



## Developing a system of exercises on word and phrase repetition for fifth-grade students in line with the Communicative Competence-Oriented Approach

Nguyen Thi Huyen Trang

Graduate student K27, Educational Science (Primary Education), Faculty of Primary Education, Hanoi Pedagogical University 2, Vietnam

### Abstract

This paper focuses on developing a system of exercises on the rhetorical devices of word repetition and phrase repetition for Grade 5 students in accordance with the orientation of developing communicative competence—one of the core competencies emphasized in the 2018 General Education Curriculum of Vietnam. Based on an analysis of the psychological characteristics, cognitive development, and linguistic proficiency of primary students, the study identifies principles for designing the exercise system that ensure scientific validity, pedagogical appropriateness, practical relevance, and the promotion of learners' activeness and creativity.

The proposed exercise system not only helps students recognize and understand the functions of word and phrase repetition, but also enables them to apply these rhetorical devices flexibly in speaking and writing activities, thereby enhancing their ability to use Vietnamese effectively in communication. The research contributes to innovating the teaching of Vietnamese in primary schools, aiming to develop students' linguistic competence while providing both theoretical and practical foundations for designing rhetoric-based exercises in competency-oriented language education.

**Keywords:** Word repetition, phrase repetition, rhetorical exercises, communicative competence, grade 5 vietnamese

### Introduction

Communicative competence is one of the most essential competencies emphasized in the 2018 General Education Curriculum of Vietnam, aiming to foster the comprehensive development of students' qualities and abilities. Particularly at the primary level, the cultivation of communicative competence serves as a foundation that not only develops students' linguistic capacity but also nurtures their thinking, aesthetic appreciation, and creativity. Among linguistic means, the rhetorical devices of word repetition and phrase repetition play a crucial role in enhancing expressive power, emphasizing meaning, and creating emotional resonance in communication.

In the Grade 5 Vietnamese Language curriculum, these rhetorical devices are introduced as a core content area designed to help students use words more flexibly and expressively in both speaking and writing. However, current teaching practices show that many students still struggle to identify and apply these devices effectively. Traditional teaching methods sometimes fail to stimulate students' creativity and active participation, resulting in a theoretical understanding of rhetoric with limited practical application in real communication contexts.

Therefore, the development of a system of exercises on word and phrase repetition with a focus on communicative competence is both necessary and meaningful. Such a system not only helps students consolidate and deepen their linguistic knowledge but also provides opportunities for them to apply what they have learned flexibly in various communicative situations. Through this process, students can gradually build and enhance their ability to use Vietnamese creatively, confidently, and effectively.

Designing exercises in line with the orientation of communicative competence requires teachers to shift from the goal of "learning to know" to "learning to do" and

"learning to communicate." This approach encourages students to actively participate in learning through experiential activities, discussions, speaking–writing practice, and language feedback. At the same time, the exercises should be organized according to principles that promote learner autonomy and reflect the psychological characteristics of Grade 5 students, thereby creating a friendly, open, and engaging language learning environment.

Based on these foundations, this paper aims to propose and construct a system of exercises on the rhetorical devices of word and phrase repetition for Grade 5 students from the perspective of developing communicative competence. The proposed system ensures both scientific and pedagogical validity, contributing to the innovation of Vietnamese language teaching at the primary level and meeting the requirements of the 2018 General Education Curriculum.

### Content

#### 1. Principles for Designing the System of Exercises

To ensure that the development of a system of exercises on the rhetorical devices of word repetition and phrase repetition is effective in fostering communicative competence among Grade 5 students, several fundamental principles need to be observed as follows:

##### a. Principle of ensuring the goal of communicative competence development

The core objective of the exercise system is to form and develop students' communicative language competence. Therefore, exercises should be designed to integrate knowledge, skills, and attitudes, enabling students to apply their understanding of word and phrase repetition in authentic communicative situations. The exercises should go beyond mere identification and analysis, encouraging

students to use these rhetorical devices in speaking and writing to express emotions, convey ideas, and create emphasis or stylistic effects in communication.

**b. Principle of ensuring scientific and pedagogical validity**

The exercises must be developed on the basis of linguistic, rhetorical, and pedagogical theories related to Vietnamese language teaching. At the same time, they should be appropriate to the psychological characteristics, cognitive level, and linguistic capacity of Grade 5 students. The system of exercises should be arranged logically — from simple to complex, from recognition to creative application — helping learners gradually progress from mastering theoretical knowledge to using it effectively in real communication.

**c. Principle of ensuring practicality and connection with real-life communication**

The exercises should reflect familiar communicative situations relevant to students' daily learning and social interactions. Incorporating practical elements into the exercises helps learners recognize the meaning and practical value of rhetorical devices in real communication, thereby stimulating motivation, engagement, and a love for the Vietnamese language.

**d. Principle of promoting students' activeness and creativity**

The exercises should create opportunities for students to explore, express their own thoughts, feelings, and ideas through activities such as group discussions, role-playing, writing short texts, oral presentations, or creative writing. Each exercise should allow for multiple possible answers, encouraging independent and creative linguistic thinking.

**e. Principle of ensuring systematic and integrated design**

The exercises should be constructed as a coherent and progressive system, ensuring continuity across cognitive levels (recognition – comprehension – application – creative application). In addition, it is essential to emphasize interdisciplinary integration, enabling students to use word and phrase repetition flexibly across different linguistic and communicative contexts.

**2. The Process of Designing a System of Exercises on Word and Phrase Repetition for Grade 5 Students Oriented Toward Developing Communicative Competence**

The construction of a system of exercises must follow a scientific sequence, ensuring that it both aligns with the objectives of the 2018 General Education Curriculum in Vietnamese Language for primary education and promotes the development of students' communicative competence. Designing a system of exercises on word and phrase repetition, similar to organizing a teaching activity, needs to

be carried out through logical, coherent steps, forming an integrated and systematic whole.

**This process includes the following five basic steps**

**Step 1: Study the 2018 General Education Curriculum and Grade 5 Vietnamese Textbooks**

- Examine the required knowledge and competencies in lessons that involve the use of word and phrase repetition.
- Determine the appropriateness of word and phrase repetition for fifth-grade students in terms of simplicity, familiarity, observability, and applicability in real-life communication.
- On that basis, select the core content to be used in designing the exercises.

**Step 2: Identify the Purpose of Designing the Exercise System**

- **Clarify the guiding question:** What is the purpose of designing a system of exercises on word and phrase repetition?
- **Main purpose:** To help students recognize, analyze, and apply word and phrase repetition effectively in communication.
- **Supporting purposes:** To train communicative skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), develop linguistic thinking, and enhance students' ability to cooperate and express opinions.
- **Define the scope of use:** Whether to integrate with textbook exercises or supplement them; to be used in practice lessons, group activities, or formative assessments.

**Step 3: Determine the Basic Types of Exercises**

Based on the requirements for developing communicative competence, the system of exercises on word and phrase repetition for Grade 5 students can be divided into three main groups

**a. Identification exercises**

- Recognize word and phrase repetition in familiar sentences, passages, or poems.
- Name and identify the initial effects of repetition phenomena.

**b. Analytical exercises**

- Help students understand the role of repetition in emphasizing meaning, creating rhythm, and expressing emotions.
- Relate the stylistic effect of repetition to real-life communication (e.g., in proverbs, slogans, dialogues).

**c. Productive and applied exercises**

- Ask students to write sentences or short paragraphs using word or phrase repetition.
- **Apply repetition in communicative situations:** giving a presentation, storytelling, or writing descriptive or simple argumentative paragraphs.
- **Encourage creativity:** writing slogans, composing poems, or creating dialogues with repetition.

**Step 4: Construct the System and Exercise Matrix**

- Design a matrix to ensure balance in the number, level of difficulty, and themes of exercises.

- **Diversify exercise formats:** multiple-choice vs. open-ended, individual vs. group work, written vs. interactive communication tasks

Ensure exercises are age-appropriate and suitable for the cognitive and psychological characteristics of fifth-grade students.

**Step 5: Analyze, Revise, and Finalize the Exercise System**

- Consult with primary school teachers and methodology experts to revise and refine the system.
- Conduct classroom trials to evaluate the effectiveness of the exercises; adjust content, language, and difficulty levels based on feedback.
- Finalize the exercise system in an open and flexible direction so that it can be adapted for various teaching contexts and modified according to students’ responses.

**3. System of Exercises on Word and Phrase Repetition for Grade 5 Students Oriented Toward Developing Communicative Competence**

**1. Identification Exercises**

**a. Objectives**

- To help students develop the skill of accurately identifying intentionally repeated words or phrases (word and phrase repetition) in different linguistic units such as sentences, paragraphs, and poems.
- To train students’ ability to observe and distinguish the stylistic use of repetition from ordinary or unintentional repetition caused by awkward expression.
- To consolidate knowledge of the basic types of repetition (successive, intermittent, and circular repetition).

**b. Specific Types of Exercises**

**Type 1: Identifying and Pointing Out Repeated Words/Phrases**

**Implementation**

The teacher provides sentences, paragraphs, or poems containing repetition. Students read carefully and underline or circle the intentionally repeated words or phrases.

**Example 1:** Read the poem below and underline the repeated phrases you find:

“Green bamboo, green since when?  
 Long ago, there were bamboo groves so green.  
 Thin and fragile are its stems and leaves,  
 Yet how strong the ramparts you form, oh bamboo!”

**Example 2:** Read the poem below and underline the repeated words or phrases

“I love my homeland so dear,  
 I love the green fields far and near,

I love the winding river’s gleam,  
 I love my school, my childhood dream.”

**Type 2: Choosing the Sentence that Uses Repetition (Multiple Choice)**

**Implementation**

The teacher gives multiple-choice questions, each with 3–4 options. Only one sentence uses repetition correctly. Students choose the correct answer.

**Example 1:** Circle the letter before the sentence that uses phrase repetition

- a. My cat is very gentle.
- b. When spring comes, hundreds of flowers bloom, hundreds of birds sing.
- c. The sky is high and clear.
- d. I am reading a story.

**Example 2:** Circle the letter before the sentence that uses word repetition

- a. I am attentively listening to my teacher’s explanation.
- b. On the high branch, the bird sings merrily.
- c. I miss my school, miss my class, miss my teachers and friends.
- d. The sun rises, spreading light everywhere.

**Type 3: Distinguishing Repetition from Redundancy Errors Implementation**

The teacher provides worksheets containing pairs of sentences—one using repetition correctly, the other containing a redundancy or awkward repetition error. Students read each pair carefully, circle the correct sentence that uses repetition, and underline the one with a redundancy error.

Students are encouraged to briefly explain their choice. The teacher then organizes pair discussion and whole-class correction, helping all students clearly understand how to distinguish stylistic repetition from mere repetition errors.

**Worksheet: Practice on Word and Phrase Repetition Objectives**

To help students distinguish between stylistic repetition (điệp ngữ) and redundancy errors (lỗi lặp từ), and to identify common types of repetition in Vietnamese.

**Exercise 1: Distinguishing Repetition from Redundancy Error**

**Instructions**

- Carefully read each pair of sentences below.
- Circle the letter before the sentence that uses repetition correctly, and underline the sentence that contains a redundancy error.
- Briefly explain why you made that choice.

No.	Sentence Pair	Your Choice (✓)	Brief Explanation
1	a. Lan really loves roses. Lan waters the roses every day. b. Mom! Mom! Please come back to me!	<input type="checkbox"/> a. <input type="checkbox"/> b.	
2	a. I study, study, and keep studying endlessly. b. I study study study all morning.	<input type="checkbox"/> a. <input type="checkbox"/> b.	
3	a. Grandpa loves the trees very much; he takes care of them every day. b. Oh tree, oh tree, please grow up quickly!	<input type="checkbox"/> a. <input type="checkbox"/> b.	

**Suggestions – Sample Answers**

- **Repetition (Điệp ngữ):** the deliberate repetition of words or phrases to emphasize emotion or meaning.
- **Redundancy Error (Lỗi lặp từ):** unintentional repetition on that makes the sentence heavy or wordy.

**Exercise 2. Identifying the Type of Repetition**

**Instructions**

- Read the following sentences and circle the letter before the correct answer.
- Write the corresponding type of repetition in the table below.

**Sentence 1:** “I love you, love you, love you so much.”

- A. Successive repetition      B. Intermittent repetition  
C. Circular repetition

**Sentence 2:** “Study, study more, study forever.”

- A. Successive repetition      B. Intermittent repetition  
C. Circular repetition

**Sentence 3:** “The bamboo protects the village, protects the country, protects the thatched roofs, protects the ripe rice fields.”

- A. Successive repetition  
B. Intermittent repetition  
C. Circular repetition

**Sentence 4:** “The moon rises high, higher, and higher still.”

- A. Successive repetition  
B. Intermittent repetition  
C. Circular repetition

Sentence No.	Correct Answer	Type of Repetition
1	A	Successive repetition
2	A	Successive repetition
3	B	Intermittent repetition
4	A	Successive repetition

**Organization of the Activity**

- **Format:** The teacher distributes individual worksheets to students. Students complete the tasks individually, then discuss their answers in pairs to reach a consensus.
- **Consolidation activity:** The teacher uses a supplementary board or an interactive board to organize a game called “*Who Can Spot the Repetition Fastest?*” — students quickly raise answer cards to choose the sentence containing repetition or identify the correct type of repetition.
- **Objective:** To help students reinforce their knowledge, and practice recognizing and analyzing word and phrase repetition in real communicative contexts.

**2. Analytical Exercises**

**a. Objectives**

- To help students gain a deeper understanding of the expressive value of word and phrase repetition in specific contexts (for emphasis, enumeration, rhythm, emotional appeal, etc.).
- To train students to clearly and logically explain the effects of this stylistic device.

- To develop analytical thinking and the ability to appreciate the beauty and expressive power of language.
- To enhance reading comprehension skills, especially for literary texts.

**b. Specific Types of Exercises**

**Type 1: Explaining the Effect of Word/Phrase Repetition**

**Implementation:** After students have identified the repeated words or phrases, the teacher asks them to state or write the effect of repetition in that sentence, paragraph, or poem.

**Example:** In the line “The bamboo protects the village, protects the country, protects the thatched roofs, protects the ripe rice fields,” what is the effect of repeating the word “protects”?

**Type 2: Explaining the Author’s Use of Repetition**

**Implementation:** Ask questions that require students to infer the author’s artistic intention in using repetition.

**Example:** Why does the poet Trần Đăng Khoa repeatedly use the phrase “Hạt gạo làng ta” (The grain of rice from our village) in his poem of the same name?

**Type 3: Comparing Expressive Effects**

**Implementation:** Present two sentences expressing the same idea (one using repetition, the other not). Ask students to compare and decide which expresses the emotion more effectively and explain why.

**Example:** Compare the two sentences below and say which conveys a deeper sense of sadness. Why?

- I feel sad when I have to leave my teacher.
- Oh sadness, such sadness when I must leave my teacher!

**Type 4: Matching Repetition Examples with Their Effects**

**Implementation:** Design an exercise with two columns — one with examples of repetition and the other with their main expressive effects. Students are asked to match them correctly.

**Example:** Match the sentences in Column A with the corresponding expressive effect of repetition in Column B.

Column A	Column B
1. I love my school, love my teachers, love my friends.	b) Listing objects that share the same quality or action.
2. Hurry up! Hurry up now! We’re almost late!	c) Urging action and creating a fast rhythm.
3. The scenery here is so beautiful, truly magnificent!	a) Emphasizing intensity or degree.

**Language Materials**

Select vivid and meaningful excerpts from prose and poetry with clear artistic effects created through the use of word

and phrase repetition, appropriate to the aesthetic and linguistic comprehension level of fifth-grade students.

### Organization

Conduct pair or small-group discussions so that students can work together to analyze and propose different interpretations of the stylistic effects. Encourage students to share their opinions with the class. The teacher summarizes, comments, and standardizes the knowledge.

### 0.2. Exercises Using Word and Phrase Repetition in Writing Paragraphs or Compositions

#### a. Objectives

- To help students transform their knowledge of word and phrase repetition into practical writing skills and apply them in text creation (writing sentences, paragraphs, and compositions).
- To train students to select and use repetition appropriately according to communicative purposes, content, and text types.
- To develop the ability to express ideas in writing coherently, vividly, and emotionally.
- To encourage creativity in language use.

#### b. Specific Types of Exercises

##### Type 1: Rewriting Sentences Using Repetition

**Implementation:** Provide simple sentences and ask students to rewrite them into one or more new sentences using repetition to emphasize meaning or make the sentences more expressive.

**Example:** Rewrite the following sentence using repetition to emphasize the red color of the flamboyant flowers: “The flamboyant flowers bloom red in the schoolyard.” (Suggested answer: The flamboyant flowers bloom bright red — red blazing across the schoolyard.)

##### Type 2: Creating Sentences with Repetition as Required

**Implementation:** Clearly state both the content to be expressed and the type of repetition to be used.

**Example:** Write a sentence using intermittent repetition to describe the sound of birds singing in the garden in the morning.

(Suggested answer: In the garden, the birds chirp joyfully — chirping and fluttering from branch to branch.)

##### Type 3: Completing Sentences/Paragraphs by Adding Repetition

**Implementation:** Provide sentences or paragraphs with blanks at appropriate places and ask students to fill in words or phrases to create repetition, making the sentences or paragraphs more complete and expressive.

**Example:** Fill in the blanks with appropriate words to create repetition

“In the fields, the rice ripens \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ in a golden glow.” (Suggested answer: golden yellow, golden yellow)

##### Type 4: Writing a Short Paragraph or Composition Using Repetition

**Implementation:** Assign a short writing task (a 5–7 sentence paragraph or a 10–15-line composition) on a familiar topic or genre (descriptive, narrative, or reflective writing) with a

clear requirement to use word or phrase repetition for expressive effect.

### Example 1 (Paragraph Writing)

Write a paragraph (5–7 sentences) describing the schoolyard during recess, using at least one instance of repetition to convey the liveliness and noise.

### Example 2 (Short Composition – Integrated Writing Practice)

Write a short composition (10–15 lines) expressing your feelings about your mother, using repetition to show your love or gratitude toward her.

### Language Materials / Prompts

Writing topics should be close to fifth graders’ real-life experiences (family, friends, school, hometown, etc.), open-ended, and encourage emotional expression and natural, creative use of language.

### Organization

Assign the writing tasks individually. After writing, students may share their work with their group or the whole class. Encourage peer feedback on the use of repetition (e.g., appropriateness, effectiveness, possible improvements). The teacher provides overall feedback and may select some good or improvable examples for class analysis and learning.

Students are encouraged to revise their work after receiving comments.

### Conclusion

Teaching Vietnamese at the primary level in the direction of competency development—particularly communicative competence—requires innovation in content, teaching methods, and organizational forms. Among linguistic tools, the rhetorical device of repetition (both word and phrase repetition) is not only a unit of language knowledge but also an effective means to train students’ expressive ability, thinking, and linguistic creativity.

This article has affirmed the necessity of developing a system of exercises on the rhetorical device of repetition with a focus on fostering communicative competence. It has also proposed a set of principles to serve as the foundation for designing exercises that are appropriate to the psychological characteristics, cognitive abilities, and learning needs of fifth-grade students. The exercise system is built on an integrated approach, aiming to help students not only understand and identify rhetorical repetition but, more importantly, apply it flexibly and effectively in real communicative situations—both spoken and written.

The research results contribute to enriching reference materials for primary Vietnamese language teachers in organizing instruction oriented toward competency development. At the same time, it opens up a new approach to designing language exercises that place the learner at the center and view communication as the ultimate goal of the teaching and learning process.

### References

1. Ministry of Education and Training. General Education Curriculum Framework. Hanoi: Vietnam Education Publishing House, 2018.

2. Ministry of Education and Training. Vietnamese Language Grade 5. Hanoi: Vietnam Education Publishing House, 2018:1-2.
3. Ministry of Education and Training. Vietnamese Language Grade 5 – Canh Dieu Series. Hanoi: Vietnam Education Publishing House, 2020.
4. Ministry of Education and Training. Vietnamese Language Grade 5 – Creative Horizons Series. Hanoi: Vietnam Education Publishing House, 2020.
5. Ministry of Education and Training. Vietnamese Language Grade 5 – Connecting Knowledge with Life Series. Hanoi: Vietnam Education Publishing House, 2020.
6. Dinh Trong Lac. Textbook on Vietnamese Stylistics. Hanoi: Education Publishing House, 1994.
7. Dinh Trong Lac, Nguyen Thai Hoa. Vietnamese Stylistics and Rhetorical Devices. Hanoi: Education Publishing House, 2005.
8. Huu Dat. Stylistics and the Language of Journalism. Hanoi: Vietnam National University Press, 2000.
9. Hoang Phe (Chief Editor). Vietnamese Dictionary. Hanoi: Da Nang Publishing House, 2003.
10. Le Phuong Nga. Teaching Vietnamese Grade 5. Hanoi: Education Publishing House, 2005.
11. Luu Thi Tuyet Mai. Designing Experiential Learning Activities in Teaching Vietnamese at Primary Level. Hanoi: Vietnam National University of Education Publishing House, 2023.
12. Nguyen Canh Toan. Stylistics and the Grammar of Style. Hanoi: Education Publishing House, 1998.
13. Nguyen Duc Ton. Pragmatics – Fundamental Issues. Hanoi: Vietnam National University Press, 2002.
14. Nguyen Minh Thuyet. Some Issues in Teaching Vietnamese Oriented toward Competency Development. *Journal of Education*, 2018:439:11–15.
15. Nguyen Thai Hoa. Modern Vietnamese Stylistics. Hanoi: Vietnam National University Press, 2004.
16. Nguyen Thi Kim Oanh. Teaching Rhetorical Devices in Primary Schools in the Direction of Developing Communicative Competence [Master's Thesis]. Hanoi National University of Education, 2021.
17. Nguyen Thi Thu Hang. Teaching Rhetorical Devices in Primary Schools to Develop Students' Language Competence. *Journal of Education*, 2018:431:27–30.
18. Nguyen Tri. Methods of Teaching Vietnamese Oriented toward Communication in Primary Schools. Hanoi: Vietnam National University of Education Publishing House, 2019.
19. Nguyen Van Thinh. The Reality of Teaching Rhetorical Devices to Primary Students in Rural Areas [Doctoral Dissertation]. Hanoi National University of Education, 2016.
20. Nguyen Xuan Kinh. Rhetorical Style in Vietnamese Folk Songs. Hanoi: Education Publishing House, 2000.
21. Phan Ngoc. Exploring the Artistic Style of Nguyen Du. Hanoi: Literature Publishing House, 1999.
22. Phan Thi Hong Nhung. Developing Fifth Graders' Ability to Appreciate Rhetorical Devices through Literary Texts. *Journal of Education*, 2022:548:34–37.
23. Tran Thu Huong. Applying Language Games in Teaching Rhetorical Devices in Primary Schools. *Vietnam Journal of Educational Sciences*, 2019:5(2):45–52.
24. Tran Trong Thuy, Nguyen Quang Uan, Dang Thanh Hung. General Psychology. Hanoi: Education Publishing House, 1998.