

Utilization of Game-based Activities to Improve Grade 7 Students' Grammatical Use of Preposition

DR. MAREDIL R. AMBOS¹, JAIRA DALE J. APOLI², ELMA JOY J. DE LA CRUZ³, NONY JEAN S. GAMPAY⁴, KRISTEL JOYCE A. LAPIDEZ⁵

^{1, 2, 3, 4, 5} Central Philippine University Jaro, Iloilo City

Abstract- *The purpose of this research was to improve Grade 7 students' grammatical use of Preposition. The series of interactive game-based activities were implemented to help students master the types and functions of Preposition. To achieve the research objectives, the study used an experimental design since its main aim is to determine the effectiveness of interactive game-based activities in the learning progress of the Grade 7 students in terms of using Preposition. There were 2 groups of participants in the study with a count of 32 students per group. One group served as the Control group and the other one was the Experimental group. Both groups were taught with the same lesson in a week which was the Type and Functions of Preposition. A pretest was conducted to check the mastery in preposition of the two groups. Then, the Control group was taught using a traditional approach while the Experimental group was taught using the interactive game-based activities. After that, post-test was conducted to determine if there is a significant difference between pretest and post-test scores. The result showed that there was a significant difference between the pretest and post-test scores of the Grade 7 students. The Experimental group greatly increased with a mean difference of 5.87 compared to the control group with mean difference of 2.09 between pretest and post-test result. This showed that utilizing interactive game-based activities had influenced the improvement of learner's grammatical use of Prepositions.*

Indexed Terms- *Game Based Activities, Gamification, Grammatical Use of Preposition, Grade 7 Students*

I. INTRODUCTION

• Background

Grammar is one of the language components in English. It is used to create and deliver meaningful information, messages and effective communication. In order for the students to perform well in speaking and writing, the students need to learn the basic rules of grammar which will guide them in their writing

composition and other academic works. One of the common difficulties in terms of grammar is the proper usage of Preposition.

According to Merriam Webster Dictionary, Preposition is a function word that typically combines with a noun phrase which usually expresses a modification of predication. These are words used with noun in phrases to provide information about time, place, and direction. Prepositions are quite simple and easy to use but they play a crucial function in grammar for it completes the information that people are trying to convey.

The study of Abker (2021) entitled, "Difficulties of Using Correct English Prepositions among EFL Students" revealed that students faced difficulty with using correct preposition after a certain verb and they find it hard also to identify correct prepositional phrase to use both in writing and every day communication. As considered solution, the study of Mubaslat (2012) entitled "The Effectiveness of Using Educational Games on the Students' Achievement in English Language for the Primary stage" revealed that using games can enhance the mastery of students. These are effective because they stimulate students' motivation and learners can absorb lesson immediately.

With this, the researchers aimed to determine the effectiveness of utilizing interactive game-based activities to improve Grade 7 students' mastery and grammatical use of Preposition.

• Purpose

The purpose of this action research is to help students learn and retain concepts of Preposition in a fun and interactive way. Also, to determine how game-based activities will improve students' mastery in the types and functions of Preposition. The interactive game-based activities include discussion and different games

that will gauge students' interest and attention while learning Preposition. The students are required to engage in class which will make them develop their participation and interpersonal skills. The researchers believe that the implementation of this learning strategy will help students learn and retain the ideas that they had gained. Furthermore, this study would like to emphasize the benefit of utilizing interactive games in presenting English lessons.

- Objectives

This study aims to enhance learners' grammatical use of preposition. Specifically, this study sought to address the following questions:

- 1) What is score of control group and experimental group in pretest?
- 2) What is the score of the control group and experimental group in post-test?
- 3) Is there a significant difference between the pretest scores of the control and experimental group?
- 4) Is there a significant difference between the post-test scores of the control and experimental group?
- 5) Is there is a significant difference between the pretest and post-test scores of the control and experimental group?

- Significance of the study

The result of the study will benefit the following individuals:

Students. The findings of the study will help students determine the different usage of prepositions. By focusing on discussion and interactive activities in the classroom.

Educators. This study will aid teachers improve students' learning competency in grammar, specifically with prepositions.

School. This study will be beneficial to the school for it addresses the learning needs of the students.

Future Researcher. The result of the study will be beneficial to future researchers who would like to conduct a study about Preposition or Grammar. This study can serve as guide to their own research.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

Difficulty in using Prepositions

Language is important in the life of people. It is used for self-expression, providing information, social adaptation, and it is used to have meaningful communication with others. One of the most used international languages is English, in fact, it is considered as universal language since it is widely used in terms of education, business and other transactions around the world. In learning English language, one must learn grammar. Grammar is a system and structure of language. It has an important role in language learning that is why learning English language cannot be separated from learning grammar. To master grammar, one must learn the different parts of speech. Preposition is under the study of grammar and a part of speeches that some students find difficult to use correctly in writing or speaking. What makes learning preposition difficult is because it is a word with multiple meanings and it is difficult to recognize in oral speech because it typically contains few syllables (Koffi, 2010). The study of Hidayat (2018) entitled, "An Analysis of the Students Difficulties in Using Preposition", aims to analyze difficulties faced by the grade eight students in using preposition. The study found that: (1) Preposition of manner is the most difficult type of preposition for students. (2) Preposition of time is the second most difficult type of preposition for the students. (3) Preposition of place was the least difficult type of preposition.

In the light of the conclusion stated by Hidayat (2018), the study found that students have difficulties in using preposition correctly as reflected in the preposition test conducted to them. The students found difficulty in the different types of prepositions specifically, in preposition of manner, time and place.

Furthermore, Abdalla (2021) from his study with the "Difficulties in Using Correct English Preposition among EFL Students" at Albaham University, Saudi Arabia showed that students faced problems with using the correct prepositions after certain verbs. Then, students encountered difficulties in identifying the correct prepositional phrase. Lastly, students experienced the same problem with the use of English

prepositions in writing tasks and in daily communication. Moreover, Abdalla (2021) stated that learners of English as Foreign Language (EFL) need to master the four basic skills in English which are the listening, speaking, reading and writing. He added that due to globalization and the increased use of English in education, communication, business and entertainment, correct writing and fluent communication in English are skills that are in high demand at present.

Therefore, learning from the basic parts of speech like preposition is important.

The findings of the study showed that learners have difficulty in using correct preposition after verb, identifying prepositional phrase and applying preposition in their writings and everyday communication. This means that the inability of a student to use correct preposition does not only affect their scores in tests but also in their skills in writing and competence in delivering information or messages in everyday life. The result of the studies conducted by various researchers supported the idea that preposition is important in mastering grammar and learning English.

According to the study of (Hidaya, 2018) learners found difficulty in the different types of prepositions specifically, in preposition of manner, time and place. For Hidaya, one reason is that learners had experienced less application or practice about preposition in their curricula. The study of (Abdalla, 2021) agreed on this as he concluded that English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners have difficulty in using correct preposition after verb, identifying prepositional phrase and applying preposition in their writings and everyday communication.

Effectiveness of using game-based activities

Using game-based activities can aid teachers in engaging and motivating their students to learn in a number of ways. Games are not usually used in the classroom since it might take a lot of time and materials, and there are occasionally restrictions in the syllabus that make it difficult for teachers to incorporate games into every session. Games, however, can be advantageous for both teachers and students since they hold students' interest and

attention, reduce stress, encourage interaction, and make learning enjoyable. In relation to this, the study of Mubaslat (2012) entitled "The Effectiveness of Using Educational Games on the Students' Achievement in English Language for the Primary stage" revealed that: (1) The results of the post test for the experimental group are so better than the controlled one which show that games have a good effect on improving the achievement for the primary stage and to create an interactive environment. (2) The use of games in teaching English has increased the student's attention and motivation and it is very useful to use games. (3) Games create a rich environment full with interaction and stimulations for the students.

Furthermore, Mubaslat (2012) stated in her study that a game should not be regarded as a marginal activity filling in odd moments when the teacher and class have nothing better to do. The main reason why games are considered effective learning aid is that they stimulate students' motivation and learners can absorb lesson immediately.

Another study entitled, "Effectiveness of Using Games in Teaching Grammar to Young Learners" by Olageldili & Arikan (2011) aims to explore the effectiveness of using games in teaching grammar to young learners from the viewpoints of Turkish English as Foreign Language (EFL) teachers working in primary schools. The study revealed that Turkish EFL teachers recognize the pedagogical value of using games in their classrooms and agree that while teaching the grammar rules explicitly is still important, using games as a form of instruction is also beneficial. Similarly, the participants express that using games is effective in grammar teaching especially for young learners.

Additionally, the study of Mahmudah (2011) entitled "Improving Students' Ability in Using Prepositions of Place through Total Physical Response (TPR)" agreed that through the use of speech and action input becomes more comprehensible to learners. The result of the study showed that through Total Physical Response (TPR) there is improvement of students' understanding of prepositions of place which is evident in the improvement of their achievement in pretest and posttest. The researcher also added that using Total Physical Response (TPR) will only make

students enjoy, fun and relax learning English but also lesson will take longer in their mind in memorizing the vocabularies because of they respond the command by their physical. The result of the various study presented above showed that integrating games in presenting grammar lesson is beneficial to learners. Games spur motivation, interest, and attention of learners. It also creates fun and rich environment full of interaction (Mubaslat, 2012). Moreover, by encouraging active participation or physical response of learners in class, the lesson becomes comprehensible and the learners can easily understand and remember the concept it is evident in the study of (Mahmudah, 2011). Lastly, the study of (Olageldili & Arikan, 2011) agreed that games have pedagogical value and it is important to use games in presenting grammar as a form of instruction. However, the researchers also pointed out that though games are beneficial in classrooms these are not integrated often due to crowded classrooms and overloaded curriculum. As a final point, teachers and learners must see the use and impact of games in presenting lesson, it is because learners can learn best when they are motivated, interested and engaged in class.

- Scope of the Study

This study is only focused on determining the effect of using interactive game-based activities in the academic performance of Grade 7 students. The participants of the study were the 64 Grade 7 students of a private institution in Iloilo City. The study will be conducted during the fourth quarter of the Academic year 2022-2023. In order to assess the effectiveness of the intervention which is the interactive game-based activities, the researchers will use a 20-item validated questionnaire for pre-test and post-test which will cover the Types and Functions of Preposition.

- Procedure

The researchers had two groups in the study which were the Control group and Experimental group with both 32 student participants. The researcher-made test questionnaires that were validated by the English teachers were used to conduct pre-test to both groups in order to determine and compare their scores before the intervention. Then, both groups were taught the same topic which is the Types and Functions of Preposition.

The Control group was taught using a routine or traditional teaching while the Experimental group was taught using the interactive game-based activities. After that, the researchers conducted a post-test to assess if there is a significant difference with the scores after the intervention and to determine whether the interactive game-based activities are effective in helping students improve their grammatical use of Preposition.

- Proposed Intervention and Strategies

To help students improve their grammatical use of Prepositions, this study suggested an intervention for grade 7 students. Two strategies will be used in the intervention: first, utilizing game-based activities to gauge students' attention and interest in learning as well as to recognize the correct usage of prepositions. This makes use of instructional approaches which attempts to make the process of learning grammar enjoyable, fun, and more meaningful. It will also help the students relax and reduce the stress while learning English. Second, there is a discussion prepared by the researchers about preposition which will give inputs to students about the different types and functions of preposition.

Here are the interactive game-based activities in teaching preposition:

Give me what I want: This is a physical activity wherein students have to roam inside the classroom, look for what is being asked and describe its place and direction using correct preposition.

One, two, three move: This activity will be fun for students will have to move and follow the instructions. This will make them learn the preposition of place and movement.

Describe the picture: In this activity different pictures will be shown to students and they have to describe it. This focuses on applying preposition in giving information.

Mark your calendar: This activity will excite students for they will write either real or fictional events in their lives in a calendar. This will make them use appropriate preposition of time.

III. FINDINGS

- Data Collection and analysis

After getting the approval of the Junior High School principal, the researcher started to conduct the study. The scores of both groups were gathered, recorded and analyzed using the mean, standard deviation and t-test of significant difference. The mean and standard deviation were used to determine the performance of both groups in pretest and post-test while the t-test was used to check if there is a significant difference between the pretest and post-test scores of the two groups.

Table 1. Pretest Scores of the Control and Experimental group

PRETEST SCORES		
Student	Control Group	Experimental Group
1	10	12
2	11	14
3	8	10
4	12	11
5	9	13
6	11	11
7	7	9
8	11	12
9	12	14
10	7	12
11	9	11
12	10	10
13	10	9
14	8	11
15	11	15
16	10	10
17	7	9
18	9	11
19	12	8
20	9	10
21	9	11
22	10	13
23	8	10
24	7	10

Legend:
 1-5 Very low
 6-10 Low

11-15 Average
 16-20 High

Table 1 shows the pretest scores of the control and experimental group. In order to classify the scores of the students, the researchers created a scale wherein scores from 1-5 is considered as very low, 6-10 is low, 11-15 is average and 16-20 is classified as high. In the Control group, the highest score is 12 and the lowest is 7. Based on the tallied scores, there were 25 students who were classified as low and 7 students who got a score under the moderate classification. On the other hand, the Experimental group recorded a highest score of 15 and lowest of 8. There are 12 students who got a low score while there are 20 students who scored average. The result of the pretest showed that majority of the students' score from the Control and Experimental group is average prior to the implementation of the intervention.

Table 2. Post-test Scores of the Control and Experimental group

POST- TEST SCORES		
Student	Control Group	Experimental Group
1	13	16
2	14	19
3	12	18
4	13	20
5	11	17
6	11	19
7	10	15

Legend:
 1-5 Very low
 6-10 Low
 11-15 Average
 16-20 High

The table 2 above shows the tallied post-test scores of the control and experimental group. The highest score in control group is 14 and the lowest is 8. To classify, there were 12 students who scored low and there were 20 students classified as average. In the experimental group, the highest score is 20 and 14 is the lowest. As per classification, there were 7 students under the average and there were 25 students who scored high.

Based on the result after the experiment, it is evident that there was an increase in the number of students who scored average for both groups and there were students who scored high in the experimental group. This means that both approach in teaching English increased students' performance, but there is a notable increase in the scores of the experimental group where the interactive game-based activities were implemented.

Table 3. Independent T-Test Results of Pretest Scores

Groups	Mean	Std. Deviation	Computed t- value	Tabular Value at 0.05 Level of Significance
Control Group	9.13	1.64120	5.915	2.042
Experimental Group	11.16	1.60863		

Table 3 shows the independent T-test results of the pretest scores of the control and experimental group. The result showed that there was a significant difference between the pre-test score of the control (M=9.13, SD= 1.64120) and the experimental group (M= 11.16 SD= 1.60863) conditions; $t(62)= 5.915$. The result of the independent t-test served as a baseline data prior to the use of interactive game-based activities. Based on the mean and standard deviation, the result showed that experimental group scored a little higher than the control group which means that the two groups do not differ much in terms of intelligence level.

Table 4. Independent T-Test Results of Post-test Scores

Groups	Mean	Std. Deviation	Computed t-value	Tabular Value at 0.05 Level of Significance
Control Group	11.22	1.75489	15.535	2.042
Experimental Group	17.03	1.51305		

Table 4 shows the independent T-test results of the post-test scores of the control and experimental group. The result showed that there was a significant difference between the post-test scores of the control group (M=11.22 SD=1.75489) and experimental group (M=17.03 SD=1.75489) conditions; $t(62)=15.535$. The post-test score of the experimental group is higher compared to the control group. This means that the scores of experimental groups which was taught using interactive game-based activities is remarkably better as compared to those which was taught using routine or traditional approach.

Table 5. Paired T-Test Result of the Control and Experimental Group

Groups	Mean	Standard Deviation	Computed t value	Tabular Value at 0.05 Level of Significance
Pretest vs Post-test (df=) 62			10.334	2.042
Control	9.13	1.64120		
Control	11.22	1.75489		
Pretest vs Post-test (df=62)			22.196	2.042
Experimental	11.16	1.60863		
Experimental	17.03	1.51305		

The table 5 presents paired t-test result of the pretest and post-test scores of the control and experimental group. The result shows that there is a significant difference between the pretest scores (M=9.13 SD=1.64120) and post-test scores (M=11.22 SD=1.75489) conditions; $t(62)= 10.334$ of the control group. This means that by using routine or traditional intervention, the scores will increase but not as much compared to the experimental group with a mean difference of 2.09. The result for experimental group showed that there was a significant difference between pretest scores (M=11.16 SD=1.60863) and post-test scores (M= 17.03 SD =1.51305) conditions; $t(62)= 22.196$. Specifically, the result showed that students' scores from the experimental group greatly increased with a mean difference of 5.87. This suggests that the intervention positively influenced the students' grammatical use of prepositions.

- Strategies Implemented

1. The researchers identified two groups for Control and Experimental with a count of 32 participants per group.
2. Distribution of the pretest to the Control and Experimental group. The researcher gave 20-item pretest to both groups to find out the students' grammatical use of preposition before utilizing interactive game-based activities as intervention to the experimental group.
3. Discussion about preposition to both groups. The control group was taught using traditional approach while the interactive game-based activities were utilized to the experimental group.

The implemented interactive game-based activities are as follows:

- Give me what I want: This is a physical activity wherein students have to roam inside the classroom, look for what is being asked and describe its place and direction using correct preposition.
 - One, two, three move: This activity will be fun for students will have to move and follow the instructions. This will make them learn the preposition of place and movement.
 - Describe the picture: In this activity different pictures will be shown to students and they have to describe it. This focuses on applying preposition in giving information.
 - Mark your calendar: This activity will excite students for they will write either real or fictional events in their lives in a calendar. This will make them use appropriate preposition of time.
4. Distributing the post-test to both control and experimental group. The post-test is identical to the pre-test that was given.
 5. The result of the pretest and post-test was analyzed using statistical tool. Mean, standard deviation and T-test were used to determine the significant difference of the scores

- Proposed Solution

In response to the difficulty and confusion of students in utilizing correct Preposition in writing, this study proposes to utilize interactive game-based activity in

presenting the different types and functions of Preposition. Using this instructional strategy, the students will have the opportunity to get engaged in class, collaborate with others, enjoy and most especially learn.

CONCLUSION

- Outcomes

1. The result of the pretest showed that majority of the students' score from the Control and Experimental group is average prior to the implementation of the intervention.
2. The result of the post-test showed that there was an increase in the number of students who scored average for both groups and there were students who scored high in the experimental group
3. The T-test results for pretest scores of the Control group and Experimental group indicate a significant difference. Experimental group ($M=11.16$) scored a little higher than the control group ($M=9.13$). This means that students' intelligence level does not differ much. This served as a good baseline for the researchers to proceed with the intervention.
4. The T-test results for post-test scores of the Control group and Experimental group indicates a significant difference. The control group got a mean of 11.22 while the experimental group got a mean of 17.03. There was an increase of scores in both groups but it is remarkable that the scores of the Experimental group who were taught using interactive game-based activities is higher compared to the Control group who were taught using traditional approach.
5. The result showed that there is a significant difference between the pretest and post-test scores of the Control and Experimental group. The Experimental group greatly increased in scores with a mean difference of 5.87 compared to the Control group with a mean difference of 2.09. This suggests that utilizing interactive game-based activities positively influenced the students' grammatical use of prepositions.

- Implications of the Study

The result of this study suggests that students can learn best and apply the correct grammatical use of

preposition when they are taught using interactive game-based activities. This could be due to the effect of teaching them through the use of games which gauged their interest and motivation to learn and get engaged in class.

Furthermore, the outcome of the study also led to certain implication for practice.

This suggests that English teachers should consider integrating interactive game-based activities as one of the aids in teaching grammar. By incorporating games into the curriculum, teachers can create a more dynamic and interactive learning environment that promotes active participation and motivation among students. As evident in the result, the students improved their academic performance after being taught using game-based strategy. This means that students can easily grasp the lesson when they are active in class.

- Further Recommendations

In the light of the conclusions drawn from the result of the study, the researchers have following recommendations:

The English Teachers. The result of the study showed that students experience improvement to their academic performance by using interactive game-based activities. With this, the researchers would recommend for the English teachers to utilize game-based activities which are developmentally appropriate for the students. Furthermore, teachers should continue to offer varied teaching strategies that would make students enjoy while learning.

The Students. The students should be motivated and develop positive attitude in learning English. The researchers would recommend the students to further study the Parts of speech, specifically Preposition, to enhance their competence in learning and in applying rules in grammar.

Future Researchers. The future researchers can use this study their basis, if they wanted to conduct a study about grammar, specifically, Preposition. The future researchers are encouraged to conduct a follow-up study.

REFERENCES

- [1] Ilham, I. (2018). An Analysis of The Students' Difficulties in using preposition. *Research in English and Education Journal*, 3(2), 125-129. From <https://jim.usk.ac.id/READ/article/view/9247>
- [2] Abdalla, I. (2021). Difficulties in using correct English prepositions among EFL students. *JEES (Journal of English Educators Society)*, 6(2). From <http://dx.doi.org/10.20431/2349-0381.0411025>
- [3] Mubaslat, M. M. (2012). The Effect of Using Educational Games on the Students' Achievement in English Language for the Primary Stage. Online Submission. From <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED529467.pdf>
- [4] Yolageldili, G., & Arikan, A. (2011). Effectiveness of using games in teaching grammar to young learners. Online Submission, 10(1), 219-229. From <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED527862.pdf>
- [5] Mahmudah, R. A. (2011). Improving students' ability in using prepositions of place through total physical response (TPR) (a classroom action research at first grade of SMPN 10 kota Tangerang selatan). From <https://repository.uinjkt.ac.id/dspace/bitstream/123456789/3007/1/RIF%27ATUL%20MAHM%20UDAH-FITK.pdf>
- [6] Lorincz, Kristen and Gordon, Rebekah (2012) "Difficulties in Learning Prepositions and Possible Solutions," *Linguistic Portfolios: Vol.1*, Article 14. Available at: https://repository.stcloudstate.edu/stcloud_ling/vol1/is