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REPETITION IN READINGS IN VIETNAMESE TEXTBOOKS FOR GRADE 5, BOOK SERIES "CONNECTING KNOWLEDGE WITH LIFE"

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ABSTRACT

In the use of language, text is the highest unit, the place that most clearly expresses the methods of association to create coherence and consistency. One of the most common and effective methods of linking is repetition. Repetition not only helps to connect sentences and paragraphs but also contributes to emphasizing ideas, creating rhythm and expressive depth for the text. On the basis of textual linguistic theory, this paper surveys, classifies and analyzes the characteristics and role of repetition in readings in Vietnamese textbooks for grade 5, the book series *Connecting Knowledge with Life*. The results of the study show that repetition is used richly in many forms such as phonetic repetition, vocabulary repetition, and grammar repetition, in which vocabulary repetition accounts for the highest proportion. Each form of repetition has its own value in enhancing cohesion, expression and education of students. From there, the article contributes to clarifying the role of repetition as an artistic technique and pedagogical means in teaching Vietnamese in primary schools.

KEYWORDS: Repetition; text linking; text grammar; Vietnamese textbook 5; *Connecting Knowledge with Life*; reading texts; primary education.

1. INTRODUCTION

Since the 1970s, written linguistics has been recognized as an independent field of study, emphasizing the role of writing as a basic and complete unit of language. This view is affirmed by scholars such as M.A.K. Halliday, who argue that the supreme unit of language is not a word or sentence but a text - a convergence of semantic, syntactic and closely linked elements.

Among the methods of linking text, repetition emerged as a common and expressive phenomenon. Repetition is the repetition of a linguistic element in different places in the text in order to maintain the flow of the text, emphasize information, or create an artistic effect. Repetition contributes to making the text more coherent, cohesive, and receptive, especially in artistic or educational texts.

In the process of surveying Vietnamese textbooks for grade 5 in the book series *Connecting knowledge with life*, we found that repetition is used intentionally and richly in readings. This is a

series of books compiled according to the General Education Program 2018, aiming to comprehensively develop students' abilities and qualities. The readings in the book not only help students practice language skills but also contribute to the formation of thinking and personality, thereby, the selection and use of repetition in the readings becomes especially meaningful.

In the past, many research works have mentioned repetition as a means of linking texts in Vietnamese, typically such as the works of Tran Ngoc Them, Diep Quang Ban, Nguyen Minh Thuyet, etc. However, these studies mostly stop at theorizing or surveying adult literature without delving into the analysis of repetition in elementary textbooks – especially in grade 5, the hinge level before moving to secondary school.

Stemming from the above reasons, this article aims to clarify the characteristics and role of repetition in the reading of Vietnamese textbooks in grade 5 – the book series *Connecting Knowledge with Life*, thereby contributing to improving teaching efficiency and awareness of language techniques in primary education texts.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Repetition in Discourse Linguistics

Repetition is one of the most common cohesive devices, found across argumentative, expository, and literary texts. Tran Ngoc Them (2003) defined repetition as “a cohesive method where elements in the conclusion repeat those in the introduction.” This is a surface-level, easily recognized linkage and also a rhetorical device with strong expressive value. Diep Quang Ban (2001) also noted that repetition maintains the textual flow and reinforces continuity in discourse. In Vietnamese discourse grammar, repetition is commonly categorized into three main forms: phonological repetition (syllables, rhymes), lexical repetition (words, phrases), and grammatical repetition (syntactic structures). Each form contributes uniquely to textual cohesion and deeper semantic layers.

2.2. Repetition in Vietnamese Textbooks

In Vietnam, research on repetition in Vietnamese textbooks remains limited and unsystematic. Some teaching materials mention repetition in isolated lessons on “sentence and paragraph cohesion” (typically taught in Grades 4 and 5), but few comprehensive studies analyze its presence and role across entire reading texts-especially within the new curriculum issued by the Ministry of Education and Training.

The Grade 5 Vietnamese textbook - *Connecting Knowledge to Life* - is the current official material under the 2018 curriculum. This series retains traditional features of earlier textbooks while innovating in structure, content, and textual approaches to develop students' language skills. As observed, repetition is richly employed in the reading texts-spanning folk literature, modern stories, poetry, and popular science.

2.3. Research Gap

Despite existing discussions on cohesion and repetition, there is a lack of empirical studies based on detailed analysis of new primary textbooks. Given the curriculum's focus on developing language competency, critical thinking, literary appreciation, and communication, understanding the role of repetition in reading texts is essential for effective Vietnamese language instruction. This article seeks to address that gap by providing a comprehensive survey and evaluation of repetition in Grade 5 reading texts.

3. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

3.1. General Statistics

A survey of 64 reading texts in the Grade 5 Vietnamese textbook revealed 408 instances of repetition. Lexical repetition was most common with 251 instances (61.5%), followed by phonological repetition with 129 instances (31.6%), and grammatical repetition with 28 instances (6.9%).

This distribution shows that lexical repetition is the most prevalent form, appropriate to the genres and cognitive level of primary students. Phonological repetition is often used in poems for rhythm, while grammatical repetition-though less frequent-plays a key role in creating logical and cohesive sentence structures.

3.2. Forms of Repetition

3.2.1. Phonological Repetition

This includes repetition of syllables and rhymes, commonly found in poems to create rhythm and emotional appeal.

Syllabic repetition: In *The grain of rice from our village* (vol. 2, p.17) by Tran Dang Khoa, the entire poem is structured in four-syllable lines repeated 38 times:

"The grain of rice from our village
Holds the taste of alluvium
From the Kinh Thay River
Carries the scent of fragrant lotus
From the full pond
Holds the lullabies of Mother
Bittersweet and tender..."

This structure mimics folk songs and evokes familiarity, emphasizing the symbolic image of rice.

Rhyme repetition: In *Fishing boats* (vol. 2, p.34) by Huy Can:

"The sun descends into the sea like a ball of fire

The waves have locked the latch, the night has closed the door."

The final sounds "fire" and "door" create a melodic effect, enhancing rhythm and aesthetic value.

3.2.2. Lexical Repetition

Widely used in both poetry and prose, this includes:

Single-word repetition (45.8%): In the text *Painting of Ho Village* (volume 1, p.132), the noun "painting" is repeated many times: "I liked the paintings of pigs, chickens, mice, frogs, coconut tree paintings, female paintings of Ho village..."

The repetition of the word "painting" not only creates a content link but also helps to emphasize the theme and engrave the impression of the traditional craft village.

Full or partial phrase repetition (~5%): In the *Lullaby of Big Babies on Mother's Back* (vol. 2, p.13), the noun phrase "sun" is repeated:

"The sun of corn is on a hill

Mother's sun, I lie on my back."

This repetition is highly symbolic: the "sun" is not only an image of nature, but also a representation of divine motherhood.

Same word class (9.3%): In the *Song of the Stone Man* (vol. 2, p.9), the phrase "singing" is repeated in many sentences, each time implemented with a different meaning:

"The song of conquering beasts, the song of inspiring the enemy..."

Function-shift repetition: "Learning is the key to success. Learning helps people expand their knowledge." - the word "learning" (noun) is repeated in both sentences, keeping the same word.

Repeat the same syntax function

"Children are future preschools ... Children need to be cared for ..." - "Children" repeated as the subject in both sentences.

Repeat function

In *The student letter to the student* (episode 1, p.89), the noun phrase "the country" repeats in two sentences, with different grammar role:

"... making the country weak ... In that construction work, the country expects ...".

In this example, the noun phrase "The country" converts the grammar function from the supplement in the first sentence to the subject in the following sentence.

This is a form of functional transfer - an advanced form of vocabulary repeating, valuable to create formal links, and emphasize continuity and causal relationship - expectations in text content.

Vocabulary repeating not only plays a sentence connection role but also creates an emphasis on the topic, emotion and character. This is especially suitable for elementary school students, which received text through visual images and emotions.

3.2.3. Grammatical Repetition

Although less frequent, it is significant in expository or descriptive texts.

Enough repetition (6.1%): like the "A - B - C / A - B - C" model, which helps to reaffirm the argument.

E.g. In *Autumn Nuggets* (vol. 2, p.53), the first three sentences repeat the complete syntactic structure:

"I see the yellow of the sun

I see the blue of the sky

I see the brown color of the soil."

The repetition of the phrase "I see" at the beginning of the sentence creates an innocent tone, and at the same time highlights the child's observation of nature.

Partial variation (0.7%): e.g., contrast in function in *Lullaby for the children growing on their mother's back*... using the phrase "the sun"

Also, in the lullaby of big babies on mother's back, the phrase "sun" repeats with different grammatical positions and roles, showing the contrast:

"The sun of corn is on a hill

Mother's sun, I lie on my back."

Grammatical repetition helps to create a tight sentence, which is especially useful in scientific and informational texts, suitable for readings with content towards analytical thinking.

3.3. The Role of Repetition in Grade 5 Textbook Reading Texts

As a cohesive device, repetition plays a crucial role in organizing language, fostering coherence, unity, and emotional depth in texts. In the Grade 5 Vietnamese textbook, repetition is used for various purposes:

3.3.1. Enhancing Cohesion and Coherence

Repetition connects sentences and paragraphs logically and smoothly. For example, in *Self-study mirror* (vol. 1, p.94), the word "he" is repeated:

"He studied from a young age until the end of his life... He excelled in many fields..."

This maintains narrative continuity and emotional flow across the text.

3.3.2. Emphasizing Content and Themes

In *The Star of the Football Field* (vol. 1, p.31), the repeated use of "I" emphasizes the character's emotional journey:

"I joyfully ran like a field star... I was lost in thought..."

The repetition helps readers clearly perceive internal developments.

3.3.3. Evoking Emotion and Rhythm

Especially in poetry, phonological and syntactic repetition contributes to musicality and emotional effects. In *The grain of rice from our village*, the consistent syllable count creates steady rhythm:

"The grain of rice from our village

Sent to the frontlines

Sent to distant places"

3.3.4. Demonstrating Artistic and Rhetorical Value

Repetition acts as an artistic device to build imagery. In *Lullaby for the children growing on their mother's back*, the phrase “the sun” is repeated metaphorically:

"The sun of corn is on a hill

Mother's sun, I lie on my back."

This highlights both nature's vitality and maternal warmth.

3.3.5. Supporting Language Competency Development

Exposure to repetition in texts enables students to identify and use this device in speaking and writing. It strengthens vocabulary, structure recognition, and stylistic awareness-core goals of the new Vietnamese curriculum.

4. CONCLUSION

From a discourse linguistic perspective, this study has clarified the characteristics and roles of repetition in the Grade 5 Vietnamese textbook's reading texts (*Connecting Knowledge to Life* series). Repetition appears in various forms-phonological, lexical, and grammatical-with lexical repetition accounting for over 60% of occurrences. These forms not only ensure textual cohesion but also serve expressive, rhetorical, and educational functions.

The analysis reveals that the textbook authors employed repetition purposefully and appropriately across genres (poetry, narrative, informational), enhancing text appeal and supporting language development. Therefore, repetition proves to be not just a grammatical phenomenon but also a pedagogical and artistic tool in teaching Vietnamese at the primary level.

This research also suggests a new approach for analyzing textbook content through discourse linguistics, laying a foundation for future studies on textual cohesion, coherence, and linguistic artistry in general education.

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