

Comparative Rhetorical Methods in the Texts in Literature Textbook for Grade 10

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Abstract: *Comparison is rhetorical method which is most commonly used in life as well as in literary composition. Especially during the composing process, comparison is used by authors with high frequencies. It is used to express their feelings, thoughts, and judgments towards things and events that were shown in the composition. Recognizing and applying rhetoric measures is one of the important contents of the Literature Program. It is not difficult to recognize comparative rhetorical measures. But it is not simple to distinguish them, identify their structures and comparative styles to see their artistic effectiveness. Researching structures of comparison and types of comparison helps readers to have a better understanding of the nature and characteristics of things and events, profound and expressive perception of unknown objects. How can students receive and create comparative rhetorical method in the most effective and fastest way? This article not only gives the readers the concept, structure of comparative method, types of comparison, distinguishing between logical comparison and rhetorical comparison, but also reckons, classifies, models, analyzes the use of comparative rhetorical method in the texts in Literature textbooks for grade 10 to give readers a fairly comprehensive picture of the comparative rhetorical method. Thus, the research sets out the recommendations for teaching and learning comparative rhetoric methods for students in high schools as well as for students in universities*

Keywords: *Comparison, rhetorical comparison, comparison of equality, comparison of inequality*

I. INTRODUCTION

Comparison is rhetorical method which is not only commonly used in everyday life but also frequently used in literary composition. In literature program of high schools, comparative rhetoric is one of the rhetorical measures appearing with high frequency in literary works. It is also a unique artistic technique, delicate and effective means of expression. The writers, poets have used this method in their writings to express feelings, thoughts, and assessments in front of things, events and phenomena. Not only that, the comparative rhetorical method is one of the powerful factors that helps to show clear images, the idea that the author wants to portray. On the other hand, the method of comparative rhetoric also makes the sentence to be more flexible, vivid and attractive. Recognizing and applying rhetoric measures is not only one of the important contents of the Literature program, but also one of the frequently used contents to test and evaluate students' competencies at different levels such as understanding, comprehension and

applying. It is not difficult to recognize comparative rhetorical methods. But it is not simple to distinguish them, identify their structure, and compare them to see their artistic effect. This article provides the reader with a theoretical basis for comparison and rhetorical measures. It examines ways to express comparative rhetoric (comparison of equality, comparisons of inequality, comparison of the same types, comparison of different types in Literature textbooks for grade 10 to provide readers with a fairly comprehensive picture of comparative rhetoric. Thence, there are suitable recommendations for teaching and learning comparative rhetoric in Literature for students in high schools and for students in universities.

II. THEORETICAL REVIEW

2.1 Definition of Comparative Rhetorical Methods

- The rhetorical method (also known as rhetoric) is the use of linguistic means in order to achieve good, beautiful, expressive and effective expression. [6, p90]

Comparison is to put two or more things and phenomena into certain relationships in order to find the similarities and differences between them. [1, p294].

- Comparative rhetoric method

There are many scientists who have given their points of view in comparative rhetoric. Lac's conception of comparison (also called image comparison, rhetorical comparison) is a semantic rhetorical method, in which people compare two different types of objective reality which are not completely identical with each other but only have a certain similarity, in order to visualize a new perception of the object. According to the author Tu. C.D, rhetorical comparison is a way of openly comparing two objects with a certain common sign in order to symbolically express the inner qualities of an object. Rhetorical comparison always consists of two sides: the comparative side (A side) and the comparative side (B side). The relationship between side A and side B are attached to each other by the following formula: A as B (like, seem like,); B (or A); how many/ how much A (or B) is; A is B. The author Dat's conception is "The essence of rhetorical comparison is to use property or status of this thing or phenomenon to explain property or status of another ones" [1, p295].

Literature textbooks for grade 6, comparison is comparing these things, these phenomenons with other things, other phenomena have similarities that increase the imagination, attraction for the expression [8, p24].

From the concepts of the above authors, comparison is a semantic rhetorical method to compare two different objects that have a certain similarity between them. Thus, the above authors agree that the comparison is comparing two objects or more objects that have a same point (similar point) between them.

So when using these rhetorical methods, what artistic effect do writers want to achieve? The first is the manipulation of logical thinking: comparing one thing with another to find the similarity or opposition between them. Therefore, comparison is valuable for the cognitive process. We bring the unknown compare with the known to understand the known but perceive, visualize the unknown. Besides the value of perception, comparison also has the value of creating various emotional expressions. The comparison in order to create specific, vivid, iconic emotions ... is called rhetorical comparison. Rhetorical comparison contains much sensuality.

First of all, it is new and beautiful perspectives in the way of seeing things in the choice of images and unexpected emotions. Comparison promotes many dimensions of connection, not just a simple one, both towards objectively and subjective perception. In artistic texts, comparison is a criticism method by the writers themselves. By the semantic nuances and the obtained symbolic meaning, comparing impacts on the recipient's intuition to in order to leave the ability to perceive creativity.

2.2 Structure of Comparative Method

In terms of form, the complete structural model of comparative rhetoric includes four factors:

Example 1:

Mặt / tươi / như / hoa.
1 2 3 4
(A face looks like a flower.)

Example 2:

Tiếng hát / trong / như / tiếng suối xa.
1 2 3 4
(Singing voice likes a stream far away.)

Factor 1: Object (thing, event) is compared

Factor 2: Comparative aspect (part or characteristic of comparison)

Factor 3: Comparative word, common words: *như, tựa, là, chẳng bằng, bao nhiêu... bấy nhiêu, ...*

Factor 4: Object (things, events) is the standard of comparison

In fact, the structural model above may change somewhat. Factor 1 is comparative object. Factor 2 is comparative aspect. Factor 3 is comparative word. Factor 2 and 3 can be omitted. In a comparative sentence, factor 1 and 4 cannot be truncated (either factor 1 and 2 cannot be omitted). When factor 2 is omitted, it is called a metaphor comparison because the aspect of comparison is not revealed. It makes the connection more widely, stimulates the intelligence and emotions of the listener and the reader more.

2.3. Types of Comparison

Based on different criteria, linguists have different ways of dividing groups of comparison.

- Based on the properties, characteristics and relationship between factor 1 and factor 4, the comparison is divided into 2 groups: comparison of the same types and different types. Example 3: comparison of the same types (action - action): "*Đánh như gãi ngựa*" (*Beat a dead horse*) (Idioms) and comparison of the different types (person- thing). Example 4 "*Anh như con tàu, lừng sóng từ hai phía.*" ("*You are like a ship, riding waves from both sides*"). [18].

- Based on the word used for comparison, it can be divided into two types of comparison: comparison of equality, comparison of inequality. Comparison of equality is often represented by comparative words / pairs *như, là, tựa, bao nhiêu...bấy nhiêu,...* Comparisons of inequality is often represented by the following words *hơn, kém, thua* or *chẳng bằng, không bằng, không như,...* In comparisons of inequality, factor 1 and factor 2 indicate things and events, though

inferior in some way, but they still have similarities with each other. This similarity allows to compare things and events with each other. For example: (5) Comparison of equality: *Anh em như thể tay chân* (Brother and sister are as close as hands and feet) (6) Comparisons of inequality: *Bóng Bác cao lồng lộng/ Ấm hơn ngọn lửa hồng* (Uncle Ho's shadow is high/ warmer than pink flame) [8.p63]. The above two comparisons use different comparison words: “*như*” (example 5) and “*hơn*” (example 6). Thus, it can be concluded that they are different. From there we can draw the model of two types of comparison: Comparison of equality: A as / is B; comparisons of inequality: A is more / not equal to B.

- Based on the appearance of factor 2 (comparative aspect), the comparison can be divided into two categories: metaphor comparison (without factor 2), literal comparison (full of factors). The comparative structure may also not include factor 2 and factor 3, That is how to compare using voice breaks and form of confrontation. Example 7: *Quả dừa - đàn lợn con nằm trên cao*. (Coconut fruits - piglets lay on high) [16], (8) *Trường Sơn: chí lớn ông cha/ Cửu Long: lòng mẹ bao la sóng trào*. (*Truong Son: Strong will of forefathers/ Cuu Long: The mother's great wave of love*) [8.p25].

2.4 Distinguish between Logical Comparison and Rhetorical Comparison

In the process of identifying comparisons, some people still confuse logical comparison (also called moral comparison, exact comparison) and rhetorical comparison. Therefore, it is necessary to distinguish between logical comparison and rhetorical comparison. Logical comparison is only for announcement value, does not produce expressive value. In the structure of logical comparison, factor 1 and factor 4 comparisons are usually the object of the same type and the purpose of the comparison is to establish the equivalence between two objects. Also the rhetorical comparison has both cognitive function and expressive value. The use of comparative rhetoric makes the object described vivid, new, and attractive.

Example 9: logical comparison: *An thấp hơn Việt* (*An is shorter than Viet*) (1).

Rhetorical comparison: (10) *Tiếng rơi rất mỏng như là rơi nghiêng*. (*The sound of falling leaves is very soft like the tilted leaves*) [17]

According to Huu Dat, the basis of the logical comparison is based on the similarities of things and phenomena. The basis of the rhetorical comparison is the different quality and kind between things phenomena. Example: logical comparison: *Nhà này cao bằng nhà kia*. (*This house is as tall as that house*). Rhetorical comparison: *Tình anh như nước dâng cao/Tình em như dải lụa đào tằm hương*. (*My love is like rising water/ Your love is like a flavored silk strip*) [1, pg. 294, 295].

In this article, we only mention rhetorical comparison because it facilitates association, stimulates the readers' exploration to 'self-identify' the similarity of the described object with the comparative object. Comparing rhetoric makes language rich in imagery and expression.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To conduct this research, researcher used the following literary devices and research methods: Methods of statistics and classification: This method is applied in the process of

surveying and collecting data. Then, classifying and statistic data according to the comparison of equality and comparisons of inequality are also deployed. Each of these comparisons is further subdivided, uses different words for comparison. This statistical and classification method helps to analyze and comment on the comparison types more accurately.

Methods of modeling: This method is used to model the structure of comparison types. The analysis of the comparative aspects provides comparison models with complete components and deficiency in components.

Descriptive method: This method is used to describe aspects of comparison such as comparative objects (things, events), comparative aspects (parts or features of comparison), comparative words and the object of comparison.

Method of discourse analysis: This method is used to analyze comparison objects. To understand the expressive meaning of the comparison sentence, it is necessary to base on specific communication circumstances; on the properties, characteristics and relationships of communicating objects, describing and analyzing the structure, and the comparative function towards the approach of language - literature - culture.

IV. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. The Method of Comparative Rhetoric Appears in the Texts in Literature Textbooks for Grade 10

We use criteria based on the comparative words which is used to survey. We classify it into two types of comparison: comparison of equality and comparisons of inequality. Through surveying 159 texts in textbook 10, we have collected 211 sentences / questionnaire using comparative rhetorical method. In which, comparison of equality appeared with a high frequency of 189 survey papers (accounting for 90.0%). Comparisons of inequality appeared with low frequency of only 22 survey papers (accounting for 10%). Comparison of equality uses comparative words such as “*như*”, “*là*”, “*bằng*”, “*tựa*”, “*y như*”, “*tương như*”... Comparisons of inequality often use comparative words such as “*hơn*”, “*chẳng bằng*”.

4.1.1. Comparison of equality

Equal comparison is a kind of comparison which compares things, events and phenomena in a relationship that are not better than each other to highlight the other. Comparison of equality is comparison using comparison words such as *như*, *là*, *bằng*, *bao nhiêu... bấy nhiêu...* In the texts in Literature textbooks for grade 10, there are the following types of comparison of equality:

4.1.1.1. Rhetorical comparison uses the word “*như*”

According to the Vietnamese dictionary, “*như*” is a linking word demonstrating an equal or similar relationship in a comparison in a certain way among things, phenomena or states, properties (*cảnh vật vẫn như xưa*) (*The scene is still the same*). (2) Words in comparison combinations demonstrating comparison denotes at a very high level that can be compared to the typical ones (*trắng như tuyết*) (*as white as snow*).

In the texts in Literature textbooks for grade 10, rhetorical comparison uses the word "như" appearing with the most frequency 92 survey papers (accounting for 76.0%) including comparison of the same types and different types. Comparison of the same types has the following forms:

A – B: person – person

A - B: thing – thing

A – B: event – event

Comparison of the different types has the following forms:

A – B: person – thing

A - B: thing – person

A - B: event – thing

A – B: thing – event

Example 11: *Nhân tài như lá mùa thu.* (Talents are like autumn leaves) [10, pg. 18]

person thing

(12) *Hồ hét như sấm.* (Shout likes thunder) [10, tr76]

event thing

(13) *Chỉ vàng chỉ đỏ như hoa dam piết.* (Red and golden threads are like Dam piet flowers) [9, pg. 35]

thing thing

Rhetorical comparison uses the word "như" in the texts in Literature textbooks for grade 10 also has both the complete components and deficiency in components. Most of the comparison sentences contains the word "như" are missing the second factor - comparative aspect.

- Comparison with the complete components rarely appears only 8 survey papers, accounting for 0.04%.

Example 14: *Bà con xem, khiên hẵn tròn như đầu cú.* (His shield is round like a head of an owl) [9. pg. 31]

1 2 3 4

- Comparison with the components mostly appeared 202 survey papers, accounting for 96%.

Example 15: *Nhân tài như lá mùa thu.* (Talents are like autumn leaves) [10, pg. 18]

1 3 4

4.1.1.2. Rhetorical comparison uses the word "là"

According to the Vietnamese dictionary, "là" is a special verb, denoting the relationship between the indicated object and the indicated cognitive content or explanation, characterizing that object.

The comparison contains the word "là" appears the second most in the texts in Literature textbooks for grade 10. This comparison consists of 7 survey papers, accounting for 0.03%. This comparison contains the word "is" includes comparison of the same types and different types.

Example 16: Comparison of the same types between person - person: *Cả miền Ê-đê Ê-ga ca ngợi Đăm Săn là một dũng tướng chắc chết mười mươi cũng không lùi bước.* (The whole E-de

and E-ga region praised Dam San for being a hero who would surely die and would not step back.) [9, pg. 35].

Comparison of the different types between person and thing: (17) “Hiền tài là nguyên khí của quốc gia” (Talent is one of the main sources of national strength) (10, pg. 31).

Rhetorical comparison contains the word “là” này does not appear comparison with the complete components, but only appears comparison with deficiency in second component of the comparison.

Example 18: Ê - đô là cố hương. (E-do is the old hometown) [9, pg. 156]
1 3 4

4.1.1.3. Rhetorical comparison uses the word “bằng”

According to the Vietnamese dictionary, “bằng” means nothing more, no less. The rhetorical comparison contains the word “bằng” includes only 4 survey papers, accounting for 0.02% and the only kind of comparison of a different kind is the comparison between people and things.

Example 19: Bắp chân chàng to bằng cây xà ngang. (His calves are as big as a crossbar) [9, pg. 35].

The comparison uses the word “bằng” to appear only one complete component.

Example 20: Bắp đùi chàng to bằng ống bễ. (His thighs are as big as bellows) [9, pg. 35]
1 2 3 4

4.1.1.4. Rhetorical comparison uses the word “ngang”

According to the Vietnamese dictionary, “ngang” is explained as not lower, but at the same level as something. in the texts in Literature textbooks for grade 10, the rhetorical method contains the word “ngang” only has 1 time, accounting for 0.005%. This rhetoric uses comparison of the same types (comparison between things and things) and lacks the second factor.

Example 21: Sức chàng ngang sức voi đực. (His strength is the same as a male elephant’s strength) [9, pg. 35]
1 3 4

If we restored the factor 2, the sentence could be fully written as “Sức chàng khỏe ngang sức voi đực”. (His strength is as strong as a male elephant’s strength).

Thus, by surveying the texts in the texts in Literature textbooks for grade 10, comparison of equality method accounts for the majority with the rate of 189/211 survey papers. There are 4 comparative words such as “như, là, bằng, ngang”... In four of comparative words above, the word “như” appears the most, accounting for the majority of the survey questions and is fully used in both Comparison with the complete components and comparison with deficiency in components. The compared things / events / phenomena are used in both of the same kind comparison of the same types and comparison of different types. Missing factors in rhetorical structures are usually factors 1 or factor 2.

4.1.2. Comparisons of inequality

Comparisons of inequality is a comparison of comparing things, events, and phenomena in a relationship that are less likely to highlight the other. Comparisons of inequality often use the words “*hơn, kém, chẳng bằng, chưa bằng, không bằng...*” In the texts in Literature textbooks for grade 10, comparisons of inequality appear 22 survey papers, accounting for 10.4%. This comparison uses only two comparative words “*hơn, chẳng bằng*”, has both comparisons with the complete components and comparison with deficiency in components.

Comparisons of inequality containing the word “*hơn*” show the most number of 20 survey papers, accounting for 92%. This comparison has both Comparison with the complete components and comparison with deficiency in components. Comparison with deficiency in components has only one form, which is deficiency in factor 1: comparative objects (things / events).

Example: Full of components

(22) Thành rộng hơn ngàn trượng. (*The city is wider than a thousand meter square*) (9, pg. 41]

1 2 3 4

Deficiency in components

(23) Cho nên nhà nước phải nhờ cậy, quyền hơn cả vua. [10, pg. 46]

2 3 4

(*Thus, the state must rely on a person with more power than the king*)

If we restored, the sentence could be fully written as: *Cho nên nhà nước phải nhờ cậy, Thủ Độ quyền hơn cả vua.* (*Thus, the state must rely on Thu Do with more power than the king*)

Comparison of the same types between person and person: (24) *Bệ hạ trẻ thơ mà Thủ Độ quyền hơn cả vua, đối với xã tắc sẽ ra sao?* (*What will happen to the young king and Nation when Thu Do is more powerful than the king?*) [10, pg. 46]

Comparisons of inequality contain the word “*chẳng bằng*”. This type of comparison has only 1 time, accounting for 0.08%. This form of comparison is comparisons of inequality and comparison of different types.

Example 25: Dầu vui đất khách chẳng bằng về. [9, pg. 142]

2 3 4

(*Going back to the home country is still happier than staying abroad.*)

Thus, comparisons of inequality in the texts in Literature textbooks for grade 10 is not commonly used, only accounts for a small number of 22 survey papers with 2 words “*hơn*” và “*chẳng bằng*” but they have shown full all kinds of comparisons in life and literature.

4.2. Some recommendations in teaching comparative rhetoric in Literature

Among the rhetorical methods, it can be said that the comparative rhetorical method is frequently used and used with a relative large frequency in both daily communication and in literary texts. To teach comparative rhetoric well, we would like to give some recommendations as follows:

With the process of receiving

- Teachers need to provide knowledge about comparative rhetoric to help students identify exactly what kind of comparative method or comparative rhetorical method is: comparison of equality or comparison of inequality.

- When identifying the comparative rhetorical measure, the teacher needs to let students analyze the comparative factors in the sentence using that comparative rhetoric. If the comparison is in the form of deficient comparison, the students should restore the structure so that they understand and know the compared objects, the objects to be compared, the aspects of comparison, the comparative words. If you analyze these factors well, it will be easier to understand the writer's artistic effects.

- After helping students identify the comparative structure of that sentence, the teacher helps students state the effectiveness of using that comparison. The comparative rhetorical method always gives the reader two values: expressive value and emotional value. That is valuable comparison for the cognitive process, comparing the unknown with the known to pass the known, perceive, visualize the unknown. The comparison also has the value of creating expressions in order to express the different emotions and feelings of the writer.

With the process of creation

- After recognizing and understanding the comparative rhetorical method, students need to apply those rhetoric methods into their texts. In order to help students know how to create high expressiveness comparison structures, the teacher can instruct them as follows. Firstly, students need to choose objects to describe and express. Secondly, based on some outstanding characteristics or properties of the thing or phenomenon that are to be expressed, they look for another thing or phenomenon that also has that characteristic or property. Thirdly, put the comparison objects and object to be compared in the model of comparative structure. Fourthly, it is not necessary to create a comparative structure model that must include all 4 factors. The first factor may be missing (E.g: *Đỏ như gấc*), lack of the 2nd element (*Trẻ em như búp trên cành*), the comparison factor can be "hidden" (but indispensable).

- It should be noted that there is no form of comparison that lacks side A (factor 1 and factor 2) because it is no longer a comparison but a metaphor. Side B (factor 4) must always be more representative, more iconic and expressive than the side A (factor 1 and factor 2).

- In order to write good sentences rich in imagery and expression, students must improve their living experience and understanding, enhance reading books, especially literary works. The background knowledge about nature, human life, cultural identity of the nation will be a premise for students to write vivid sentences with high expressiveness.

V. CONCLUSION

The method of rhetorical comparison is not only widely used in literary works but also frequently used in daily communication. It is very necessary to examine the texts in Literature textbooks for grade 10 to find out about the authors' use of comparative rhetoric. It makes teaching and learning Literature more effectively. Therefore, we surveyed 159 texts in Literature textbooks and obtained 211 survey papers using methods of comparative rhetoric method. These comparison methods have both comparison of equality and comparison of inequality, structure

with full factor and structure with a dearth of factor, comparison of the same types and different types. Students who understand the characteristics of comparative structures and mechanism for making meanings will comprehend comparative rhetoric and also be able to create comparison sentences rich in imagery and expression. From the analysis of comparative rhetoric, we have made a number of recommendations to help students receive and create comparative rhetoric more effectively.

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