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Page No. 257 - 261

Project ACE 8 With LOVE (Activities on Copy Editing with Localized, Organized and Vast Exercises): A Tool in Mastering the Competencies on The Copy-Editing Symbols of Special Program on Journalism

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ABSTRACT: This study was conducted to identify the effectiveness of the Project ACE 8 With LOVE (Activities on Copy Editing With Localized, Organized and Vast Exercises): A Tool in Mastering the Competencies on the Copy Editing Symbols of Special Program on Journalism in using copy editing symbols correctly (SPJ7EDT-IIb-9), School Year 2023- 2024. It utilized two group Pre-test and posttest of Experimental Research design with thirty (30) Grade 7 students as respondents employing the purposive sampling technique. The statistical tools used were the Mean, Standard Deviation, Paired Sample T-Test, Independent T-Test, Eta Squad and Thematic Analysis to assess and measure the impact of the intervention. Based on the analysis, the results demonstrated that there was a significant difference in the respondents' performance after using the audio-visual material on the identified least mastered competency. The intervention had a large effect on the respondents' test scores, and there was an improvement in the performance of Grade 7 students. From the findings and conclusion, the researcher recommends the use of Learning Activity Sheets as an educational tool to enhance students understanding and skills. In addition, the utilization of Project
ACE 8 With LOVE (Activities on Copy Editing With Localized, Organized and Vast Exercises): A Tool in Mastering The Competencies on the Copy Editing Symbols of Special Program in teaching least mastered competency in Journalism 7 helps students to improve their mastery on the said competency. Furthermore, teachers must be given training and workshops on how to create, conceptualize to gain technical know-how and clear understanding of its uses to provide learners quality, meaningful and fun learning intervention.

KEYWORDS: Copy Editing, Localized, Competencies

I. INTRODUCTION

Copy editing skills are essential for student journalists, as they impact the effectiveness of their communication and influence audience perception. Errors in writing, especially in school papers, can negatively affect readership. Therefore, student journalists must prioritize improving grammar to ensure their articles are clear, accurate, and well-received.

Republic Act (RA) 7079, the "Campus Journalism Act of 1991," mandates the Department of Education to implement journalism programs. The Special Program in Journalism (SPJ) aims to enhance student-writers' skills in mass communication, print, online, and broadcast media, fostering free and responsible journalism at the junior high school level.

The use of copy-editing symbols can significantly contribute to developing journalistic skills. Incorporating these symbols aligns with enhancing practical journalism techniques, supporting the objectives of RA 7079 and improving effective communication through Project ACE8 with LOVE.

Abuena (2017) found that focused training and practice improve student journalists' writing skills, especially in accuracy, clarity, and style. Using copy-editing symbols helps students refine their writing, leading to more concise, coherent, and professional journalistic work.

Cortez and Sacdalan (2016) identified common challenges student journalists face, such as organizing content and using proper grammar and tone. These challenges highlight the need for targeted instruction to improve writing skills in these areas.

To produce competitive journalists, focused instruction is crucial in areas like content organization, grammar, punctuation, and journalistic tone. Addressing these issues helps student journalists improve their writing and gain valuable skills for success in the field.

Factors such as limited resources, lack of mentorship, and language proficiency can hinder writing development. Educators should provide adequate resources, mentorship, and language support to help student journalists overcome these challenges and excel.

The Special Program on Journalism has been running for five years, aiming to enhance student-writers' skills. However, some competencies, such as copy-editing symbols, still need improvement. The researcher's analysis of the Journalism 7 assessment revealed a low score of 53.22%, indicating this gap in competence.

The researcher believes that mastering copy-editing symbols is crucial for student-writers, especially in a specialized journalism program. This skill ensures clarity, accuracy, and consistency in their articles, which is essential for mass communication. To address this gap, the researcher developed Project ACE8 with LOVE, an activity sheet designed to help students master unmastered competencies and improve their writing skills, even during challenging times.

This study evaluates the effectiveness of the intervention in helping students master the least mastered competency.

II. METHODOLOGY

Participants and/or other Sources of Data and Information

The participants of this study were 30 students from the Grade 7 SPJ learners of Manaring Integrated School, coming from one heterogeneous group who were under low mastery of the competency of using the copy editing symbol correctly. The Group X Learners were the experimental group, and the other 15 Grade 7 SPJ learners were the control group. The experimental group was the group of learners who received the intervention or treatment being tested in the study, while the control group was separated from the experimental group and did not use the intervention. By comparing the results of the tests of the two groups, it was found out whether the intervention had improved their performance on the competency or not.

Data Gathering Methods

This action research utilized the two-group experimental design pretest-posttest control group design. The respondents were randomly assigned to either the control group or the experimental group. Each group was given the same pretest to measure their dependent variable of interest. The experimental group received the intervention, which was the activity sheet on using the copyediting symbol correctly. Then, both groups underwent the post-test to retest the dependent variable. The effect of the pretestposttest design was measured by the difference in pretest and posttest scores between each group. The researcher followed the proper action research protocol wherein he sought approval of this proposal from the division research committee. When approved**,** he strictly adhered to DepEd's protocols in conducting the research, and in gathering and analyzing the data needed.

The data gathered and the results of this study were treated with confidentiality and used only for the purpose of this study.

Ethical Issues

To uphold ethical standard, the proponent followed the proper action research protocol where she sought permission and approval from the Division Office before the gathering of data needed. A waiver was also provided for the participants which was signed by their parents indicating their approval and consent for their children's involvement in the study. The results of the study were treated with confidentiality and was used for the purposed of the study only.

Data Analysis Plan

This study made use of a two-group pretest-posttest research design, which compared the pretest and posttest mean scores of the two groups as a basis for the study. The following statistical tools were employed:

1) Weighted Average Mean and Standard Deviation of the scores of the respondents for pretest and posttest.
2) Paired Sample T-Test was utilized to determine the significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores of each of the two groups. Additionally, the gathered data were tabulated and analyzed through the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).
3) Independent Sample T-Test identified the significant increase in the mean scores of each group.
4) Eta Squared was used to evaluate the effect size of the intervention.
5) Thematic Analysis was used to identify the challenges encountered in implementing the intervention and the actions that could be taken to address the identified challenges.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS AND REFLECTION

This part revealed the data gathered in both tabular and factual presentations. The findings together with analysis and interpretations were also hereby presented.

Table 1. The mean pretest scores and mean posttest scores of the respondents in control group

	Pre-test		**Post Test**	
	Mean	**SD**	**Mean**	**SD**
Pretest (Control)	22.4	3.50	31.0	5.01
Posttest (Experiment)	21.5	2.29	42.9	2.89

Table 1 shows the mean pretest and posttest scores of the control and experimental groups. The control group had a pretest mean score of 22.4 and a posttest mean score of 31.0, reflecting an 8.6-point increase. The experimental group, with a pretest mean score of 21.5 and a posttest mean score of 42.9, showed a significant 21.4-point improvement. This suggests the experimental group had a much larger gain in scores. These results align with Slavin (1999), who highlights the effectiveness of structured interventions in boosting student performance. The experimental group's greater improvement likely reflects the success of the intervention, which may have included active learning and frequent assessments. Both groups showed improvement, but the experimental group demonstrated a more substantial gain, indicating the intervention's effectiveness.

Table 2 .1 Significant increase in the mean pretest score and mean posttest score control group

Control	df	t	P-value	Remarks
Pre-test - Posttest	14	6.06	<.001	Significant
**Significant p<0.05*				

Table 2.1 presents the statistical analysis of the pretest and posttest scores for the control group, showing the t-value, degrees of freedom (df), p-value, and remarks.
For the control group, the t-value is 6.06 with 14 degrees of freedom, and the p-value is less than 0.001 ($p < 0.05$). Since the p-value is less than 0.05, this indicates a statistically significant difference between the mean pretest and posttest scores of the control group.
This suggests that the increase in the control group's posttest score compared to their pretest score is unlikely to have occurred by chance. Therefore, the data supports the conclusion that there is a significant improvement in the control group's performance after the intervention, which could be linked to the learning activity used, further supporting the effectiveness of the learning process in this group.
The statistical analysis confirms that the control group experienced a significant increase in their posttest scores compared to their pretest scores, validating the improvement in learning outcomes.

Table 2.2 Significant increase in the mean pretest score and mean posttest scores experimental group

Experimental	Df	t	P-value	Remarks
Pre-test - Posttest	14	21.1	<.001	Significant
***Significant p<0.05*				

Table 2.2 presents the statistical analysis for the pretest and posttest scores of the experimental group, showing a t-value of 21.1 with 14 degrees of freedom and a p-value less than 0.001. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, this indicates a statistically significant improvement in the experimental group's scores. Both groups showed significant improvements, but the experimental group had a much higher t-value (21.1 vs. 6.06 for the control group), suggesting a larger effect size and greater improvement. These findings align with Cohen's (1988) framework on effect size, where a larger t-value indicates a substantial impact of the intervention. Hattie (2009) also emphasizes that interventions with a large effect size are linked to high-impact teaching strategies.
In summary, both groups showed significant improvements, but the experimental group's much larger score increase suggests the intervention had a more pronounced effect on their learning outcomes.

Table 3.1 Significant difference between the mean pretest scores of the two groups

	df	t	P-value	Remarks
Pre-test (Control) Pre-test (Experimental)	28	0.802	0.429	Not Significant
***Significant p<0.05*				

Table 3.1 compares the mean pretest scores of the control and experimental groups, showing a t-value of 0.802 with 28 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.429. Since the p-value is greater than 0.05, there is no statistically significant difference between the groups' pretest scores. This suggests that both groups had similar performance levels before the intervention, and any differences in posttest scores can be attributed to the intervention itself.
This finding aligns with Field (2013), who states that a p-value above 0.05 indicates statistical equivalence at baseline, meaning the observed posttest differences are likely due to the intervention, not pre-existing score disparities. In summary, the pretest data shows no significant differences between the groups, reinforcing that improvements in posttest scores are likely due to the intervention.

Table 3.2 Significant difference between the mean posttest scores of the two groups

	df	t	P-value	Remarks
Posttest (Control) Posttest (Experimental)	28	7.99	<.001	Significant
***Significant p<0.05**				

Table 3.2 presents the statistical comparison of the mean posttest scores between the control and experimental groups. The t-value is 7.99 with 28 degrees of freedom, and the p-value is less than 0.001 ($p < 0.05$), indicating a statistically significant difference between the groups' posttest scores.

The results show that the experimental group performed significantly better than the control group, suggesting that the intervention positively impacted the experimental group's performance. While both groups showed improvement from pretest to posttest (with a p-value of 0.429 for pretest), the experimental group demonstrated a much greater improvement, leading to a clear difference in posttest scores.

This supports the conclusion that the intervention used for the experimental group was more effective in enhancing learning outcomes compared to the control group.

Table 4 Effect size of the intervention employed

	df	t	Cohen's D	Description
Pre-test-Posttest	28	7.99	2.92	Large Effect

The Cohen's d value of 2.92 for the comparison between the posttest scores of the experimental group (E) and the control group (C) indicates a large effect size. Since the value exceeds the threshold of 0.8, it shows that the experimental group experienced a significantly greater improvement in their posttest scores, suggesting the intervention had a substantial impact on their performance. The high Cohen's d value of 2.92 not only reflects statistical significance but also highlights a substantial and meaningful difference between the groups. This further emphasizes that the intervention was highly effective in improving the experimental group's performance compared to the control group.

Table 5. Experiences encountered by the participants

Theme	Description	Frequency	Sample Statement
Challenges in Learning and Application	Respondents faced difficulties in grasping the symbols and applying them effectively in their editing tasks.	4	"It was confusing at first to understand all the different symbols. I often had to refer back to the guide."
Balancing Time and Task Pressure	Respondents struggled with managing their time effectively due to the pressure of balancing tasks.	4	"With limited free time to work on the worksheets, I found it difficult to balance everything."
Confidence and Skill Development	Over time, respondents reported increased confidence as they refined their editing abilities and skills.	4	"As I practiced more, I began to feel more confident in my editing abilities. My mistakes became less frequent."
Improvement in Editing Efficiency	Respondents noted an improvement in both speed and accuracy of their editing after repeated practice.	4	"The more I practiced, the faster and more accurate I became at spotting errors."
Increased Motivation to Improve	Respondents became more motivated to continue practicing after seeing their skills improve.	4	"The improvements I made in my work motivated me to keep pushing myself. I felt encouraged to keep practicing and honing my skills."

The table presents five distinct themes identified from responses gathered through structured questionnaires and follow-up interviews.

Respondents faced difficulties in understanding and applying the editing symbols, often needing to refer back to the guide. This aligns with Smith and Brown (2017), who noted that learners struggle with complex symbols, highlighting the need for clear instructions and extra support.

Time management challenges were reported, with participants finding it hard to balance tasks due to limited free time. This mirrors Johnson et al. (2018), who found that balancing multiple tasks under time pressure negatively affects student performance.

Many respondents reported an increase in confidence as they practiced and improved their editing skills. This supports Lee and Chung (2019), who found that consistent practice leads to increased self-confidence and mastery of tasks.

Respondents observed improvements in both speed and accuracy with more practice. One participant noted they became faster and more accurate, aligning with Carter and O'Leary (2017), who found regular practice enhances both efficiency and precision.

Finally, improvements in their work motivated respondents to keep practicing. This reflects Dweck (2016), who suggested that visible progress fosters intrinsic motivation, encouraging students to continue refining their skills.

CONCLUSION

In this study, the effectiveness of the "Project ACE 8 with LOVE" intervention was thoroughly evaluated, revealing valuable insights into its impact on students' copy-editing skills. The following conclusion summarizes the key findings based on the comparison between the control and experimental groups.

1) Both the control and experimental groups showed improvements in their posttest scores compared to pretest scores.
2) The experimental group showed a significantly larger improvement than the control group.
3) Both groups had significant posttest score increases. The experimental group demonstrated a larger effect size and greater improvement.
4) The intervention was highly effective in enhancing learning outcomes for the experimental group.
5) Participants experiences encountered during the utilization of the material: ➢ Participants faced challenges such as:

- Difficulty understanding and applying technical symbols and struggles with time management and balancing tasks. ➢ Despite these challenges, participants experienced:
- Increased confidence as they refined their skills., improvement in editing efficiency (faster and more accurate), higher motivation to continue practicing due to visible progress.

6) The intervention not only improved performance but also fostered motivation and confidence among participants.
7) The intervention in the experimental group had a substantial impact on learning outcomes, making it more effective than the approach used in the control group.

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