

UNIT STRUCTURE

Teaching writing grammatically correct sentences

CLASS – VI

Unit Over-view	Rationale	Unit Outcomes				Methodology Support					Additional Reading	
		Learning Outcomes	Learning Gaps to be addressed	Related Lessons	Unit Objectives	Introduction	Case Study 1	Activity 1	Case Study 2	Activity 2		Summary
<p>Overview of the language skill (Grammar)</p> <p>What the gunotsav /NAS Assessment shows</p>	<p>LO 6.12 : Writes grammatically correct sentences for a variety of situations, using noun, pronoun, verb, adverb, determiners, etc</p>	<p>Understand the concept of subject-verb agreement</p>	<p>Unit 9 - Desert Animals What If Unit 10- The Banyan Tree</p>	<p>Locate/extract information from nontextual materials such as tables and diagrams .</p> <p>Interpret information from non textual materials such as tables and diagrams</p>	<p>What this unit will teach you</p>	<p>write grammatically correct sentences</p>	<p>Matching noun subjects with correct verb forms</p>	<p>Learning about subject-verb agreement through various examples</p>	<p>Writing correct sentences by combining subjects with the correct verb forms</p>	<p>What you learnt in this unit</p>	<p>Suggested Questions</p>	<p>TESS India OER</p>

Overview

The unit discusses strategies and activities that you can use in the classroom to help your students understand and apply the rules of subject-verb agreement; which will in turn help them to construct grammatically correct sentences. These activities and case studies along with exercises will address the problems that we often encounter in the classrooms at level of grade VI.

Rationale

The results of Gunotsav 2017 reveal that students of class VI often struggle with the rules of Sub-Verb agreement .It has been observed that most of the students make mistakes in combining the subjects with the correct forms of the verbs .They have difficulty in understanding the basic rule of S-V agreement and also regarding the usage of words like 'each' and 'every'.As a result they often construct incorrect sentences.

Introduction:

My students like to sing English rhymes and read simple texts but they find it difficult to construct sentences using the correct subject-verb agreement pattern .They have problems in forming grammatically correct sentences following the rules of S-V agreement.

Teaching grammar is not about teaching abstract rules .It must involve the students in activities that will help them practise using English grammar correctly in various situations. Students must be made aware of English grammar by using inductive method(that is moving from examples to rules). Through varied language activities and adequate practice we will be able to help the students in expressing themselves in grammatically correct English and make them more confident to communicate in English. In this regard using the rules of subject-verb agreement has great importance. It is necessary to ensure that subjects and verbs in a sentence always agree to each other. The relation between subject and verbs lie at the heart of grammatically correct English writing. Subject - Verb agreement unifies a sentence and makes it easier to understand.

In this unit you will learn about a few purposeful and enjoyable activities that you can use in your classroom to motivate your students to develop grammatical skills especially in regards to subject-verb(S-V) agreement.

Unit Objectives:

In this unit you will read ways of helping learners to :

1. Understand the concept of subject-verb agreement
2. Construct grammatically correct sentences following the rules of subject-verb agreement

Case Study1 : Deepak Saharia encourages students to write grammatically correct sentences following the basic rule of subject verb agreement

Deepak Saharia joined a local upper primary school in Narayanpur as a new English teacher of class VI. In his first class he decided not to formally start a lesson. He felt he should start by engaging them in an informal language activity. So he asked the students about their favourite games, superhero etc. However he noticed that only a few of them managed to speak without hesitation, some even couldnot say a single sentence correctly and most of them who tried to express their thoughts in simple sentences struggled with the combining the subject with correct verb form.

To make things easier,he asked them to write down what they wanted to say, so they could organise their ideas. But he discovered the same problem with most of the children.

He then applied a simple technique to help his students to give them an understanding of the concept of subject-verb(S-V) agreement. He wrote a list of singular and plural subjects on one side of the blackboard and some verbs (including singular and plural forms). He then asked the students to match them i.e to match the subject with the verb.Though the students now seemed to be enjoying the activity they were still seen to be struggling with the ideas of subject-verb agreement. He understood the problem of the students and he used the same list to clarify their doubts.Then he gave them the first rule of subject verb agreement:

"subject-verb agreement simply means that verb must agree in number and person to the subject. Thus if a subject is singular then the verb must also be singular, if a verb is plural, its corresponding verb must also be plural." After that he gave them some other familiar examples and got positive results from most of the students . He tried to give a general idea about it using the blackboard.

Examples

1) The dog chases the cat

The dog + chases + the cat

↓

↓

(Singular subject, no 's') (singular verb)

2) The dogs chase the cat.

The dogs + chase + the cat
 ↓ ↓
 (Plural subject, with 's') (plural verb)

In this manner Deepak Saharia, was able to make his students understand the basic rule of subject-verb agreement. Gradually the students were made familiar with the other rules and by the end of the term they could understand the concept of agreement and write grammatically correct sentences.

Let's stop and think

- ★ How important it is to teach S-V agreement at the upper primary level, considering they are already familiar with it.
- ★ Do you think teaching grammar rules through examples can help learners to understand the concepts better?
- ★ Do you think learning about S-V agreement can make the students better writers?

Activity1 : Matching noun subjects with correct verb forms

It is seen that our children have difficulty in understanding the concept of subject-verb agreement. They have a fair idea about the sentence structure and the parts of speech but many a times they make mistakes in writing correct sentences as they fail to combine the correct forms of verb with the subject. Here is a simple yet interesting activity to help the learners understand the concept of subject-verb agreement better:

Divide the class into two equal groups. Ask each group to write five subject nouns and five verbs. Have one group write or read out a noun from the list and the other group responds by giving a verb to go with the noun. The whole class discusses whether or not the verb agrees with the noun, with the help of the teacher. The teams then switch and the second team offers a noun subject and the first team offers a verb.

This activity may be continued with the guidance of the teacher till the students get adequate practice in combining subjects with the correct verb forms.

Let's stop and think

- ★ Do you think children can learn better by doing?
- ★ How important is it to give adequate practice in grammar?
- ★ What do you think about the role of the teaching in arriving at conclusions regarding grammar rules?

Case Study 2 : Mira Bora helps her students learn about subject-verb agreement through various examples

Mira Bora teaches English in a rural upper primary school. Her students' English skills are poor, especially because at home they have no opportunity to learn English. So Mira tries to find ways to help her learners develop better English language skills.

She had attended an English teachers' training programme and learnt about teaching grammar inductively. When she discussed with her colleagues in the staff room, they told her it would not

work. They said that without learning the rules the students can never be able to write English correctly. They also told her all these new techniques were good for private schools, not for government schools like theirs', where each classroom has more than 50 students.

Mira Bora decided not to be angry and to try to teach grammar to class VI, by giving examples first, that is through inductive method. The students of class VI were already introduced to the sentence structures, but Mira Bora knew that most of the students were still not clear about the simple rules of subject-verb agreement. Hence, they were not able to construct correct sentences.

She showed a chart to her students which had certain sentences on it. The chart read as:

The bird flies.

The children go to school by bus.

The dog barks.

She likes to dance.

I go to school.

She then asks the students to read out the sentences. The learners read out the sentences in a drill. Next, she showed another chart, on which the same sentences had mistakes in subject-verb agreement. The sentences were:

The bird fly.

The children goes to school by bus.

The dog bark.

She like to dance.

I goes to school.

She asked the students to tell her the differences. She helped them to see the differences in the two charts. Through the discussion Mira Bora was able to make the students notice the structures of the correct sentences and the wrong ones. The students also enjoyed her class and participated with full sincerity. In this way they understood in a better manner, how singular subjects agree to singular form of the verbs and vice versa. Next she writes a few more sentences on the blackboard.

Each of the children gets a candy.

Every boy and girl was absent in class yesterday.

Every day there is much work to be done.

Each must do his best.

In each room there is a telephone.

Every morning John goes for jogging.

The students notice that the sentences begin with 'each' and 'every' as their teacher read out the sentences. Mira Bora emphasized on 'each' and 'every' and on the corresponding verb. She then made the students understand that "If one of the words, each or every comes before the subject the verb is singular". Mira Bora tried teaching a few more rules of subject-verb agreement through this method and gradually her students started constructing grammatically correct sentences. At the end of the year, Mira Bora's students got good marks in English. Her colleagues realized that her training and new methodology helped her to improve the students' English.

Let's stop and think

- ★ Do you think teaching grammar rules through examples can help learners to understand the concepts better?
- ★ Do you think the examples given, can help them better their understanding of correct sentence structures?
- ★ Can adequate practice in grammar help the learners become better writers in the future?

Activity 2 : Writing grammatically correct sentences by combining subjects with the correct verb forms

It is seen that our children find it difficult to construct grammatically correct sentences. Most often the subjects in the sentences do not agree with the following verbs. Here is a fun activity that could help the students understand the concept and write correct sentences with the guidance of the teacher.

Choose ten important sentences from a lesson, for example from the chapter "Desert Animals" from Honeysuckle, a textbook in English for class VI. On the blackboard make two columns. On one side write the subjects of the sentences and on the other side write the rest of the sentences with the correct verb form, in a jumbled order. Now divide the class into pairs and ask them to match the sentences and write the complete sentences having correct subject-verb agreement. After they complete the task, ask them to exchange their notebooks for peer correction, as you guide them with the correct sentences. The pair with most correct sentences may be declared as winners. Those who make most errors encourage them to understand the correct forms.

Peer correction in this activity may take time but students usually enjoy doing things on their own. Through this activity they would learn important points from the chapter along with getting practice in writing grammatically correct sentences.

Let's stop and think

- ★ After doing such activities, do you think your students can correctly write other sentences, with your help?
- ★ Research shows that children should not be discouraged from writing just because they make mistakes. Only by constant practice they will overcome their mistakes. How do you treat your students' mistakes?

Unit Summary :

In this unit you have looked at a few ways of helping the students construct grammatically correct sentences by understanding the concept of subject-verb agreement. The activities have been designed to improve the students' familiarity with English words and sentences. This is more likely to make them more confident in expressing themselves in English. Keeping in view the learning outcomes you can use the given activities, modify or design your own. The more practice the children get through grammar exercises, the better will be their language skills. And in the long run it will make them better writers and speakers of English.

Relevant Literature/Additional Reading:

Reading 1: Why teach grammar?

At different stages of our schooling, we always had to study English grammar. There has indeed been a lot of grammar around us in our early years of schooling. Now, what is grammar? According to Penny Ur, "Grammar is a set of rules that define how words are combined or changed to form acceptable

units of meaning within a language." From this definition it is clear that grammar is concerned with rules of use that enable a speaker or writer to organize language elements into meaningful sentences. Knowledge of grammar gives us the skill to distinguish between grammatical and ungrammatical sentence forms. Grammar provides an accepted model of the language in use. The aim of teaching grammar is to acquaint the students to the accepted grammar forms. It is of utmost importance to devise strategies to make grammar teaching in classroom more interesting.

Grammar has a positive effect on all the four skills of language learning. Its impact on reading, writing, listening and speaking is now being seen to be prominent.

Enhanced communication skills call for a high degree of grammatical competence. Communicative proficiency involves knowledge and application of grammar and use of appropriate vocabulary of the language to convey meanings in a socially acceptable way. This is also the reason why grammar teaching is considered imperative.

Grammar is the base of English language. English especially as a second or a foreign language is not acquired naturally; instruction and structured learning are important. Through grammar, an English language learner learns how to operate at the sentence level and studies the governance of the syntax or word orders that form the base of that language. While, it is argued that some learners 'notice' grammar rules and logic naturally, yet it cannot be denied that if one hopes to acquire and use English language accurately and fluently, grammar learning is necessary.

Reading 2: Methods of teaching grammar.

Teaching of grammar should be seen as means to an end and not as an end in itself. The teaching of it should be integrated with the textbook. And most importantly teaching of grammar should be inductive and not deductive.

Inductive Method: Inductive method is a quite modern method of teaching grammar at school stage. Inductive grammar demonstrates the rules of language through language samples. In direct method of teaching, inductive grammar is taught. Descriptive grammar is inductive grammar. In this method certain examples are presented before the students by the teacher and then he establishes the rules with the help of the students. Later on these rules are applied to exercises. With this method the teacher can take the active participation of the pupils and they become more interested in learning grammar.

Deductive Method: Deductive method is the opposite of inductive method. This is an old method of teaching grammar. Deductive grammar states the rules first and then examples are given. Traditional grammar or prescriptive grammar is deductive grammar. In this method the teacher states the rules first and then illustrates examples. The students do not get opportunities to become active participants and on the part of the teacher no originality is required in the teaching of grammar.

Reading 3: Subject-verb Agreement: Language has its base in logic and harmony. Hence a verb in a sentence must agree with its subject in terms of number and person. Subject-verb agreement is obviously a very basic aspect of grammar. However, it can get very tricky when certain elements are thrown in the mix. Let us revisit few rules of subject-verb agreement: -

- Rule 1 - A verb agrees with its subject in number. Singular subjects take singular verbs and plural subjects take plural verbs. E.g-
He wakes up early in the morning.
They wake up early in the morning.
- Rule 2 - When two subjects are joined by 'and', the verb is plural.
e.g- My brother and his friend are going to the market.
- Rule 3 - When two singular nouns express one idea, the verb should be in the singular form.
e.g- Bread and butter is good for breakfast.
- Rule 4 - If subjects are preceded by each or every, the verb should be singular.
e.g- Every Sunday I go to church.
Each person has the right to express his or her view.

- Rule 5- When the subjects are joined by either-or / neither-nor, the verb agrees to the number and person with the noun nearest to it.
E.g-Neither Rohini nor Rohan is intelligent.
Either you or I am responsible for this mistake.
- Rule 6 - Connectives like- with, together with, as well as, accompanied by etc. are used to combine two or more subjects. In such cases the verb agrees with the subject mentioned first.
e.g - Mr Mehra, accompanied by his wife and children is arriving tomorrow by bus.
- Rule 7- Many words indicating a number of people or animals are singular. The following nouns are usually singular. In some cases they are plural if the sentence indicates that the individual members acting separately.
Some examples of collective nouns:
The family was upset at the news.
Our team is certain to win the match.
Some collective nouns are used in plural:
The family were fighting over inheritance.
The committee have arrived by different buses.
- Rule 8- 'A number of' and 'the number of' observe two structures.
A number of + plural noun+ plural verb
The number of + plural noun+ singular verb.
e.g- A number of employees are going to the meeting.
The number of days in a week is seven.
- Rule 9 - Collective nouns indicating time, money and measurements and used as a whole are singular and take a singular verb. Eg-
Three miles is too much for this man to run.
Twenty rupees is not such a big amount for her.
- Rule 10 - When the percentage or a part of something is mentioned with plural meaning the plural verb is used. Eg-

20% of Indians are illiterate.

These are some of the rules of subject-verb agreement. There are other rules as well, which need to be incorporated in the teaching of the concept with varied activities and exercises.

High school grammar and Composition, Wren and Martin

Practical English Grammar and Composition. SC Gupta. (Arihant publications).

Honeysuckle - Textbook in English for class VI (NCERT)

The English Teacher's Handbook, TC Baruah. (Sterling publishers private limited)

Methods of Teaching English. G. Rama, B.B. Sarojini, Ed. K Venugopal. (Neelkamal Publications)

Proficiency in English, KKHSOU

Tess India Resources

Teaching English: Approaches, Methods and Techniques.N. Krishnaswamy, Lalitha Krishnaswamy.

(Macmillan)

<https://www.towson.edu/ows/moduleSVAGR.htm>

<https://www.theclassroom.com/games-teach-subjectverb-agreement-12102970.html>

<https://www.theclassroom.com/fun-way-teach-subject-verb-agreement-10025171.html>

<https://www.education.com/lesson-plan/link-up-a-subject-verb-agreement-game/>

https://www.e-education.psu.edu/styleforstudents/c1_p6.html

Suggested Questions :

(I) Re-write the sentences by choosing the correct form of the verb that agrees with the subject.

1. Anwasha and her brothers (is, are) at school.
2. Either my mother or my father (is, are) coming to the meeting.
3. The dog or the cats (is, are) outside.

4. Ram and Tanuj (doesn't, don't) want to see that movie.
5. Bedika (doesn't, don't) know the answer.
6. The players, as well as the captain, (want, wants) to win.
7. Either answer (is, are) acceptable.
8. Each of those books (is, are) fiction.
9. Mathematics (is, are) Sanjay's favourite subject, while English (is, are) Anita's favourite subject.
10. The Prime Minister, together with his wife, (greet, greets) cordially the press.

(II) Underline the correct verb in these sentences.

1. Seema (run, runs) to the park every day.
2. The dogs (bark, barks,) at strangers.
3. Tanu and Manu (is, are) going to the movies.
4. The game (was, were) exciting.
5. They (worry, worries) too much.
6. She (study, studies) every night.
7. Pink or blue (is, are) your choice.
8. That (was, were) incredible.
9. Those (is, are) pretty shoes.
10. Our team (is, are) the best

(III) Put the correct form of the present tense of the verbs in the blank spaces in the following sentences—

1. A good dictionary.....a lot. (cost)
2. The river.....beautiful in summer. (look)
3. The mangoes.....fresh. (look)
4. Ten kilometres.....a long distance to walk.(be)
5. The boys.....to school daily.(go)
6. He.....to see pictures.
7. Mita.....next to my house. (live)
8. Either of you.....wrong. (be)
9. One of the teachers.....English.(teach)
10. Ram.....on me. (rely)

(IV) Complete the sentences by selecting the verb form that best fits in the blank.

1. Rohan is the only one of those students who _____ lived up to the expectations of all the teachers.
 - has
 - have
2. Not only the students but also their teacher _____ been called to the principal's office.
 - have
 - has
3. Most of the milk _____ gone bad. Six gallons of milk _____ still in the refrigerator.
 - has ---- are
 - have ---- is

4. Each and every student and teacher in this building _____ for a new facility by next year.
- hope
 - hopes
5. Four years _____ a long time to spend away from your friends and family.
- are
 - is

(V) Re-write the following passage by correcting the subject-verb agreement-

Next month we is going on our vacation to Goa. My sister like it when we go to Goa because she get to swim in the sea. My brother and I wants to go deep-sea fishing while we is there. My father say he is going to take us this time. I sure hopes the weather is good so we can go. While my mom and sister swims , we are going to be find sea shells. I are sure we were going to have a good time.

(VI) Edit the following passage by correcting subject-verb agreement-

The boy live with his grandfather in Dehradun. There were a grand old banyan tree in the garden of that house. He enjoy sitting on top of that tree. From there he used to spies on the world below. Since the grandfather could not climbs the tree, it belonged only to the boy.

(VII) Choose the correct verb to complete each sentence.

1. My cousins (visit, visits) during their break from school.
2. He (sharpen, sharpens) his pencil before class begins.
3. My family (shop, shops) for food at the local market.
4. The teammates (plan, plans) a fun surprise to thank their coach.
5. Our teacher (tell, tells) us funny jokes that (make, makes) us laugh.

(VIII) Construct sentences with the following words-

- a. Deserts
- b. Insects
- c. figs
- d. Banyan
- e. Squirrels

(IX) Read the statements given below and tick the correct option:

1.
 - a. He with all his friends were awarded.
 - b. He with all his friends was awarded.
 - c. He with all his friends has awarded.
 - d. He with all his friends had awarded.

2.
 - a. One of my friends live in Bangalore.
 - b. One of my friends living in Bangalore.
 - c. One of my friends will living in Bangalore.
 - d. One of my friends lives in Bangalore.

3.
 - a. Each of the girls was been given a reward.
 - b. Each of the girls were given a reward.
 - c. Each of the girls are been given a reward.
 - d. Each of the girls was given a reward.

4.
 - a. A pair of scissors are to be brought.
 - b. A pair of scissors were to be brought.
 - c. A pair of scissors going to be brought.
 - d. A pair of scissors is to be brought.

5.
 - a. Five kilograms of salt is sufficient.
 - b. Five kilograms of salt are sufficient.
 - c. Five kilograms of salt am sufficient.
 - d. Five kilograms of salt were sufficient.

(X) Put 'is' or 'are' after or before the word 'there' in the following sentences:

1. There..... no light there.
2. There..... nothing to be so sad about.
3.there anybody there?
4. There.....five boys standing along the tree.
5. There....eleven players in the team.

