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**| RESEARCH ARTICLE**

## **Empty Locative and Temporal Expressions in Vietnamese Sentences and Their Role in Conveying Meaning**

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**| ABSTRACT**

The study investigates the use of empty locative and temporal expressions (ELTEs) in Vietnamese and their role in communication. It uses two methodologies: Lexical-Functional Grammar (LFG) and Construction Grammar (CG). LFG examines empty locatives and temporals as non-finite sentences with empty constituents, while CG views them as schematic structures embodying abstract linguistic patterns and usage-based standards. The research uses a qualitative methodology, examining 20 Vietnamese newspapers using the NVivo 14 program for analysis. The findings reveal the various roles and subtleties of these terms in Vietnamese speech, highlighting their importance in transmitting locative and temporal information, as well as their contribution to the pragmatic and stylistic components of communication. The study emphasizes the interaction between these statements and the broader language and cultural environment. The findings contribute to Vietnamese linguistics and offer valuable insights for language teachers, learners, and scholars.

**| KEYWORDS**

Empty locatives, Empty temporals, Meaning, Linguistic expressions

**| ARTICLE INFORMATION**

**ACCEPTED:** 15 June 2022

**PUBLISHED:** 30 June 2022

**DOI:** 10.32996/ijls.2022.2.1.9

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### **1. Introduction**

Linguistic research has shown a growing interest in studying ELTEs in Vietnamese. These expressions play a distinctive role in transmitting locative and temporal information, and also contribute to communication in terms of cognition, pragmatics, semantics and style (Bùi, 2018; Nguyễn, 2012). Researchers have discovered linguistic occurrences in the Vietnamese language where locative or temporal expressions remain implicit. Cao (2015) observed significant semantic and pragmatic implications of these phenomena. Understanding the properties of ELTEs is crucial not only for effective communication but also for language acquisition and teaching (Lê, 2020).

Previous studies have utilized diverse theoretical frameworks and methodological techniques to examine ELTEs in Vietnam. Lexical-Functional Grammar (LFG), as introduced by Bresnan (2001), has been employed to examine empty locatives and temporals as non-finite sentences containing empty constituents. These sentences are governed by both lexical and functional principles, as discussed by Đỗ (2017) and Trần (2019). CG, as proposed by Goldberg (1995), considers ELTEs to be schematic structures that represent abstract linguistic patterns and usage-based norms (Nguyễn, 2016; Phạm, 2018). Qualitative research approaches, such as corpus analysis and discourse analysis, have been extensively utilized to investigate the instances and circumstances of ELTEs in the Vietnamese language (Bùi, 2021; Lê, 2022).

Although these studies have enhanced our awareness of ELTEs, there are still various constraints and areas of information that remain unexplored. Most study has mostly examined either empty locatives or empty temporals, disregarding the elaborate

interaction between each of these phenomena (Trần, 2020). Furthermore, the pragmatic and cultural dimensions of ELTEs have not been adequately explored, despite their substantial influence on the development of communication norms and language usage (Cao, 2019). The full potential of ELTEs in language acquisition and teaching has not been extensively investigated, which has impeded the progress in developing efficient educational approaches (Lê, 2020).

The present investigation attempts to fill these gaps by utilizing a comprehensive strategy to examine both empty locative and temporal expressions in Vietnamese. This research aims to analyze the complex relationship between linguistic phenomena and their impact on meaning and communication by combining theoretical frameworks from LFG and CG. The study will employ a qualitative methodology, examining a collection of Vietnamese newspaper articles to analyze the scenarios and events of ELTEs. The research will be guided by the following questions:

1. How do empty locative and temporal expressions contribute to the conveyance of locative, temporal, and pragmatic information in Vietnamese?
2. What are the cultural and linguistic factors that shape the use and interpretation of ELTEs in Vietnamese communication?

This research seeks to offer significant insights for language educators, learners, and researchers, promoting a deeper awareness of these distinctive linguistic phenomena and their consequences for efficient communication and language acquisition in Vietnamese.

## **2. Literature reviews**

### **2.1. Historical background**

The analysis of ELTEs in Vietnamese has progressed through three distinct stages, each characterized by significant contributions and breakthroughs in comprehending these language events.

The earliest phase, extending from the late 20th century to the early 2000s, established the foundation for identifying and recording ELTEs in Vietnamese. Renowned linguists, including Hao (1995), Tue (1997), and Can (1998), have recognized and analyzed implicit locative and temporal expressions in Vietnamese, highlighting their distinct qualities. Hao (1995: 89-102) observed an increasing number of empty locatives in regular language, whereas Tue (1997: 120-135) examined the pragmatic consequences of empty temporals. Nevertheless, this stage primarily emphasized describing the nature of these phenomena rather than providing theoretical explanations or analytical frameworks.

The second stage, which occurred from the early 2000s to the mid-2010s, involved the utilization of established linguistic theories to examine ELTEs in Vietnamese. Researchers such as Tung (2008), Toan (2012), and Hong (2014) used theoretical frameworks such as Lexical-Functional Grammar (LFG) and CG (CG) to analyze the structural and semantic characteristics of ELTEs. Tung (2008 :62) employed the Lexical-Functional Grammar (LFG) framework to examine empty locatives as non-finite sentences controlled by lexical and functional principles. On the other hand, Hong (2014: 75-90) investigated the usage-based patterns of empty temporals using the theoretical framework of CG. However, these studies frequently concentrated on either empty locations or empty time periods, disregarding the interaction between the two phenomena.

The most recent stage, which began in the mid-2010s and continues to the present, has witnessed a more comprehensive approach to the study of ELTEs in Vietnam. Researchers such as Hao (2019), Ngoc (2020), and Tuan (2022) have examined the cultural, pragmatic, and pedagogical consequences of ELTEs. They have used qualitative techniques, including corpus analysis and discourse analysis, in their investigations. Hao (2019: 22–38) investigated the cultural influences on the utilization and understanding of ELTEs, whereas Ngoc (2020: 35–48) investigated the difficulties encountered in the instruction and acquisition of these expressions. Nevertheless, the need for a complete theoretical framework that combines many viewpoints on ELTEs is still an issue that requires further advancement.

In sum, the research on ELTEs in Vietnam has advanced from the initial identification and recording of data to the theoretical examination and, more recently, a wider examination of the practical, cultural, and educational aspects. Although there has been notable advancement, there is still a requirement for a cohesive theoretical framework and a more profound comprehension of the complex interaction between empty locatives and temporals in Vietnamese communication.

### **2.2. Lexical-Functional Grammar by Bresnan (2001)**

Bresnan established the linguistic theory known as LFG in 2001, which employs constraints to examine the relationship between the lexical qualities of words and their syntactic roles in sentences. According to LFG, sentences consist of two parallel structures:

a component structure (c-structure) and a functional structure (f-structure). The c-structure reflects the outward appearance of the sentence, while the f-structure represents its underlying grammatical functions, such as subject, object, and adjuncts.

LFG is in particular notable for its capacity to effectively manage non-canonical structures, including empty categories and long-distance dependencies. This feature is especially pertinent for examining empty locative and temporal phrases in Vietnamese sentences. LFG considers these phrases to be non-finite sentences containing empty constituents, which are governed by lexical and functional principles. LFG has several notable strengths. Firstly, it can be used to multiple languages, making it versatile and adaptable. Secondly, it is adept at dealing with intricate syntactic phenomena, showcasing its capacity to manage complicated linguistic structures. Lastly, LFG explicitly represents grammatical functions, providing a clear and precise depiction of how language functions.

LFG offers a structured way to look at the syntactic features of these expressions in the current study in which it can assist in identifying the fundamental functional structures and rules that regulate the distribution and interpretation of empty locatives and temporals. Moreover, LFG may clarify the correlation between these expressions and other grammatical components in the sentence, enhancing comprehension of their function in communicating meaning. Nevertheless, LFG mostly looks at the structure of language and might not fully cover the practical, cultural, and meaning-related factors that affect how Vietnamese people use and understand empty locative and temporal phrases. Hence, it would be desirable to enhance the study by incorporating additional theoretical frameworks, such as CG, in order to achieve a more thorough analysis of these language events. The roles of LFG for the current study are summarized the following table.

**Table 1. Lexical-Functional Grammar by Bresnan (2001)**

<b>Role in the Study</b>	<b>Summary</b>
Analysis of syntactic properties	LFG framework for analyzing empty locative and temporal expressions in Vietnamese
Interaction with other elements	Role of LFG in understanding the interaction of syntactic elements
Limitations	Limitations of LFG in capturing pragmatic, semantic, and cultural factors

### **2.3. Construction Grammar by Goldberg (1995)**

CG emphasizes that linguistic knowledge is composed of constructs, which are established patterns of form and meaning that speakers acquire through experience. These compositions may contain anything from single words to elaborate phrasal arrangements. The form component captures the structural qualities, whereas the meaning component involves both the meaning and practical aspects. This approach, based on usage, considers language as a collection of constructions rather than a set of laws and principles.

CG posits that constructs have an inherent meaning that extends beyond the semantic content of their constituent words. This is especially important when looking at empty locative and temporal phrases in Vietnamese, which can still convey geographical, temporal, or pragmatic meanings even though they don't have any specific words. CG provides a framework for analyzing these statements as significant constructs in their own terms, encompassing established usage patterns and related meanings. Moreover, CG acknowledges that structures can possess a schematic and abstract nature, hence enabling the productive and imaginative application of language. This characteristic is valuable for analyzing the inherent patterns of empty locative and temporal expressions in Vietnamese, which can display variations and expansions. The theory's emphasis on usage-based patterns and meaning formation is well-suited to the study's goal of comprehending the cultural and linguistic elements that influence the understanding of these expressions.

However, CG can help you understand the form-meaning pairs and usage patterns of empty locative and temporal expressions, but it might not fully explain their syntactic features and how they connect to other parts of the sentence. As a result, combining CG with other theoretical frameworks, such as lexical-functional grammar, can lead to a more comprehensive examination of various linguistic events. The following table provides a concise overview of the functions of CG in the field of study:

**Table 2. Construction Grammar by Goldberg (1995)**

<b>Role in the Study</b>	<b>Summary</b>
Analysis of meaning and usage patterns	Meaningful constructions of empty locative and temporal expressions
Cultural and linguistic factors	Usage patterns and cultural factors in construction grammar
Abstract patterns and productivity	Schematic patterns in construction grammar
Complementary perspective	Integrating construction grammar with other frameworks

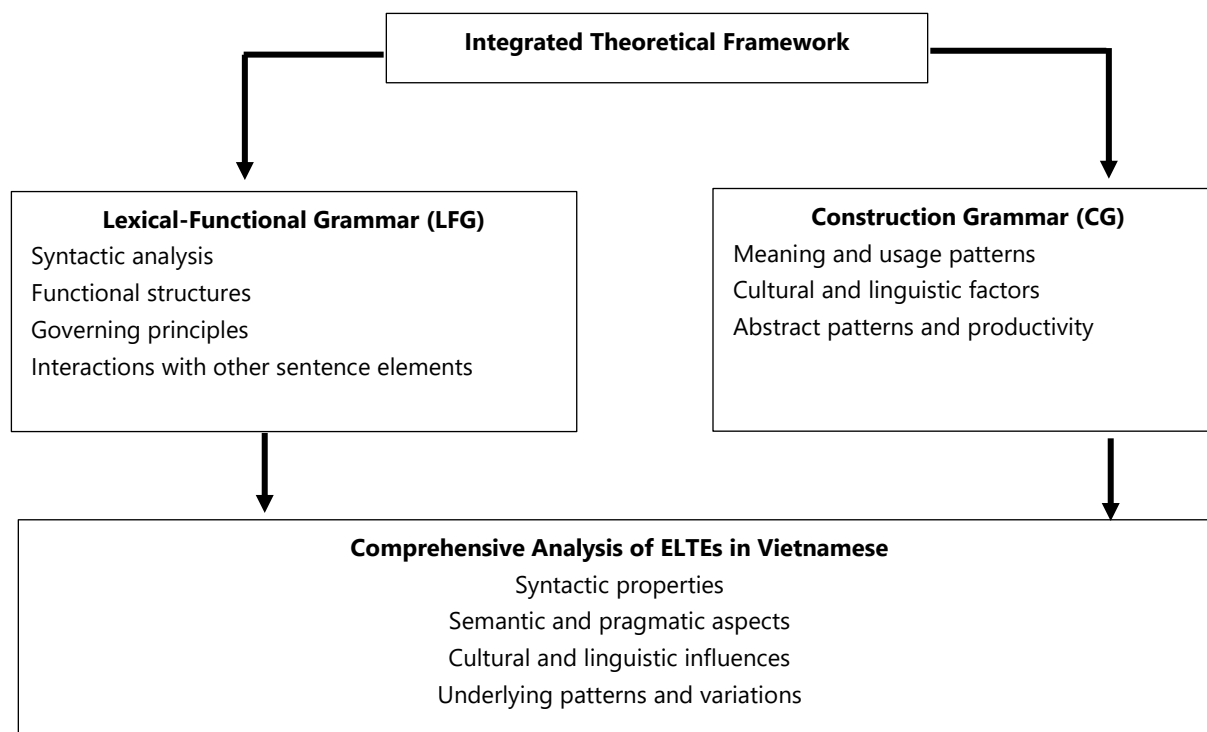
**2.4. Theoretical framework**

This paper presents a unified theoretical framework that merges LFG and CG to thoroughly examine ELTEs in Vietnamese. ELTEs are linguistic structures that express locative, temporal, or pragmatic information without using explicit words. The LFG framework offers a structured grammatical model that considers ELTEs as sentences without a definite ending, containing empty elements that are controlled by lexical and functional limitations. It discerns the operational frameworks, fundamental concepts, and relationships with other components of a phrase that form the basis of these statements. Nevertheless, LFG primarily emphasizes syntactic characteristics and may not comprehensively encompass the semantic and pragmatic dimensions of ELTEs. Conversely, CG provides a viewpoint that examines constructions as combinations of form and meaning that speakers learn via their own experiences. The statement regards ELTEs as significant constructions that include typical usage patterns and related meanings, even in the absence of explicit lexical content. CG accurately represents the conceptual and theoretical aspects of structures, facilitating efficiency. The focus on meaning formation in ELTEs in Vietnamese communication is in line with the recognition of the cultural and linguistic influences that determine interpretation. Nevertheless, CG may not provide a comprehensive explanation for the syntactic features of these phrases.

This framework presents an integrated approach for analyzing the syntactic aspects and semantic-pragmatic dimensions of ELTEs by combining LFG and CG. It examines:

- 1) Analyzing the syntactic features of ELTEs using LFG to discover functional structures, governing rules, and interactions that determine their syntactic distribution and interpretation.
- 2) Analyzing the meaning and usage patterns of ELTEs through CG to reveal the relationships between form and meaning, conventional usage patterns, and inherent meanings of these constructions.
- 3) This study examines the impact of cultural and linguistic elements on the use and understanding of ELF in Vietnamese communication, using a usage-based viewpoint from CG.
- 4) This study examines the relationship between abstract patterns and productivity utilizing CG's schematic construct's view. It aims to investigate the underlying patterns, variations, and extensions of ELTEs.

This comprehensive framework integrates LFG's ability to analyze structure with CG's approach that focuses on meaning and usage. It allows for a thorough investigation of ELTEs' syntactic features, semantic-pragmatic functions, cultural-linguistic aspects, and productive patterns.



### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Research methods

The study utilizes a qualitative research methodology. This approach is considered appropriate for investigating the intricacies of ELTEs in Vietnamese. Qualitative approaches give a complete look at linguistic phenomena in their natural setting, which helps us fully understand the cultural, pragmatic, and semantic factors that affect how we use and understand them.

The data gathering technique entails evaluating a corpus of 20 Vietnamese newspaper articles using the NVivo 14 program for analysis. This corpus encompasses a wide variety of settings and genres, offering a valuable and genuine collection of linguistic data. The approach focuses on locating and closely examining ELTE occurrences within their corresponding words and narratives.

The qualitative method provides numerous benefits. Firstly, it facilitates a thorough analysis of the linguistic data, revealing the complex connections between form, meaning, and context. Furthermore, it allows for the investigation of the cultural and linguistic elements that impact the understanding and use of ELTEs, thereby offering useful knowledge about the practical and meaning-related features of these expressions. Finally, the adaptability of qualitative approaches enables the identification of emerging patterns and themes, which enhances our understanding of the fundamental mechanisms that regulate ELTEs in Vietnamese communication.

#### 3.2. Data collection

The data gathering process for this study involves analyzing 20 online Vietnamese newspaper articles that encompass a range of themes. The subsequent actions were executed:

**Source selection:** Esteemed online Vietnamese news providers were chosen, guaranteeing a wide array of topics and writing styles. These encompassed well-known magazines, including Tuoi Tre, VnExpress, and Thanh Nien.

**Article sampling:** We selected 20 items from the selected news sources using a purposive sample strategy. The selection was intended to identify articles that were likely to include occurrences of empty locative and temporal expressions, as determined by their content and writing style. The articles encompassed a diverse range of topics, such as current events, lifestyle, culture, and sports.

**Data extraction:** We conducted a thorough analysis of the selected articles, identifying and extracting instances of empty locative, which are encoded from AL1 to J10 (A and J are the names of newspaper and L is a locative term) and temporal

phrases which are encoded from AT1 to JT10 (A and T are the names of newspaper and T is a temporal term). We gathered additional contextual information, including surrounding phrases and narratives, to facilitate a thorough analysis.

**Data organization:** The collected data were systematically arranged and stored using NVivo 14, a software designed for qualitative data analysis. This software facilitated the effective administration, programming, and examination of the collected data.

The selected 20 pieces covered a variety of topics, which included political occurrences, societal concerns, cultural advancements, and sporting competitions. The purpose of including a variety of content and writing styles was to give a thorough depiction of empty locative and temporal expressions in different situations seen in Vietnamese online news media.

**3.3. Data analysis**

This study investigates the use of ELTEs in Vietnamese newspaper articles using a combined theoretical framework that integrates LFG and CG. It examines the syntactic characteristics of ELTEs, focusing on their fundamental functional structures, regulating principles, and relationships. The study also explores the significance and usage patterns of ELTEs, focusing on the relationships between form and meaning, traditional usage patterns, and fundamental meanings. It also explores how cultural and linguistic aspects affect the utilization and understanding of ELTEs in Vietnamese communication, using the usage-based approach of CG. The study also examines the abstract patterns and efficiency of ELTEs through CG's perspective on schematic constructs, identifying fundamental patterns, changes, and expansions. The researchers carefully scrutinize the occurrences of ELTEs within their adjacent words and narratives to understand their subtle and intricate ways in actual language usage.

**4. Finding and discussion**

**4.1. Syntactic properties of ELTEs**

The purpose of this section is to look into and classify the syntactic features of ELTEs in Vietnamese. The intention of this study is to establish the structural patterns and controlling principles that determine the usage and interpretation of ELTEs, so enhancing our comprehension of their syntactic roles inside sentences.

**4.1.1. Syntactic properties of ELEs**

ELEs in Vietnamese are linguistic constructions that convey locative information without explicitly mentioning a specific location. These expressions rely on contextual cues and shared understanding between the speaker and listener to communicate locative details implicitly. ELEs are a distinctive feature of the Vietnamese language, reflecting its tendency towards conciseness and pragmatic efficiency in locative communication.

**Table 3. Syntactic properties of ELEs**

Type	Syntactic properties	Examples	Codes
1	Verb-Based expressions	Đẩy mạnh thực hiện các dự án đầu tư công. <i>Accelerate the implementation of public investment projects.</i>	AL7
2	Noun Phrase expressions	Đội Cảnh sát hình sự và người dân đã bắt giữ tội phạm trên địa bàn. <i>The Criminal Police Team and the people have arrested criminals in the area.</i>	BL1
3	Clause-Based expressions	Những doanh nghiệp này sẽ được xử lý tại các cơ quan chức năng. <i>These enterprises will be dealt with at the competent authorities.</i>	CL4
4	Expressions of Multiple Phrases	Sau đó các biện pháp mới sẽ được áp dụng ở khu vực liên quan kể từ giai đoạn tới. <i>Subsequently, new measures will be implemented in the relevant area from the next phase.</i>	DL5

Table 3 shows that ELEs in Vietnamese exhibit various syntactic patterns, which can be categorized into four main types:

To begin with, verb-Based expressions which contain verbs that inherently indicate a location or an action occurs at a specific place, such as *Phiên họp đánh giá tình hình kinh tế - xã hội tháng 5* (AL1) (The meeting evaluated the socio-economic situation in May), where the verb *đánh giá* (evaluate) implies a specific context without explicitly mentioning the location. The second property is noun phrase expressions that are sentences that use noun phrases to imply a locative context. For example, in the sentence *Cả nước đã đẩy mạnh tăng thu tiết kiệm chi* (AL3) (Notably, the entire country has raised revenue and cut expenditures), the phrase *cả nước* (the entire country) serves as a broad locative reference. Subsequently, clause-based expressions are sentences that contain clauses contributing additional locative information, such as *Những doanh nghiệp này sẽ được xử lý tại các cơ quan chức năng* (CL4) (These businesses will be handled by the relevant authorities), where the clause *tại các cơ quan chức năng* (by the relevant authorities) implies a specific institutional context. The last property is called expressions of multiple phrases that combine

multiple locative phrases to create a complex locative framework, such as *Việc triển khai gói tín dụng cho nhà ở xã hội rất chậm* (AL4) (The implementation of the social housing credit package is very slow), which amalgamates locative elements to convey a nuanced locative setting.

Although ETEs are not exclusive to the Vietnamese language, their frequency and subtle usage might differ among languages, indicating cultural and linguistic disparities in locative communication preferences. For example, certain languages may give more importance to explicit locative phrases, whilst others, such as Vietnamese, prefer the implicit and context-dependent approach supported by ETEs. This variety highlights the intricate interaction of language, culture, and the techniques used to communicate geographical information.

Comprehending the syntactic characteristics of ETEs is essential for proficient communication in Vietnamese. These expressions make it easier to give short but meaningful descriptions of locations by using hints from the surrounding context and common knowledge. Their extensive utilization showcases the language's adeptness in conveying locative specifics without superfluous explicitness, while still honoring cultural norms and pragmatic factors. Examining ETEs provides useful insights into the complex mechanisms by which languages encode and communicate locative information, showcasing the diverse range of communication tactics across different linguistic and cultural contexts.

#### 4.1.2. Syntactic properties of ETEs

ETEs are known as language formulations in Vietnamese that demonstrate a notable degree of schematicity and abstraction in expressing temporal information. In contrast to explicit temporal markers, ETEs use the complicated interaction of contextual signals and common pragmatic knowledge to send references to time without being explicit. The unique characteristic of the Vietnamese language demonstrates its inclination towards brevity and practical effectiveness in time-based communication, while simultaneously highlighting its ability for productive and imaginative language utilization.

**Table 4. Syntactic properties of ETEs**

Type	Syntactic properties	Examples	Codes
1	Verb-Based expressions	Cuộc họp <b>kết thúc</b> vào lúc 5 giờ chiều. <i>The meeting finished at 5 pm.</i>	<b>CT9</b>
2	Noun Phrase expressions	Chỉ số giá tiêu dùng tháng 5 tăng 0.05% <b>so với tháng 4</b> . <i>The consumer price index in May increased by 0.05% compared to April.</i>	<b>AT1</b>
3	Clause-Based expressions	Khi các công trình hoàn thành sẽ có lễ khánh thành. <i>When the construction is completed, there will be an inauguration ceremony.</i>	<b>HT4</b>
4	Expressions of Multiple Phrases	Trong những năm gần đây, tình hình kinh tế đã có nhiều tiến triển. <i>In recent years, the economy has made a lot of progress.</i>	<b>JT7</b>

Table 4 shows that we can roughly classify the syntactic characteristics of ETEs in Vietnamese into four primary categories, each representing a distinct schematic pattern. Firstly, verb-based expressions, such as *Cuộc họp kết thúc vào lúc 5 giờ chiều* (The meeting finished at 5 pm) (CT9), utilize the verb *kết thúc* (end) to convey a temporal meaning without explicitly mentioning a specific time. Furthermore, noun phrase expressions use noun phrases to create a sense of time, as demonstrated in the sentence *Mùa đông năm này thật khắc nghiệt* (This winter has been exceptionally hard) (GT1), in which the phrase *mùa đông năm này* (this winter) serves as a general temporal reference.

The third type of expression is clause-based, which includes clauses that provide additional temporal information. An example of this is *Khi các công trình hoàn thành, sẽ có lễ khánh thành* (When the construction is completed, there will be an inauguration ceremony) (HT4), where the clause *khi các công trình hoàn thành* (when the construction is completed) indicates a specific temporal context. Multiple phrases in an expression carefully combine different temporal elements to create complex temporal frameworks. For example, the sentence *Trong những năm gần đây, tình hình kinh tế đã có nhiều tiến triển* (In recent years, the economy has made a lot of progress) (JT7) shows how multiple phrases work together to create a complex temporal context.

Although ETEs are not unique to the Vietnamese language, their widespread use and subtle application reveal cultural and linguistic preferences for time communication. Some languages place emphasis on using clear temporal markers, while others, such as Vietnamese, tend to rely on implicit and context-dependent methods supported by ETEs. The presence of diverse elements

highlights the complex relationship between language, culture, and the methods used to express time-related information, demonstrating the depth of human communication.

Understanding the syntactic features of ETEs is essential for effective communication in Vietnamese, as it reveals the underlying patterns and productive mechanisms that control their use. These expressions effectively represent time by utilizing contextual signals and shared knowledge, showcasing the language's ability to provide temporal aspects without needless explicitness. Studying ETEs provides a valuable understanding of the intricate processes through which languages encode and convey temporal information. This research emphasizes the wide variety of communication strategies used in different linguistic and cultural settings and reveals important insights into the fundamental structure and efficiency of human language.

**4.2. Semantic and pragmatic aspects of ELTEs**

The purpose of this section is to examine the meaning and practical implications of ELTEs in the Vietnamese language. The study examines these expressions and emphasizes their functions in implicitly conveying locative and temporal information, thus enhancing communication. The investigation provides valuable insights into how ELTEs improve the effectiveness and nuance of language usage, contributing to a more profound understanding of Vietnamese linguistics.

**4.2.1. Semantic and pragmatic aspects of ELEs**

Empty locative expressions in Vietnamese provide locative information without directly referencing a particular location. These expressions depend on contextual clues and mutual understanding between the speaker and listener to implicitly convey locative data. ELEs are a characteristic aspect of the Vietnamese language. They serve as a reflection of the language's inclination towards brevity and practical effectiveness in conveying locative information. Comprehending ELEs entails analyzing their inherent characteristics and their function in efficiently conveying locative information using simple verbal structures.

**Table 5. Semantic and pragmatic aspects of ELEs**

Type	Semantic properties	Examples	Codes
1	Implicit location	Tại vùng khó khăn này nhiều hộ gia đình vẫn đang sống trong cảnh thiếu thốn. <i>In this difficult area, many households are still living in deprivation.</i>	IL1
2	Locative relationship	Trước đây một số doanh nghiệp đã từng hoạt động tại những nơi đó. <i>Previously, some businesses used to operate in those places.</i>	CL7
3	Locative reference	Đội Cảnh sát hình sự và người dân đã bắt giữ tội phạm trên địa bàn. <i>The Criminal Police Team and the people have arrested criminals in the area.</i>	BL1
4	Locative metaphor	Tình hình kinh tế được ví như mùa đông lạnh giá. <i>The economic situation is likened to a cold winter.</i>	GL1
5	Context-dependent meanings	Để tổ chức đảng không ngừng đi lên vững mạnh tại đơn vị Đảng ủy công ty đã phối hợp chặt chẽ với Công đoàn trong các hoạt động. <i>To ensure the continuous and robust development of the party organization at the unit, the company's party committee closely cooperated with the trade union in its activities.</i>	FL5

Table 5 illustrates the various categories into which we can divide the semantic features of ELEs. Implicit location expressions, such as *Tại vùng khó khăn này nhiều hộ gia đình vẫn đang sống trong cảnh thiếu thốn*, only imply a location without expressly expressing it. (IL1): In this challenging region, numerous households continue to endure deprivation. The geographical relationship between entities is indicated by locative relationship expressions, such as *Trước đây một số doanh nghiệp đã từng hoạt động tại những nơi đó*. (CL7): In the past, certain businesses operated in those locations. Locative reference refers to the use of a general term to refer to a location broadly. For example, *Đội Cảnh sát hình sự và người dân đã bắt giữ tội phạm trên địa bàn*. (BL1) - The Criminal Police Team and the people have arrested criminals in the area.

Additionally, ELEs can be locative metaphors, such as *Tình hình kinh tế được ví như mùa đông lạnh giá*, that use figurative language to portray a location. (GL1) - The economic situation is likened to a cold winter. Context-dependent meanings are also important for ELEs, as demonstrated by *Để tổ chức đảng không ngừng đi lên vững mạnh tại đơn vị Đảng ủy công ty đã phối hợp chặt chẽ với Công đoàn trong các hoạt động*. (FL5): The company's party committee closely cooperates with the trade union in its activities to ensure the continuous and robust development of the party organization at the unit.

ELEs have important pragmatic responsibilities in addition to their semantic ones. They make it unnecessary to clearly state locations, enabling effective and subtle communication. This is consistent with Vietnamese culture, which values implicit and indirect communication methods that put context awareness ahead of overly explicit communication. ELEs allow speakers to preserve face and adhere to pragmatic rules while communicating locative details in a concise manner.



Vietnamese tends to be more indirect and pragmatically flexible than other languages, like English, which frequently uses explicit locative phrases such as in the office on the second floor. The language's extensive usage of EEs demonstrates this. This contrast emphasizes how critical it is to understand these linguistic nuances for language learning and intercultural communication.

In conclusion, one notable aspect of the Vietnamese language that promotes effective and contextually appropriate spatial communication is the use of EEs. By dissecting pragmatic and semantic components, we can learn more about the complex ways that languages encode locative information and the cultural factors that determine communicative norms. For language learners, teachers, and translators negotiating the complexity of the Vietnamese linguistic landscape, a thorough understanding of EEs is essential.

#### 4.2.2. Semantic and pragmatic aspects of EEs

EEs are linguistic structures in Vietnamese that play a crucial role in communication by implicitly conveying temporal information without explicitly stating specific time periods or durations. In order to effectively convey information about time, these sentences primarily depend on contextual cues and the shared comprehension of the speaker and the listener. EEs demonstrate the Vietnamese language's inclination towards conciseness and efficacy, facilitating seamless and efficient communication while deftly balancing the delicate equilibrium between brevity and clarity in conveying time.

**Table 6. Semantic and pragmatic aspects of EEs**

Type	Semantic properties	Examples	Codes
1	Implicit time	Chỉ số giá tiêu dùng tháng 5 tăng 0.05% so với tháng 4. <i>The consumer price index in May increased by 0.05% compared to April.</i>	AT1
2	Temporal relationship	Tình trạng đang diễn ra trong những ngày liên tiếp gần đây. <i>The situation is ongoing in recent consecutive days</i>	DT3
3	Temporal reference	Việc xử lý sẽ diễn ra trong tương lai. <i>The processing will take place in the future.</i>	CT4
4	Metaphorical time	Trông thấy tiến bộ đó trong giai đoạn gần đây thật tuyệt vời <i>Witnessing that progress recently was delightful.</i>	ET4
5	Context-dependent meanings	Tăng trưởng phục hồi doanh nghiệp vẫn khó khăn. <i>Growth recovery for businesses remains difficult</i>	AT7

Based on their semantic characteristics, EEs can be divided into five primary groups: context-dependent meanings, implicit time, temporal relationships, temporal references, and metaphorical time. Implicit temporal expressions rely on the surrounding context to infer time-related information. For example, *Chỉ số giá tiêu dùng tháng 5 tăng 0.05% so với tháng 4* (AT1) states that the consumer price index increased by 0.05% in May compared to April. Here, the expression *so với tháng 4* (in contrast to April) indicates the time period implicitly; the listener must infer the chronological reference from the context.

First, temporal relationship expressions indicate the relationship between distinct time intervals. For example, *Tình trạng đang diễn ra trong những ngày liên tiếp gần đây* (DT3) indicates that the issue has been continuous in recent consecutive days. By implying a relationship between the current circumstance and a sequence of earlier days, the expression *những ngày liên tiếp gần đây* (recent consecutive days) helps the listener understand the temporal relationship without providing specific information. Then, temporal reference expressions convey implicit but obvious messages regarding time. An example of such an expression is *Việc xử lý sẽ diễn ra trong tương lai* (CT4). In this expression *trong tương lai* (in the future) functions as a temporal reference, implying that the processing will take place at an undisclosed later date and doesn't require any more explanation. Subsequently, time expressions that use metaphors to indicate specific temporal events include *Trông thấy tiến bộ đó trong giai đoạn gần đây thật tuyệt vời* (ET4). In this case, the term *trong giai đoạn gần đây* (recently) uses a metaphor to indicate a certain time frame without saying so directly. Finally, situational context is used by meanings that depend on it, as shown by *Tăng trưởng phục hồi doanh nghiệp vẫn khó khăn* (AT7), which means Growth recovery for enterprises remains challenging, to subtly send information about time. This expression consists of the word *vẫn* (to remain) which denotes a continuous state or condition; therefore, the listener can deduce the temporal component from the particular context.

In short, EEs are important because they provide a nuanced and efficient means of expressing temporal information in Vietnamese without the need for explicit declarations. Their emphasis on mutual understanding and context makes communication easier, which is consistent with the cultural preference for succinctness and indirectness. Through classification and analysis, we gain a deep understanding of the language strategies and cultural norms that influence temporal communication in Vietnamese. Gaining proficiency in this area improves one's capacity to communicate effectively in Vietnamese and fosters a deeper understanding of the careful balancing act between conciseness and comprehensibility.

#### 4.3. Cultural and linguistic influences on ELTEs

This section seeks to investigate the influence of cultural and linguistic factors on the utilization and understanding of ELTEs in the Vietnamese language. This study explores the complex relationship between the high-context communication style, indirectness, politeness, and communal orientation of Vietnamese culture, and the linguistic principles of implicit meaning through context and abstract patterns. It examines how these expressions operate within their cultural and linguistic environment.

4.3.1. *Cultural influences on ELTEs*

Cultural elements such as the use of high-context communication, indirectness and politeness, communal orientation, and pragmatic flexibility significantly shape ELTEs in Vietnamese. High-context communication relies heavily on contextual cues rather than explicit statements to convey information. The cultural inclination towards subtlety and respect is demonstrated by the use of indirectness and politeness in interactions. Communal orientation prioritizes collaborative acts and shared experiences, whereas pragmatic flexibility demonstrates the ability to change language use based on the specific context and need.

**Table 7. Cultural influences on ELTEs**

Type	Cultural influences	Examples	Codes
1	High-context communication	Phiên họp đánh giá tình hình kinh tế - xã hội tháng 5 tiếp tục xu hướng phục hồi tích cực tốt hơn tháng 4. <i>The meeting assessing the socio-economic situation in May continues the positive recovery trend compared to April</i>	AS1
2	Indirectness and politeness	Nợ công, nợ chính phủ, nợ nước ngoài quốc gia và bội chi được kiểm soát thấp hơn. <i>Public debt, government debt, national foreign debt, and budget deficit are controlled at a lower level.</i>	AT2
3	Communal orientation	Đáng chú ý cả nước đã đẩy mạnh tăng thu tiết kiệm chi <i>Notably, the entire country has made significant efforts to increase revenue and reduce expenditure.</i>	AS3
4	Pragmatic flexibility	Việc triển khai gói tín dụng cho nhà ở xã hội rất chậm. <i>The implementation of the social housing credit package is very slow.</i>	AS4

In Vietnamese culture, high-context communication is dominant, with a significant amount of information implicit and dependent on shared understanding. The phrase *Phiên họp đánh giá tình hình kinh tế - xã hội tháng 5 tiếp tục xu hướng phục hồi tích cực tốt hơn tháng 4* (AS1) suggests that the meeting is focused on evaluating the positive recovery trend in the economic and social situation in May compared to April, without providing specific information. This type of phrase presupposes that both the speaker and listener have sufficient contextual knowledge to comprehend the suggested significance. High-context communication is characterized by its ability to deliver information efficiently and concisely, aligning with the cultural norms of Vietnamese interactions. In this context, the surrounding context often achieves clarity, making explicit details unnecessary.

From another perspective, indirection and courtesy are essential components of Vietnamese communication. The phrase *Nợ công, nợ chính phủ, nợ nước ngoài quốc gia và bội chi được kiểm soát thấp hơn* (AT2) exemplifies the use of indirect temporal expressions. Instead of providing precise numerical values, the phrase allows for interpretation and acknowledges the listener's capacity to deduce the specifics. This indirect technique not only upholds civility but also embodies cultural standards that prioritize harmony and preserving one's reputation in social interactions. These formulations serve to avoid any potential discomfort or direct confrontation that may result from more specific assertions.

In Vietnamese culture, there is a strong emphasis on community experiences and behaviors, which is known as communal orientation. An illustration is *Đáng chú ý cả nước đã đẩy mạnh tăng thu tiết kiệm chi* (AS3). In this context, *cả nước* is used as a general term to refer to the entire country, emphasizing collective participation without specifying particular individuals or localities. This communal emphasis is in line with cultural principles that stress group cohesion and collective obligations. This emphasizes the interdependence of individuals within a community, as well as the importance of collective effort and identity in Vietnamese society.

Finally, Vietnamese ELTEs exhibit pragmatic flexibility, enabling expressions to adjust according to the context. For example, in the statement *Việc triển khai gói tín dụng cho nhà ở xã hội rất chậm* (AS4), the phrase *rất chậm* (extremely sluggish) is used in a vague manner to denote a prolonged time. The adaptability of speakers allows them to modify their language to suit different communication requirements and situations. The phenomenon showcases the cultural adaptability and practical approach to language usage, allowing individuals involved in communication to mutually agree and comprehend the exact interpretation based on the context and shared understanding.

In conclusion, cultural practices and communication styles deeply embed ELTEs in Vietnamese. Vietnamese expressions are unique due to their high-context nature, indirectness, politeness, communal orientation, and pragmatic flexibility. By comparing these

characteristics with other languages, we see that Vietnamese places a significant emphasis on implicit meanings and contextual cues, which are crucial for effective and nuanced communication. Understanding these cultural influences on ELTEs provides valuable insights into Vietnamese linguistics and enhances cross-cultural communication.

#### 4.3.2. Linguistics influences on ELTEs

Linguistic occurrences known as ELTEs assume geographical or temporal components instead of explicitly mentioning them. These phrases largely depend on context to fully convey their meaning, making them a distinct and crucial part of natural language processing and comprehension. ELTEs, also known as ellipsis-like textual elements, often function implicitly within sentences, contributing to overall coherence and context without explicit declaration. This implicitness helps to optimize communication by reducing repetition and facilitating smoother, more efficient interactions.

**Table 8. Linguistics influences on ELTEs**

Type	Linguistic influences	Examples	Codes
1	Implicit meaning through context	Phiên họp đánh giá tình hình kinh tế - xã hội tháng 5 tiếp tục xu hướng phục hồi tích cực tốt hơn tháng 4 đạt kết quả tốt hơn cùng kỳ năm 2023 trên hầu hết các lĩnh vực. <i>The meeting assessing the socio-economic situation in May continued the positive recovery trend seen in April, achieving better results compared to the same period in 2023 across most sectors.</i>	AS1
2	Interaction of linguistic phenomena	Tăng trưởng phục hồi doanh nghiệp vẫn khó khăn. <i>Growth recovery remains challenging for businesses.</i>	AS2
3	Syntactic analysis and constraints	Trong tại vùng khó khăn này, nơi vị trí cụ thể được ngụ ý và hiểu theo ngữ cảnh. <i>In this difficult area, where the precise location is suggested and understood by the context.</i>	IS1
4	Abstract patterns and productivity	Trước đây đã từng, nhưng không đề cập đến thời gian cụ thể. <i>In the past, but without mentioning a specific period.</i>	DS7

First, ELTEs often function implicitly within sentences, contributing to overall coherence and context without being overtly present. This implicitness helps streamline communication by reducing redundancy and enabling smoother, more efficient interactions. For example, consider the implicit meaning through context (AS1): *Phiên họp đánh giá tình hình kinh tế - xã hội tháng 5 tiếp tục xu hướng phục hồi tích cực tốt hơn tháng 4 đạt kết quả tốt hơn cùng kỳ năm 2023 trên hầu hết các lĩnh vực*. In English, the meeting continued the positive recovery trend seen in April, achieving better results compared to the same period in 2023 across most sectors. Here, *tháng 5* (May) implicitly indicates the time frame of the meeting's evaluation without needing further clarification. Another example demonstrating the interaction of linguistic phenomena (AS2) is: *Tăng trưởng phục hồi doanh nghiệp vẫn khó khăn*, translated as growth recovery remains challenging for businesses. The term *doanh nghiệp* (businesses) implicitly suggests the subject of the difficulties, showing how ELTEs interact with other linguistic elements to convey meaning efficiently.

Next, A variety of semantic, pragmatic, and morphological traits that ELTEs display improve the breadth and flow of communication. Semantically, the speaker and listener's shared knowledge is what fills in the blanks in these statements. From a pragmatic standpoint, they help to streamline conversations by cutting down on repetition and increasing coherence. When interpreted in context, ELTEs might morphologically manifest as nouns or prepositional phrases. As an example of the intricate ways in which these expressions function, consider *tại vùng khó khăn này* (IS1), which means in this difficult area, where the precise location is suggested and understood by the context.

Subsequently, when ELTEs in Vietnamese are compared to those in other languages, such as English, both distinctive and shared characteristics are revealed. Vietnamese tends to utilize implicit terms that are understood in context, while English frequently uses explicit time markers like yesterday or last week. In Vietnamese, for instance, *trước đây đã từng* (DS7), as opposed to the more direct in the past in English, suggests a former activity without mentioning a specific period. This distinction emphasizes how crucial linguistic and cultural context are when evaluating ELTEs and emphasizes their significance for effective communication.

Eventually, ELTEs are not only fascinating from a theoretical perspective but also have practical implications in everyday communication and language learning. By understanding how these expressions work, language learners can better grasp the subtleties of a language, enhancing their fluency and comprehension. Additionally, for natural language processing applications, accurately identifying and interpreting ELTEs can improve machine translation, which makes them more effective and natural-sounding.

In summary, by bridging the gap between explicit and implicit information, ELTEs are essential to clear and consistent communication. By enabling more complex and contextually driven interactions, they enhance language. Gaining an understanding of and analysis of these phrases can help one better understand how language functions and how communication is affected by it. By comparing ELTEs between

languages, we can gain a deeper understanding of the distinctive and universal features of this linguistic phenomenon and expand our knowledge of language and its purposes. Thus, ELTEs are not only an intriguing field of study but also crucial for improving our language proficiency and communication techniques.

## 5. Conclusion

This study examines the use of ELTEs in Vietnamese, highlighting their crucial role in implicitly expressing geographical and temporal information. Utilizing both CG and LFG, the study provides a thorough grasp of the syntactic and semantic functions of these expressions, representing the linguistic and cultural subtleties of Vietnamese communication. The dual-framework approach highlights the importance of ELTEs for efficient communication and language acquisition by offering a strong basis for examining their structural and functional characteristics.

Despite the positives of this research, such as the thorough analysis offered by integrating LFG and CG, and the unique cultural insights into Vietnamese communication, there are notable drawbacks. The study is limited because it relies solely on a qualitative analysis of 20 Vietnamese media stories, which may not fully represent the range of ELTE usage in various genres and situations. Moreover, even if the study provides an in-depth analysis of Vietnamese, without more comparative investigation, the conclusions might not be directly transferable to other languages.

A future study should consider including a larger and more diversified corpus, including spoken language and various textual media formats, to capture a wider variety of ELTE usage in order to solve these constraints and build on the findings. By integrating insights from cognitive science and pragmatics, interdisciplinary techniques could enhance our understanding of the processing and employment of ELTEs in real-time communication. Furthermore, by comparing Vietnamese with other languages, comparative research might uncover ELTE characteristics that are both language-specific and universal, furthering the field of linguistic theory. Investigating the pedagogical implications of ELTEs can facilitate the development of successful teaching methods for Vietnamese language learners that emphasize implicit and contextual meaning understanding.

**Funding:** This research received no external funding.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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