

Developing A System of Sentence Exercises for Grade 5 Students Within A Competency Based Approach

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ABSTRACT: This paper presents the research findings on developing a system of sentence exercises for Grade 5 students within a competency-based approach. The system consists of four groups of exercises: (1) exercises for practicing sentence recognition; (2) exercises for practicing sentence transformation; (3) exercises for practicing sentence construction; and (4) exercises for practicing sentence cohesion. Through this system, the study contributes to fostering linguistic competence amongst primary school students and improving the quality of Vietnamese language teaching in Grade 5.

KEYWORDS: exercise system; simple sentence; compound sentence; sentence cohesion

I. INTRODUCTION

Vietnamese language is a core subject in the General Education Curriculum. In Grade 5—the final year of primary education—equipping students with a solid foundation of Vietnamese language knowledge is essential for preparing them for the next level of learning. Among these components, sentences play a central role, making a significant contribution to the development of learners' competencies and qualities. However, survey results indicate that many students still make a considerable number of mistakes when using sentences, which leads to difficulties in communication. Stemming from this reality, the present study aims to develop a logical, diverse, differentiated, and feasible system of sentence exercises for Grade 5 students, with the purpose of improving the quality of Vietnamese language teaching and learning.

II. METHODOLOGY

This paper employs a combination of theoretical analysis and practical research, specifically:

- (1) Systematizing the theoretical foundations of sentence instruction within a competency-based framework;
- (2) Surveying the current practices of Vietnamese language teaching in several primary schools in Thai Nguyen Province;
- (3) Designing a system of sentence exercises for Grade 5 students following a three-step process: recognition, analysis, and application.

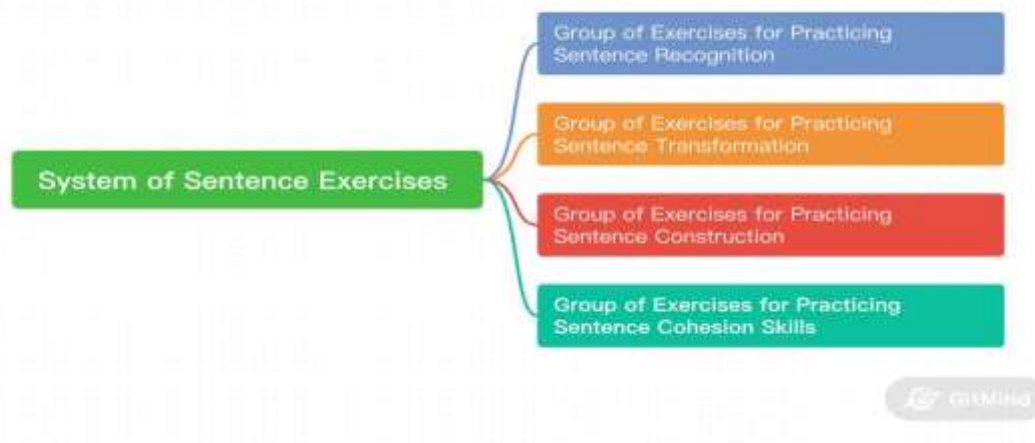
III. RESEARCH FINDINGS

1. Principles for Developing the System of Sentence Exercises

- Ensuring alignment with the goals of primary education
- Ensuring scientific and systematic validity
- Ensuring feasibility
- Ensuring effectiveness
- Ensuring appropriateness to learners' characteristics

2. Overview of the Exercise System

The exercise system refers to the complete set of exercises that are organized and arranged according to specific principles. In this context, the content of the system corresponds to the sequence of Vietnamese language knowledge on sentences as prescribed in the 2018 General Education Curriculum for Grade 5, as well as the varying levels of knowledge and skills that students are expected to achieve. Based on these foundations, the study identifies the system of exercises as consisting of various groups, types, and formats, illustrated in the following diagram:



3. SYSTEM OF SENTENCE EXERCISES FOR GRADE 5 STUDENTS

3.1. Group of Exercises for Practicing Sentence Recognition A. Exercises on Identifying Simple and Compound Sentences

Exercise 1: Circle the letter before the correct answer:

a) How many subject–predicate units does a simple sentence have?

- A. 1 subject–predicate unit
- B. 2 subject–predicate units
- C. 1 or more subject–predicate units
- D. No subject–predicate unit, only a predicate

b) How many subject–predicate units does a compound sentence have?

- A. 1 subject–predicate unit
- B. 2 subject–predicate units
- C. 2 or more subject–predicate units
- D. No subject–predicate unit, only a predicate

c) Which of the following sentences is a simple sentence?

- A. The village road is winding and shaded by bamboo.
- B. The school drum sounds, and students rush out to the yard.
- C. It rains heavily, flooding the whole field.
- D. I read stories while my sister writes essays.

d) Which of the following sentences is a compound sentence?

- A. The flamboyant tree in front of the school has bloomed.
- B. I sing while my friend dances.
- C. The sparrow chirps merrily on the branch.
- D. The sun is glowing red.

e) How many simple and compound sentences are there in the following passage?

Every time I return to my hometown, I rush into my grandmother’s warm embrace. Each evening, she tells me stories from the old days, while I sit and listen intently. In the morning, the rooster’s crow echoes through the small village.

The village road shaded by bamboo is tied to my childhood memories. I love my grandmother deeply, and I also love my homeland dearly.

- A. 4 simple sentences and 1 compound sentence
- B. 2 simple sentences and 3 compound sentences
- C. 3 simple sentences and 2 compound sentences
- D. 1 simple sentence and 4 compound sentences

Exercise 2: Rewrite the *simple sentences* in the following passage, then underline the *subject* once and the *predicate* twice.

“This afternoon, light rain drizzled in front of the porch. Mother sits sewing Nhur’s old shirt. In the garden, the leaves tremble with each raindrop, and the sound of rain is gentle and soothing. Nhur sits beside her mother, chatting while watching the white curtain of rain outside. The rain grows heavier, yet the small house remains warm because Mother is there.” Exercise 3: Write *S* before simple sentences and *C* before compound sentences.

1. ____ Linh is reading a book.

Developing A System of Sentence Exercises for Grade 5 Students Within A Competency Based Approach

2. ___ Because I study hard, I received the Excellent Student Award.
3. ___ Mother cooks while Father sweeps the floor.
4. ___ The cat lies lazily on the porch, stretching in the sunlight.
5. ___ Khanh An is not only good at studying but also hardworking.

Exercise 4: Read the following sentence and complete the tasks below:

“This morning, I went to school, my parents went to work, and my grandparents returned to the countryside early in the morning.”

- a) What type of sentence is this, and how many clauses does it have?
- b) Write out each clause and use a slash (/) to mark the subject and predicate of each one.

Exercise 5: Read the passage below and complete the tasks:

“We went to play soccer, passing the field near our apartment every day. The grass on the field was lush green, so the ball rolled smoothly on it before bouncing high at the edge of the road. After the match, the whole team sat under a tree; I wandered around, picking up fallen yellow leaves as souvenirs for myself.”

- a) Underline the *compound sentences* in the passage.
- b) Use different colors to mark the *clauses* within each compound sentence.
- c) Use slashes (/) to identify the *subject* and *predicate* of each clause.

B. Exercises on Recognizing Ways of Connecting Clauses in Compound Sentences

Exercise 6: Read the following sentences and complete the tasks below:

1. In the folktale *The Starfruit Tree*, the younger brother is diligent and kind, while the elder brother is lazy and greedy.
2. The sky hasn’t completely darkened, yet the moon has already risen.
3. If you practice diligently, you will sing better.
4. In the early morning, thin white clouds spread across the sky, and the sea was softly veiled in mist.
- a) Circle the *conjunctions*, *correlative pairs*, or *punctuation marks* used to connect the clauses.
- b) Identify how the clauses in each sentence are connected: 1. The clauses in Sentence 1 are connected by _____
2. The clauses in Sentence 2 are connected by _____
3. The clauses in Sentence 3 are connected by _____
4. The clauses in Sentence 4 are connected by _____

Exercise 7: Put an “X” in the Appropriate Box

Sentence	Connected by a single conjunction	Connected by a pair of conjunctions	Connected by a pair of correlative words	Connected by punctuation
The canh kien flowers bloom yellow in the forest, while the kim anh flowers are pure white.				
As Thuy Tinh raised the water level, Son Tinh lifted the mountains just as high.				
The flamboyant tree (phuong) is an upright-stemmed plant, whereas the pumpkin vine is a creeping one.				
Because Khanh was lazy about exercising, she became overweight.				

Exercise 8: Fill in each blank with a suitable conjunction, correlative pair, or transitional expression to connect the clauses in the compound sentences below:

- a) _____ it was raining heavily, _____ I still went to school on time.
- b) The starfruit tree was laden with ripe fruits, _____ the jujube trellis glistened with clusters of delicious red berries.

Exercise 9: Complete the following tasks

- a) Write C (Correct) for sentences that use appropriate conjunctions, and I (Incorrect) for those that use them incorrectly.
 - b) For each incorrect sentence, circle the wrong conjunction and correct it.
- ☐ 1. I studied my lessons, my mother graded her students’ papers, but my father read the newspaper. _____
 - ☐ 2. Although I was too busy with work, so I couldn’t visit you. _____
 - ☐ 3. The darker the sky grew, the stronger the wind blew. _____
 - ☐ 4. Because Hien studies well but she is not conceited. _____
 - ☐ 5. Since I was late for school, yet the whole class lost merit points. _____

Developing A System of Sentence Exercises for Grade 5 Students Within A Competency Based Approach

2.2.2.2. Group of Exercises for Practicing Sentence Transformation

A. Transforming Simple Sentences into Compound Sentences

Exercise 10: Rewrite the following simple sentences as compound sentences appropriately

- a) Mai saw a rabbit trapped in a bush. She slowly walked closer to help it.
b) Lan was reluctant to part with the little sparrow, yet she decided to release it back to its mother.

Exercise 11: Examine the two transformation options below and place a check mark (✓) next to the correct compound sentence:

- a) Simple sentences: "Nam is good at Math. Nhi is good at Vietnamese." ☐ Nam is good at Math, while Nhi is good at Vietnamese.
☐ Nam is good at Math, so Nhi is good at Vietnamese. b) Simple sentences: "It's cold. I wear a warm coat." ☐ It's cold, but I wear a warm coat.
☐ Because it's cold, I wear a warm coat.

Exercise 12: Match to form suitable compound sentences:

Summerpasses	then	she is also good at studying.
He wants to succeed	and	autumn comes.
Ha Vi is diligent	if	he must study hard.
It is about to rain	so	everyone in my family hurriedly went to collect the rice.

Type B: Exercises that transform compound sentences into simple sentences

Exercise 13: Rewrite the compound sentence "Lan is diligent in studying and Lan often helps her friends." into two simple sentences.

Exercise 14: Match the compound sentences in column A with the simple sentences that can be separated in column B:

Column A	Column B
Dad goes to work while Mom cooks.	Dad goes to work.
Nam is very well-behaved, but he's a bit shy.	Nam is a bit shy.
	Mom cooks.
	Nam is very well-behaved.

Exercise 15: Separate the following compound sentence into two simple sentences and expand them creatively to make the writing more vivid.

"The flowers bloom brightly, and the birds sing melodiously."

Exercise 16: Separate the following compound sentences into simple sentences.

- a) When school ends, since the students still have to help their mothers collect firewood, everyone hurries home.
b) In class, the teacher teaches enthusiastically, and the students listen attentively.
c) During recess, the girls sit and read magazines, while the boys play marbles.
d) As soon as the sun rises, the children in the highlands climb the mountains to go to school.

Developing A System of Sentence Exercises for Grade 5 Students Within A Competency Based Approach

C. Exercises on Transforming Clause Connections in Compound Sentences

Exercise 17: Rewrite the following sentences by changing the way the clauses are connected (from conjunctions to commas, or vice versa).

a) It was raining, yet we still went out to play football.

Rewrite: _____

b) Because Lan studied hard, she won a high prize.

Rewrite: _____

Exercise 18: Rewrite the following compound sentence using two different connecting methods (one with a single conjunction, one with a comma).

Because it was raining, we didn't go out.

● Method 1 (using a single conjunction): _____

● Method 2 (using a comma): _____

Exercise 19: Rewrite the following compound sentence using a correlative pair appropriately.

“The wind blew strongly, and the trees shook violently.”

2.2.2.3. Group of Exercises for Practicing Sentence Construction

A. Exercises on Constructing Simple Sentences

Exercise 20: Make one simple sentence using each of the following words:

- Desk and chair: _____

- Invention: _____

- Sky: _____

Exercise 21: Construct simple sentences following these three patterns:

a) Who does what?

b) Who is how?

c) Who is what?

Exercise 22: Write three simple sentences on the topic of school (for example: classroom, friends, teachers).

Exercise 23: Imagine you have just gone on a picnic in the park. Write at least two simple sentences to describe what you did during the trip.

B. Exercises on Constructing Compound Sentences

Exercise 24: Create three compound sentences using the following conjunctions:

a) Because... therefore...

b) Although... but...

c) If... then...

Exercise 25: Write one compound sentence that uses a comma (,) and another that uses a correlative pair to connect the clauses.

Exercise 26: Imagine you are visiting a zoo. Write three compound sentences to describe what you saw or felt during the trip.

Exercise 27: Write one compound sentence for each pair of ideas below:

a) studying – playing

b) grandparents – grandchildren

c) raining – schoolyard

C. Exercises Combining Multiple Sentence Construction Skills

Exercise 28: Write four sentences in your “One Day at School Diary”:

- Two simple sentences describing events in the morning.

- Two compound sentences describing what you and your friends did together.

Exercise 29: Imagine you and your friend are talking during recess. Write:

- One simple sentence describing the schoolyard scene.

- One compound sentence describing the activities of your classmates.

Developing A System of Sentence Exercises for Grade 5 Students Within A Competency Based Approach

Exercise 30: Write a short postcard (about 4–5 sentences) to your grandmother in the countryside.

Include:

- One simple sentence expressing your feelings.
- One compound sentence describing your current life.

2.2.2.4. Group of Exercises for Practicing Sentence Cohesion Skills

A. Type of Exercise: Identifying and Analyzing Sentence Cohesion

Exercise 31: Circle the repeated word(s) used to link sentences in the following passage and fill them in the blanks below:

(1) One day, Thach Sanh was sitting in the dark dungeon and took out the lute given to him by the King of the Sea to play. (2) The music sounded like words of grievance—lamenting the princess’s indifference and condemning Ly Thong’s cruelty. (3) The melody reached the royal palace and entered the princess’s ears. (4) As soon as she heard the tune, the princess suddenly began to smile and speak joyfully. (5) She asked her father, the king, to summon the musician to the palace.

Sentence (1) is linked to sentence (2) by the word _____

Sentence (2) is linked to sentence (3) by the word _____

Sentence (3) is linked to sentence (4) by the word _____

Exercise 32: Which words or phrases do the bolded words in each paragraph below replace? Fill in the blanks below:

a) The grass field in my village has many ponds during the rainy season. **They** are low-lying patches of land that lie under the sun throughout the dry months. When the rainy season begins, **they** turn into ponds brimming with water, like large mirrors.

b) When you come to Tà Xùa, you will encounter Hmong musicians playing the khèn on the vast, windy mountaintops. **Their figures** blend harmoniously with the poetic natural scenery here, like a masterpiece created by nature itself.

c) Whoosh! The balloon slipped from my hand, soared into the sky, and disappeared behind the white clouds. We were both surprised and regretful. That afternoon, we played hide and seek, sometimes glancing up to see if “**our little friend**” would drift back again.

Exercise 33: Find the cohesive devices in the paragraph below and classify them into appropriate categories

Social networks play an important role in modern life. They help people connect, share information, and learn from one another. For example, social networks can quickly deliver news, create opportunities for social interaction, and support online learning and work. However, social networks also have limitations, such as being potentially addictive or spreading misinformation. Therefore, we should learn to use social networks wisely.

Linking sentences by repetition of words or phrases	Linking sentences by using connective words	Linking sentences by using substitute words
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

B. Exercises on Using Lexical Cohesive Devices

Exercise 34: Underline the appropriate cohesive word in parentheses to complete each paragraph. a) During the day, the city is crowded and bustling. (But / Therefore / And) at night, it becomes strangely quiet.

b) The rain covered the path in white, and the entire forest seemed to be immersed in a mist. (However / Therefore / Meanwhile), En could not go to school.

c) The garden became increasingly vibrant. The purple came from the wild lilies. The yellow belonged to the lilies. (And / But / Therefore) the red came from the hibiscus flowers.

Developing A System of Sentence Exercises for Grade 5 Students Within A Competency Based Approach

Exercise 35: Choose the most suitable word to fill in the blanks in the sentences below. Circle the letter before the correct answer.

a) Thu gently held the package of *green sticky rice* in her hands. (...) is a signature dish of Hanoi's autumn.

- A. This
- B. That
- C. These D. Those

b) Newton was the one who discovered the law of universal gravitation. Moreover, (...) also made many other great scientific contributions.

- A. the scientist
- B. the magician
- C. the musician
- D. the historian

Exercise 36: Choose appropriate words to fill in the blanks to link the sentences in the following story (words may be repeated):

they

he

the boy

so

but

The Shepherd Boy

Once upon a time, there was a shepherd boy who often took his sheep to graze at the foot of a mountain near a forest.

One day, feeling bored, (1) _____ came up with a prank so that someone would come and play with him. (2) _____ ran to the village and shouted loudly:

— “Wolf! Wolf!” (3) _____ the villagers rushed out with (4) _____, but (5) _____ saw no wolf anywhere,

(6) _____ angrily went back home. That prank made (7) _____ very amused. A few days later, (8) _____ did it again. The villagers once again came to help (9) _____ and once again returned home in anger. But not long after that, the wolf really came. (10) _____ panicked and cried out:

— “Wolf! Wolf!”

This time, however, no one from the village came, (11) _____ they all thought (12) _____ was tricking them again as before. So the wolf happily devoured the whole flock of sheep.

C. Type of Exercises: Identifying and Correcting Errors in Cohesion

Exercise 37: Put an “X” in front of the paragraph that contains repetition errors and then rewrite it appropriately.

- ☐ 1. The sunlight shone down on the golden field. The sunbeams danced and jumped gleefully.
- ☐ 2. Mai is a student in class 5C. Mai studies very well. Mai is loved by the whole class.
- ☐ 3. The velvet roses in the garden are in full bloom. Each deep-red petal opens wide.
- ☐ 4. The little girl loves reading books. Books are very good, books are very interesting, and books are very useful.

Exercise 38: Circle the incorrectly used linking word(s) in the following passages and correct them:

- a) First, Mom separates the lotus seeds from the pod. Finally, she carefully sorts the lotus embryos and seeds into two separate bowls. After that, she cooks the lotus seeds into porridge.
- b) The children were joyful, eagerly waiting for Tet. However, this was the time when they received lucky money, went out to play, and got new clothes from their parents.

Exercise 39: Underline the incorrect linking words in the following passages and correct them.

- a) Tomorrow, our class will go on a field trip to the “My Home” ecological area. According to the plan, we will gather over there at 7:30 a.m. to listen to the guide introduce some rules before the trip.
- b) In September 2024, floods and landslides occurred in the northern region, causing great loss of life and property. However, Thai Nguyen and Son La provinces were the most severely affected.

Paragraph	Incorrect word/phrase	Correction
a		
b		

D. Type of Exercise: Writing Paragraphs Using Linking Words

Exercise 40: Write a short paragraph (3–4 sentences) on the topic of environmental protection, using linking words to connect sentences.

Developing A System of Sentence Exercises for Grade 5 Students Within A Competency Based Approach

Exercise 41: Use appropriate substitute words to continue the sentences below:

a) Ha Vy is the class monitor of my class.

b) In the garden, a flock of tailorbirds is busily working.

Exercise 42: Write a short paragraph (3–4 sentences) about the benefits of modern communication devices to human life, using at least one type of sentence linkage you have learned.

III. DISCUSSION

The research results confirm that developing a system of sentence exercises for grade 5 students following a competency-oriented approach is both necessary and feasible. First, the system is designed progressively—from recognition to application—helping students gradually acquire knowledge and language skills. Second, the exercises are diverse and differentiated: they both support average students in mastering basic knowledge and provide opportunities for advanced students to develop reasoning and creativity. Moreover, teachers can flexibly apply the system in regular lessons, remedial sessions, enrichment activities, or student assessments.

IV. CONCLUSION

Developing a system of sentence exercises for grade 5 students based on competency development is an essential direction, meaningful both theoretically and practically. The designed exercise system not only provides teachers with rich materials for effective teaching but also allows students to practice, experience, and develop linguistic competence actively and creatively. The system ensures logical, diverse, and practical connections, helping students overcome common sentence-use errors, and develop precise, effective, and flexible communication skills. The findings reaffirm the importance of this exercise system as a tool for teaching, learning, and assessment—contributing to improving the quality of Vietnamese language education at the primary level.

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