

Grammar Literacy Enhancement Through Project Grammar Dreams: Struggling Students In Focus

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Abstract: *In the 21st century, improving literacy has become a significant focus for educational leaders and teachers, given its crucial role in individual success. To explore the impact of Project Grammar Dreams on enhancing grammar literacy, a quantitative study was conducted using a one-group pretest-posttest experimental design with 30 struggling Grade 8 students at Parada National High School. The findings indicate that language teachers and academics should prioritize grammar literacy enhancement. The pretest results, supported by various studies and reports, highlight a deficiency in grammar skills, which impedes students' ability to effectively use English in writing and speaking tasks. Project Grammar Dreams, with its innovative approach to teaching and learning English grammar, including the development of contextualized and digitalized resources and the ASPIRE model, has shown potential to address these challenges. It is recommended that Project Grammar Dreams be implemented in schools where students exhibit low English grammar skills. Such innovations and resources can help English teachers adapt their practices to better meet the needs of 21st-century learners. This study underscores the importance of digitalization in education, aiming to ensure that Filipino students are well-equipped, functional, and competitive on a global scale.*

Keywords: *grammar literacy, digitalized resources, struggling students, one-group-pretest and posttest design*

INTRODUCTION

In this 21st Century, literacy improvement received great attention from educational leaders and teachers as individuals notably succeed once they are literate. Being literate requires individuals to be equipped with various skills and need to be knowledgeable enough. One of the skills that need to be acquired and honed by students is grammar skills. These will enable them to convey messages to others through speaking or writing. This will happen once they have a strong foundation in language forms and rules in English. With this, mastery of grammar rules and forms will lead them to communicate effectively and clearly.

In English classes, the grammar skills of students are necessary to complete their various written works and performance tasks, where students are required to write and submit reflection papers, essays, reviews, and research papers. Their ability to construct grammatically correct sentences will lead them to achieve satisfactory academic performance. Undoubtedly, students who encountered difficulty in writing and speaking well-structured sentences due to limited knowledge of grammar forms and rules greatly affected their academic performance in English 10. Pascual (2019) asserts that most students find grammar difficult to learn and they fail to learn it because it is associated with mind-numbing rules. As a result, students fail to produce grammatically correct sentences, leading to low

scores in their written output, indicating that they are not linguistically and communicatively competent users of the English language. This led to the fact that there are students

who are marked as struggling. According to Alharbi (2021), the term "struggling learner" is commonly used to describe students who are trying—often unsuccessfully—to study English in a formal context. This means that they encountered difficulty processing and understanding the lessons. In this innovation, the students who performed poorly during the class discussion and assessment activities and got low scores on different grammar tests were considered struggling learners.

At present, teachers use materials taken from textbooks, which, sadly, are decontextualized. Another problem is the scarcity of learning materials, which limits the teaching-learning process. Morales (2017) said that the materials needed to teach the subject and cover the competencies included in the curriculum guide are still unavailable. This has prompted the English 8 teachers to incorporate the contextualization approach in developing learning resources such as drills and videos on English grammar. This academic undertaking is anchored on the principle that the utilization of contextualization can enhance the grammar skills of students so that they will be knowledgeable and proficient in English, as the learning process becomes engaging and meaningful because the activities are prepared based on the interests and preferences of the students. With its potential to positively influence the engagement and performance of students in learning grammar, the proponent incorporated digitalization in education by developing digitalized learning resources.

This has prompted the researcher to conceptualize Project Grammar Dreams which stands for Digitalized Resources in Edifying and Monitoring the Skills of Struggling Students, which aims to hone the grammar skills of selected Grade 8 struggling students by utilizing digitalized resources as the

contextual learning and self-discovery approaches are employed.

Methods

The researcher utilized the quantitative research approach, specifically the one-group pretest-posttest design, to determine the effect of the digitalized learning resources, as the main output of Project Grammar Dreams on the enhancement of the students' grammar skills. The 60-item pretest and posttest were validated by selected specialists in the field of language education and assessment, who were composed of 2 Master Teachers, 1 English Professor in English, and one in Measurement and Assessment. The assessment tools were composed of 6 identified least learned grammar lessons which are 1. Parallel structure, 2. Modals, 3. Conjunctions; 4. Punctuation Marks 5. Capitalization; and 6. Sentence Pattern. Also, surveys on the attitude and feedback of students towards English grammar were distributed and analyzed, which served as support in claiming that the use of digitalized materials contributed meaningfully to enhancing the skills of the participants.

The students used different digitalized contextualized grammar drills, which are aligned with the Most Essential Learning Competencies in the 3rd and 4th Quarters. The process of learning became more meaningful and enjoyable as the students accessed the learning resources at home, and the elaboration and engagement processes will happen in the school. Various digital resources were placed in the English room, the learning venue for students, for the implementation of this project.

The 30 participants were purposively selected based on the results of the grammar assessment test administered in School Year 2021-2022 and as follows: 1. They got low scores for the previous grammar assessment tests; 2. Their parents allowed them to participate by signing the consent form; 3. They have cellphones; and 4. They are not participants in the reading program of the school. Following these criteria, the proponent, through the help of the English 8 teachers identified 30 students coming from Grade 8 Camia and Grade 8 Sunflower.

Results

I. Level of Grammar Skills of the Participants Before Using the Digitalized Resources

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Grammar Skills of Student-Participants(Posttest)			
Scores	Frequency	Percentage	Verbal Interpretation
49-60	2	6.666667	Highly Skilled
37-48	5	16.666667	Skilled
25-36	16	53.333333	Moderately Skilled
13-24	7	23.333333	Lacking Skills
0-12	0	0	Without Skills
Total	30	100	-
Mean Score	30.167		MODE R A T E L Y S K I L L E D

To assess the level of grammar skills of the participants, which will serve as the main basis of this innovation, the implementers administered a pretest covering the identified grammar lessons. As shown in the data, no one got scores ranging from 60–49 or 48–37. Then, most students got scores ranging from 24 to 13, interpreted as "Lacking Skills."

This shows that there is a need to enhance the grammar skills of the students, which are vital as they write their sentences in various writing tasks and affect their academic performance in English. This supports the conclusion of Sioco and De Vera (2018), that Junior High School students need to further enhance their level of grammatical competence. This will be achieved as the students will be exposed to different intervention and enrichment programs centered on the grammar needs of the students. The level of grammar skills of the participants before the implementation plan was "Lacking Skill." This has promoted the implementers to conduct Project Grammar Dreams, which focuses on addressing the needs of struggling learners.

II. Level of Grammar Skills of the Participants After Using the Digitalized Resources

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Grammar Skills of Student-Participants (Posttest)			
Scores	Frequency	Percentage	Verbal Interpretation
49-60	2	6.666667	Highly Skilled
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After the 10-week implementation of digitalized resources, a posttest was administered to the participants to determine the outcomes of the innovation. It can be gleaned from the table that there are 2 (7%) students who got scores ranging from 60–49, interpreted as "Highly Skilled." Then, there are 5 (17%) students who got scores ranging from 48–37, interpreted as "Skilled." Significantly, 53% of the participants belong to "Moderately Skilled." This signifies that the innovative materials such as slide and video presentations, gamified activities, and online assessments used by the learners contributed meaningfully to improving their grammar skills.

They became actively engaged with the class discussion as the materials were contextualized and localized. This advanced the learners to fully grasp the grammar rules and forms as the examples are meaningfully created. This also promotes the idea of learning by doing, as the students were tasked to use the tablets to access the gamified and online assessment tools.

Summing up, the level of grammar skills of the participants after the implementation program is Moderately Skilled, which is the desired level of this innovation project.

III. Significant Difference in Participants' Level of Grammar Skills Before and After Using the Digitalized Resources

Paired Samples Test		
Statistics	Pretest	Posttest
Mean	21.63	30.17
Standard Deviation	5.463	
Sample Size	30	
Mean Difference	8.533	
t-value	8.556	
p-value	.000	Alpha: .05
Interpretation	Significant	

A paired sample t-test was utilized to determine the significant difference between the grammar skills before and after the implementation of the innovation centered on grammar. It can be gleaned that there was a statistically significant difference between the pretest ($M = 21.63$, $SD = 4.731$) and the posttest ($M = 30.17$, $SD = 7.630$), $t(29) = 8.556$, $p.001$ (two-tailed). The mean increase in the post-test scores was 8.533, with a 95% confidence interval ranging from 6.493 to 10.573.

The table presents a comparison of the scores of the participants before and after the implementation. Through a paired sample test, it was revealed that there was a significant difference between the level of grammar skills of the participants before and after using the digitalized resources. This signifies that the contextualized drills converted into digital format, as well as the slide, video, and gamified presentations, contributed meaningfully to honing the skills of the participants.

III. Survey on the Attitudes of Students Towards Learning English Grammar

Statements	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. I enjoy learning English grammar using digitalized materials.	3.9	Strongly Agree
2. I can really understand the grammar lesson as the teacher uses slide presentations discussion.	3.77	Strongly Agree
3. I view learning English grammar as fun and engaging, as I used gamified presentations.	3.6	Strongly Agree
4. I also learn at home as I have a copy of the learning materials.	3.5	Strongly Agree
5. I use my knowledge of English grammar in different writing tasks.	3.73	Strongly Agree

This table presents the attitudes of students towards learning English grammar after using the digitalized learning resources. It is notable that all statements in the survey received the verbal interpretation of "Strongly Agree."

The highest mean was obtained by Statement 1, "I enjoyed learning English grammar using digitalized resources." It was followed by statements 8 and 10 with the mean of 3.83, interpreted as "Strongly Agree." Statement 8, "I value the efforts of the teachers to teach English grammar effectively and meaningfully." Statement 10, "I am motivated to learn English grammar because my teacher prepared various technology-based activities. These statements attested that the students have a positive attitude in learning English grammar as they were exposed to different digitalized materials which they may not use in their typical class discussion.

Digital materials are particularly helpful for supporting learners' comprehension, focusing their attention, improving their noticing skills, engaging them with the content, and assisting them in becoming more independent learners, all of which increase the likelihood that they will successfully assimilate the material, claims Blue (2021).

The involvement of various digitalized materials and online platforms contributed meaningfully to innovate the teaching-learning process in the field of English grammar and achieve the goal of this innovation, which is to improve their grammar skills. Before they use the grammar rules and forms correctly and appropriately in one context, they must have a solid foundation of linguistic competence, which can be achieved once the students are motivated to learn. This led to the use of technology-based activities and devices such as tablets, laptops, and smart televisions.

Recommendations

1. It is evident that through Project Grammar Dreams, the level of grammar skills of the students improved from Lacking

Skills to Moderately Skilled. Also, they have experienced an innovative way of learning English grammar through digitalized learning resources, which contributed meaningfully for them to establish a positive attitude towards learning English grammar. With this, students should realize the vital role of attending and participating in various projects centered on the enhancement of their skills, especially in English grammar. They should maximize their gadgets, such as cellphones, tablets, and laptops, in accessing various digitalized resources to study the least learned grammar lessons, as they can learn at home at anytime, anywhere, as the teachers continuously upload various

2. The innovation in the process of teaching English grammar should be used by language teachers to ensure that students will enjoy learning English grammar. Also, the outputs of this project may serve as their guide in developing their learning materials centered on students' needs, interests, and preferences to ensure quality and meaningful learning. This innovation may give them another perspective on how to teach English grammar in a very meaningful, engaging, and truly student-centered way. That is why the best practices highlighted in this innovation may be adopted and implemented, especially for those students who encounter difficulty learning English grammar.

3. The school administrators should constantly support their teachers in pursuing projects centered on macro skills or least-learned skills, especially in the field of language education. Also, seminars and training on contextualization and digitalization are suggested in the LAC sessions or In-Service Training.

4. Other researchers should continue exploring the implications and benefits of utilizing digital materials to address the literacy needs of students. They may conduct a qualitative study to ascertain the lived experiences of the participants in using the innovative materials.

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