GRASPhopper Game: Intervention in Improving the English Sentence Construction of the Grade V Pupils

**ABSTRACT**

This action research was conducted to (1) identify the pre-test performance level of the Grade V learners in improving the English sentence construction, (2) post-test level of Grade V learners in improving the English sentence construction, (3) determine the difference between the pre-test and post-test of the learners, (4) determine the significant effect of the learner’s sentence construction. (5) determine the perception of the learners towards the intervention.

The respondents of the study were the Grade V learners of Carmen Central Elementary School identified having difficulty in the sentence construction. Sixteen (16) learners were selected through convenient sampling technique. A Self-Made Assessment in a form of a game was used to determine the pre-test and post-test of the performance level in the sentence construction. The assessment tool was validated by the Master Teachers in Carmen Central Elementary School.

GRASPhopper Game intervention was used to improve the performance level of the learners; the remediation level, reinforcement level, and enrichment level were identified. The GRASPhopper Game helps improved the performance level of the Grade V learners in the English sentence construction

KEYWORDS: Perception, performance, significance, improvement, intervention

**Introduction**

**I. CONTEXT AND RATIONALE**

Writing is an essential tool for communication and an important tool for learning.   The researcher found out that there are some of the learners in English have difficulty in the sentence construction particularly identifying the subject, verb and object in the simple sentence. This issue was strongly related to limited vocabulary which was used in formulating a sentence with complete thought.

In particular, this was the usual scenario experienced by the Grade 5 learners of Carmen Central Elementary School when it comes to sentence construction in a certain given passage. A common weakness in writing is the lack of varied sentences, sixteen (16) learners have difficulty in the sentence construction of a simple sentences. As a result, their writing ability was compromised. They are having hard time to compose a sentence especially in answering the Learning Activity Sheet (LAS) which focus in writing a paragraph using the given text-types.

Since researcher has the eagerness to address this problem, varied activities have been instigated. It starts with the simple process of checking the completeness of the sentence. The presence of the subject and the predicate, as well as the capitalization and punctuation has been materialized to test on how far their ability to write can be mended. However, the learners are still having difficulties in constructing a sentence even from the lesson text-type being presented. Learners have little stack of vocabulary and have difficulty in identifying the parts of a sentence; Subject-Verb-Object.

Thus, if the gaps will not be addressed immediately, learners will continually commit mistakes and constantly create confusion in paragraph making at the end. They find it hard to express their thoughts and ideas through writing if limited activities will be given to them. And the worst thing, learners may not be able to compose a paragraph as a whole.

With this situation, the researcher utilized the GRASPhopper Game to improve the sentence construction of Grade V pupils of Carmen Central Elementary School. GRASPhopper Game is a simplified activity sheet in a form of a game. But, the researcher used first a powerpoint presentation to introduce it. Learners were encouraged to engage by identifying a set of words if it is a complete or not complete sentence. A good start for them to construct a sentence on their own particularly the simple sentence. It was an avenue to captivate the learners’ interest and get involve in the sentence construction. These recent developments reveal that rapid changes in literacy have taken place as a result of the arrival of the computer and the development of other new technologies.

Consequently, the pressure on teachers to keep up with such developments and to raise standards in their classrooms is ever present (Feiler & Logan, 2007). Not only does it motivate and encourage learners to engage in reading and writing, but the various ways it is used proves beneficial in cultivating writing skills among this population of students (Lee, 2012).

**II. ACTION RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Specifically, this research will find answers to the following questions;

1. What is the Pret-test performance of the Grade V pupils before utilizing GRASPhopper Game as an intervention?
2. What is the Post-test performance of the Grade V pupils after utilizing GRASPhopper Game as an intervention?

3. Is there a significant difference between pre-test and post-test of the Grade V pupils after utilizing the GRASPhopper Game?

4. Is there a significant effect in the learners’ sentence construction using the GRASPhopper Game?

5. What is the perception of the learners to GRASPhopper Game?

**III. INNOVATION, INTERVENTION, AND STRATEGY**

Writing exercises are valuable because they help students think critically about course material while encouraging them to grasp, organize, and integrate prior knowledge with new concepts. Being able to construct simple sentences is necessary for effective written expression.

This situation calls for teachers to create lessons for all pupils based upon their readiness, interests, and background knowledge. Anderson (2007) noted that it is imperative not to exclude any child in a classroom, so a differentiated learning environment must be provided by a teacher.

Since poor writing of sentence construction affects the learner’s ability to learn lessons independently, the researcher felt the pressing needs to modify intervention to figure out ways to cope up with the demands in this new normal learning. Therefore, the utilization of GRASPhopper Game is proposed by the researcher to improve the English writing skills of Grade V pupils of Carmen Central Elementary School. The game has three levels; Level 1: “Easy Round” is a level where they will use a checklist scrutinize the completeness of the sentence; it has capitalization, subject, predicate and punctuation. Level 2: “Average Round” is a level wherein the jumbled words will be arranged to form a simple sentence. The capitalization and the punctuation are the hints to make it. Level 3: “Difficult Round” is a harder level which they will compose a sentence using the given scrambled words with proper construction. Every time they can answer they will hop forward and those who can first reach in front will be considered a winner.

Through this method, the 16 learners are the respondents of this study which will be capacitated with the skills they need. If pupils improve their sentence construction in English, this intervention strategy will support to the Basic Education - Learning Continuity Plan motto, “No student left behind” ensuring that education, despite the existence COVID 19 pandemic it will continuously be utilized by all means possible.

**IPO Model Presentation**

Output

Process

Input

Sentence Construction Level

Level I

Remediation

Level 2

Reinforcement

Level 3

Enrichment

Improved sentence construction

Higher percentage of learners in enrichment level

Collection and analysis of data through GRASPhopper Game

*Fig.1: An IPO Model showing the process in improving the sentence construction level using the GRASPhopper Game intervention.*

Writing exercises are valuable because they help students think critically about course material while encouraging them to grasp, organize, and integrate prior knowledge with new concepts. Being able to construct simple sentences is necessary for effective written expression.

This situation calls for teachers to create lessons for all pupils based upon their readiness, interests, and background knowledge. Anderson (2007) noted that it is imperative not to exclude any child in a classroom, so a differentiated learning environment must be provided by a teacher. This supports the study of Setyowati & Sukmawan, (2019), An English teacher can identify learners' weaknesses and strengths and provide valuable input to enhance their writing skills ability

**IV. ACTION RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

**a. Research Method**

The action research used the mixed method which will deal primarily with the performance level of the Grade 5 learners in the English sentence

**b**. **Research Participants**

The respondents of the study were the 16 learners of Grade V in Carmen Central Elementary School with having difficulty in sentence construction where English is used as a medium of instructions during the third quarter of school year 2023-2024.

**c. Data Gathering Methods**

Before the conduct of the research, a proposal was submitted to the School

Research Committee. After the approval, a copy of the approved letter was submitted to the Principal’s Office asking permission to conduct the research.

The researcher followed the three phases in collecting the data of the research. First phase, the administration of the pre-test through a simplified activity sheet. Second, the giving of the post-test and third phase, the interpretation of the result.

**d. Data Analysis**

The researcher used the following measure to analyse the data:

**Mean and Standard Deviation**. This is to determine the pre-test and post-test mean score of the respondents.

**Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test.** This is the statistical tool used to compare the pre-test and post-test mean score and to compute the significant difference.

***r***. This was used to test the magnitude effect of the GRASPhopper Game to the English vocabulary of the pupils.

**Thematic Analysis.** This is used to analyze qualitative data and identify common themes.

**Research Instrument**

A self-made activity sheet in a form of game was used which was validated by the Master Teachers before and after the intervention. It was adopted from Yaccob & Yunus, 2019, a language game is defined as an activity that is used to facilitate the learning of a language). The sentence construction level was assessed based on the PHIL-IRI Instructional Decision set by the Department of Education, Numbers 1-6, describes the pupils' remediation level; Numbers 7-9, reinforcement level; numbers 10, enrichment level.

**V. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS AND REFLECTION**

The results of the pretest indicate that the learners' performance in sentence construction requires remediation, as evidenced by a mean score of 4.5 (SD = 0.894) out of a possible 10 points. According to the established criteria, scores ranging from 0.00 to 7.00 signify a need for remediation. With a mean score falling within this range, it is evident that the learners have not yet achieved a satisfactory level of proficiency in sentence construction and would benefit from targeted instructional support to improve their skills. This implies that in intervention should be given to enhance their performance in sentence construction. This is related to the study of Kalanzadeh, Mahnegar, Hassannejad, & Bakhtiarvand, (2013), who affirmed that students who have higher self-esteem would be more involved in the learning activities in or outside class.

**Table 1. The learner’s performance in sentence construction in pretest.**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Variable** | **n = 16** | **SD** | **Mean** | **Description** |
| Pretest |  | 0.894 | 4.5 | needs remediation |
|  |  |  |  |  |

*Legend:*

*0.00 – 7.00 – needs Remediation*

*7.01 – 9.00 – needs Reinforcement*

*9.01 – 10.00 – needs enrichment*

Following an instructional intervention, the learners' performance in sentence construction showed improvement, as indicated by a mean post-test score of 8.44 (SD = 1.09). This mean score falls within the "needs reinforcement" category (7.01-9.00), suggesting that while progress has been made since the pretest (Table 1), further instruction and practice are still necessary to solidify their understanding and skills in sentence construction. The slightly larger standard deviation (1.09 compared to 0.894 in the pretest) might suggest a wider range of performance among the learners, warranting individualized support to address the remaining skill gaps.

This implies that a strong support or additional materials in the intervention should be given to enhance their performance in sentence construction. This supports the study of (Setyowati & Sukmawan, 2019) that an English teacher can identify learners' weaknesses and strengths and provide valuable input to enhance their writing skills ability

**Table 2. *The Learner’s Performance in Sentence Construction in Posttest.***

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Variable** | **n = 16** | **SD** | **Mean** | **Description** |
| Posttest |  | 1.09 | 8.44 | needs reinforcement |
|  |  |  |  |  |

*Legend:*

*0.00 – 7.00 – needs Remediation*

*7.01 – 9.00 – needs Reinforcement*

*9.01 – 10.00 – needs enrichment*

A Wilcoxon signed-rank test was conducted to compare learners' performance on the sentence construction pretest and posttest after using the GRASPhopper game. The test revealed a statistically significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores, W = -3.52, p = 0.00044. This indicates that the GRASPhopper game intervention had a statistically significant impact on learners' sentence construction skills. The negative value of W suggests that posttest scores were generally higher than pretest scores.

This supported by the previous study of Menggo, Suparwa, & Astawa, (2019) showed that performance assessment could increase writing skills and encourage students psychologically, i.e., by improving motivation to overcome their self-efficacy barriers in writing English.

**Table 3. Difference between Pre-test and Posttest using the GRASPhopper Game**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  | **n** | **Statistic** | **p-value** |
| Pre-test | Posttest | WILCOXON W | 16 | -3.52 | 0.00044 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

A rank biserial correlation analysis revealed a strong positive association between pre-test and post-test scores, r = 0.879, p < .001. This indicates a statistically significant relationship, suggesting that higher pre-test scores were associated with higher post-test scores. This finding supports the effectiveness of the intervention.

According to Vangah, Jafarpour, & Mohammadi, (2016) study. the understanding, and the effect of performance assessment to empower students’ writing ability are highly provided.

**Table 4. Effect of GRASPhopper Game in Learner’s Performance in Sentence Construction**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Variable** |  |  | Effect Size | p-value | INTERPRETATION |
| Pre-test | Posttest | r | 0.879 | <.001 | LARGE EFFECT |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

*Table 4 shows the responses of the learners in utilizing grasphopper game. The responses manifested how they have been challenged and improved in their sentence construction.*

**The qualitative information on the GRASPhopper intervention**

There are three themes generated from the interview of eight respondents such as **1Learn to Grasp, 2 Grasp Challenge and 3 Grasp Improvement.** These themes were extracted and agreed by the three inter-raters. Although, there was ambiguity of the themes, however Focus-Group Discussion (FGD) was conducted to solve the ambiguity of the themes. On the other hand, there were only eight learners chosen as respondents in the interview for the reasons that saturation of data was considered.

**Learn to Grasp**

The respondents felt astonished upon introducing the GRASPhopper Game Intervention which they **“**L**earn to Grasp”** the different phrases, simple sentences and its proper punctuation marks. Based in their responses, the respondents have the eagerness to learn more in sentence construction. Based on the study of Efendi, (2017); Murtini, Padmadewi, & Putra, (2013) learners feel challenged, motivated, practiced, and provided valuable feedback on the student's learning to encourage further writing development

*- I learned how to write sentences.*

*- I learned to write complete sentences.*

*- I noticed the part of the sentence that goes from beginning to end.*

*- I learned words in sentences that I didn't know.*

L1

L2

L3

L4

**Grasp Challenge**

The respondents were keeping on track despite the **“Grasp Challenge”.** The drive of wanting to face the confusions is very evident but they still managed to cope with it. This finding is in line with a research report conducted by (Aubrey, 2011; Menggo, Suastra, & Padmadewi, 2019), who claimed that students' interests could be a powerful teaching tool. It makes lessons exciting and can harness a student's latent in the language learning process.

**L5** *- I'm trying because I'm afraid of making mistakes.*

**L6** *- It's confusing, but if you understand the sentence, you can write it correctly.*

**Grasp Improvement**

The development of respondents’ performance towards the GRASPhopper Game intervention were observed through the **“Grasp Improvement”** This supports the study of (Schunk & Zimmerman, 2007) writers need to determine writing goals and constantly monitor progress toward those while they manage the completion of all tasks and while they manage their effort, time, and motivation.

*L7 -* *Because of the jumbled words, I can figure out how to make a sentence.*

*L8 --* *If we were given another activity, I could write a sentence.*

**Findings:**

The findings of the study are summarized as follows:

1. The results from the pretest *r*esulted to the need of the learners to have remediation in sentence construction. This implies that intervention should be given to enhance their performance in sentence construction.

2. The results from the posttest resulted to the need of the learners to have reinforcement in sentence construction. This implies that a strong support or additional materials in the intervention should be given to enhance their performance in sentence construction.

3. A measure of effectiveness was performed to identify the effect size of the contextualized grasphopper game intervention to the learner’s learning performance. It revealed that the intervention given has a large effect to the learners ability to construct a sentence.

4. Based on the learners’ responses, there are three themes generated such as 1Learn to Grasp, 2 Grasp Challenge and 3 Grasp Improvement. In generating themes, sentences where used. The responses manifested how the learners have been challenged and improved in sentence construction. It would serve as an instrument of change in their writing skills.

**VI. Conclusions:**

The following conclusions are drawn based on the results of the study:

1. The performance level of the Grade V learners in the sentence construction was improved after the utilization of the GRASPhopper Game.

2. The performance level of the learners to have reinforcement in sentence construction should be emphasized. This implies that a strong support or additional materials in the intervention should be given to enhance their performance in sentence construction.

3. The measure of effectiveness was a manifestation that GRASPhopper game has a large effect on the learner’s learning performance in sentence construction.

4. The perception of the learners towards the GRASPhopper game was challenging.

**Recommendations**

For School Administrators:

1. GRASPhopper Game is an intervention to be used by the teachers in monitoring the level of performance of the learners in the sentence construction in their school.
2. The school will consider assigning a teacher to focus on the writing skills of the learners which primarily look into the improvement of the sentence construction through the use of GRASPhopper Game as an intervention
3. More Activities using the GRASPhopper Game as an Intervention in the school to develop and improve the sentence construction of the learners.

For Teachers:

1. Use the intervention for a long-term approach for the assurance of the higher results of improvement.
2. A similar study is to be conducted at different levels as an intervention to be used by the teachers in shaping the learners' mastery in writing.

**COMPETING INTERESTS DISCLAIMER:**

Authors have declared that they have no known competing financial interests OR non-financial interests OR personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

**VII. REFERENCES**

**Berninger, V.W., Cartwright, A., Yates, C., Swanson, H., & Abbott, R. (1994).** Developmental skills related to writing and reading acquisition in the intermediate grades: Shared and unique variance. Reading and Writing: An Interdisciplinary Journal, 6, 161-196.

**Efendi, Z. (2017).** Improving students’ ability in writing English teaching by using portfolio

**Graham, S., & Harris, K.R. (1997a).** It can be taught, but it does not develop naturally: Myths and realities in writing instruction. School Psychology Review, 26, 414- 424.

**Harris, K.R., Graham, S., & Mason, L. (2006).** Improving the writing, knowledge, and motivation of struggling young writers: Effects of self-regulated strategy development with and without peer support. American Educational Research Journal, 43, 295-337

**Li, K. L., & Razali, A. B. (2019)**.Idea Sharing: Process-Based Approach to Writing in Malaysian English Education. PASAA, 58(July- December), 317-339.

**Li, K. L., & Yee, T. J. (2017).** The Use of Colourful Semantics to Improve Sentence Construction in Writing Sentences among Year Four Pupils. Journal of English Education, 2(1), 43-50

**Kalanzadeh, G. A., Mahnegar, F., Hassannejad, E., & Bakhtiarvand, M. (2013).** The influence of EFL students’ self-esteem on their speaking skills. *The International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World*, *2*(2), 76–83.

**Menggo, S., Suastra, I. M., & Padmadewi, N. N. (2019).** Self-recording videos to improve academic English-speaking competence. The Asian EFL Journal, 25(5.2), 133–152.

**Menggo, S., Suparwa, I. N., & Astawa, I. G. (2019).** Hindering factors in the achievement of

English communicative competence in tourism academy students. *Aksara*, *31*(1), 137–152.

**Setyowati, L., & Sukmawan, S. (2019)**. Authentic materials for teaching writing: a critical look. International Journal of Language Education, 3(2), 68–77.

**Vangah, F. P., Jafarpour, M., & Mohammadi, M. (2016).** Portfolio assessment and process writing: Its effect on EFL students’ L2 writing. Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research, 3(3), 224–246.

**Yaccob, N. S., & Yunus, M. M. (2019).** Language Games in Teaching and Learning English Grammar: A Literature Review. Arab World English Journal, 10(1), 209-217. doi: 10.24093/awej/vol10no1. 18