(Cold deserted beach – Chu Lai)

- *It's time! Goodbye! I wish you all the best.*

(The starling crossing the river -
Nguyen Huy Thiep)

As can be seen in the above examples, wishes express hope for good things for the listener, thus contributing to enhanced politeness of the greeting. In Vietnamese culture, combining wishes and greetings serves the dual purpose of wishing and creates a way of greeting in specific and conditional communication situations.

3.4. Wishing in combination with sending regards, encouragement, and reminders

Sending regards is a tradition commonly practiced by Vietnamese people, who tend to send regards to one another in a polite way to start or build up a conversation on the occasion of an event,

anniversary, or other happy and sad moments, etc. “Regards + wishes” is a very common pattern in everyday communication. Examples include:

- *That's all I have. Take it and settle your business. Please send her my regards and wishes for happiness!*

(Hung Karo – Chu Lai)

- *Please send my regards to your wife and wish your kids to study habits.*

(Faraway time – Le Luu)

- *I would like to wish you, your uncle, and Ai a peaceful and healthy life!*

(Halfway of spring – Khai Hung)

Wishes are often combined with encouragement:

- *Stay positive, Hung. I believe you are a strong-minded person and that you can overcome this. I wish you a speedy recovery.*

(VnExpress)

The wishes themselves can be used as words of encouragement. Examples include:

- *I wish you the strength to endure your pain!*

(VnExpress)

In these situations, the use of wishes is limited to embracing joy or wishing good things to the listener. However, it also aims to encourage, comfort, and offer condolences to the listener.

In parting, Vietnamese people tend to use wishes in combination with reminders. Examples include:

- *I'm leaving now! Have a good night, and... remember to close the window to avoid a nasty draft!*

(Cold deserted beach – Chu Lai)

- *She hugged Nam and cried bitterly: Take good care of yourself, and when you die, never be like Uncle Hien so that your grandparents will not have to be shamed by their fellow villagers.*

(Under heavens – Duong Huong)

This type of wish shows the speaker's affection and care for the listener and is often used when the relationship between the speaker and the listener is close and intimate, for example, family members, friends, or colleagues.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

When stating how Vietnamese people use wishes within the framework of this article, the author focused on examining the possibility of combining wishes with some other linguistic acts in Vietnamese communication. The problems of analyzing the use of direct-indirect wishes, wish models, or strategies in Vietnamese are pending.

Combining wishes with other linguistic acts creates alternative ways of offering wishes in the Vietnamese language. If compared with the wish strategies proposed by Elwood (2004)¹, one can see

that the ways of wishes in Vietnamese are not as diverse, but the use of wishes by Vietnamese people in communication is quite flexible. This contrast is due to the difference in the structure of the English and Vietnamese languages and the language norms of the two cultures.

The initial research results mentioned in the study served as the basis for a more in-depth analysis of the Vietnamese people's communication strategies. As a positive politeness strategy, wishes are used quite flexibly in different communication situations and contexts. Wishing can be easily combined with other speech acts of complimenting, thanking or greeting, etc., in certain communication rituals and situations. Wishes are like a supplement that reinforces politeness and effective communication. The different uses of wishing as presented in this study reasonably identify Vietnamese people whose acts and behaviors are traditionally mingled with respect and affection and who are likely to choose skillful and flexible ways of communication that show politeness and respect to listeners. However, in order to have a more in-depth understanding of how Vietnamese people use wishes in their communication, future studies should collect and analyze more quantitative data to add to the qualitative analysis techniques used in this study.

¹ Research by Elwood (2004) proposed 14 strategies, including 1) illocutionary force indicating device (IFID); 2) expression of happiness; 3) request for information; 4) expression of validation; 5) self-related comments; 6) exclamation/expression of

surprise; 7) offer of good wishes; 8) Encouragement; 9) joke; 10) affection expression; 11) a suggestion to celebrate; 12) thanking god; 13) offer of help; 14) statement dealing with the negative situation.

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