

Language – Based Approach in Teaching English and the Grammatical Competence among Grade 9 Students

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Abstract

This study determined if a language-based approach using literary texts in teaching English will improve the grammatical competence of Grade 9 students in verbals. To generate data on the level of proficiency and grammatical competence, a pretest and post-test were used to assess the learning outcome of the subjects in the study. Based on the analysis of the data, the results revealed that after the implementation of the language-based approach, the respondent's level of proficiency in gerund and infinitive is approaching and they have acquired 50%-60% grammatical competence in both topics while they are proficient in participle and they have acquired 70%-80% grammatical competence. It was concluded that there is a significant difference in the level of proficiency and grammatical competence before and after the implementation of the language-based approach. It was recommended that: In implementing the language-based approach, it is important to pay particular attention in the stylistic analysis of the verbals. The teacher may provide the students with the opportunity to distinguish the pattern of usage of verb tenses and also, to enhance proficiency and acquire competence in verbals and other grammar concepts, teacher may provide rich drills and practices in written activities allowing the students to use the grammar concepts to create their own sentences. Finally, teacher may support instruction with more literary texts, resources, and effective techniques and strategies to encourage active student engagement.

Language – based approach, proficiency, grammatical competence

1. Introduction/Background

The Language Arts and Multiliteracies Curriculum (LAMC) of the K to 12 Curriculum addresses the students' English learning needs. That is why English as a subject in Basic Education follows a unified framework which allows easy transition from acquiring and learning one language to another (K to 12 Curriculum, 2020). An effective language trades and multiliteracies class satisfies the following principles among others 1) develops thinking and language through interactive literacy; and 2) develops communicative capability and critical thinking; The revised class re-organizes the intertwined language trades class according to the content norms that must be met by all scholars at the end of introductory education. The LAMC provides further information about the areas that scholars need to learn and that preceptors need to educate in detail. For effective language accession and literacy to take place, language preceptors must guide by language tutoring principles. These principles explain the natural process of language development. The LAMC offers more details regarding the topics that teachers must thoroughly teach and that students must learn. Language teachers must follow the principles of language teaching for effective language learning and acquisition to occur. These ideas clarify the way language develops naturally. The receptive skills, productive skills, grammar, and vocabulary will all be taught in a way that integrates all three domains of language learning. For a deeper integration of language and literature to be realized, a language-based strategy is a good option because it will aid students in attaining their primary goal, which is to increase their English knowledge and skill. Techniques like stylistic analysis are part of a language-based approach to studying literature that enables students to make study of literary texts meaningful.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to investigate if a language-based approach in teaching English will improve the grammatical competence of Grade 9 students in English.

Specifically, it sought answers to the following questions:

- What is the level of proficiency of respondents before the implementation of language-based approach in terms of:

Gerund,
Participle, and
Infinitive?

- What is the level of proficiency of respondents after the implementation of a language-based approach in terms of?

Gerund,
Participle, and
Infinitive?

- Is there a significant difference between the level of proficiency of respondents before and after implementation of language-based approach on the grammatical competence?

2. Review of Related Literature

This part provides information, data and evidence related to the problem that the research investigates. Language-Based Approach. The awareness of the language of literature is emphasized in a language-based approach. Students' responses and experiences with literature are also facilitated by this approach and can be accessed by the learners. As an integral part of the oral and written language, the teachers need to try to teach the basic language skills. To enhance the quality of language instruction. The teachers may use varieties of resources that are available (Choudhury, 2016). A variety of activities is provided in language instruction. Literature serves as an excellent way to transport the four skills in English development by interaction, collaboration, peer teaching and student interdependence.

According to Lazar (Febriani, 2018), the literature is employed with the intention of enhancing the students' English knowledge and proficiency. Literary writings are regarded as resources that offer energizing language exercises. It is suggested that a language-based approach include methods and approaches that are more directly focused with the analysis of the literary text itself. The procedure in utilizing the literary text is divided into three steps: pre-reading activities, while-reading activities, and post-reading activities. It is important that the students' interest in the story is stimulated to explain the literary text. Developing students' sufficient vocabulary and helping them with language and style are important activities while reading.

After the students undertake the pre-reading and reading activities they are led and guided by the teacher to the post-reading activities. such as in making interpretations of the text, follow-up writing activities, and practicing fluency (Febriani et al., 2018).

Students' ability to evaluate a text methodically and systematically, as in Carter and Long's recommended language model, is developed through the language-based approach. This method uses literary texts to aid students in honing their linguistic abilities. By giving the students suitable language skills and connecting them to the language aspects in depth, reading the text can be successfully completed. As a result, literature can be expanded to include creative writing, descriptive writing, sketch writing, and many other forms of writing (Hamid & Aziz, 2022). According to Choudhary, the language-based approach meets the linguistic demands of students studying literature: They learn the skill and technique to make it simple to access the texts and build sensitivity to diverse genres so they can enjoy a work of literature relating to a certain genre and experience (Deskalovska & Dimova, 2022).

Likewise, Regmi (2022) stated that language-based approach in teaching literature considers literary texts as means to help students improve their language proficiency. In Regmi's review, researchers argue that the primary purpose of language-based approach is to use literary texts as a resource-developing student's vocabulary, language skills, and other aspects of the language. This approach looks at how far literary texts provide space to carry out language-based including learning activities. Malthusian et al. (2017) stated that language-based approach is concerned with the language-oriented activities particularly in the way language is used for developing language competence. This approach develops exposure to literary texts, extends words repertory, also higher-level language proficiency. The language-based technique has been used by researchers in the past in a number of investigations. When a language-based approach is employed in literature, the texts selected are more alluring and compelling to be used and

understood since it enables the students to study the book on their own. A language-based approach to teaching may improve activities and offer valuable text clarity. Additionally, when students are exposed to their interests for educational objectives, such as literary texts, they are seen to be highly motivated learners (Hamid & Aziz, 2022). Literary Texts. According to Perles (2022), advocates of literature-based instruction typically emphasize the value of using actual literature rather than the material covered in foundational textbooks. Books aimed towards youngsters are frequently dull, artificial, and less likely than works of true literature. Genuine literature may expose students to many cultures, social systems, and plots. Because they believe it fosters higher order thinking skills than training at a foundational level, the majority of teachers favor literature-based instruction. Literature-based instruction encourages students to think deeply and share their opinions about a tale rather than pressuring them to respond to simple questions about it. Vocabulary, reading comprehension, language proficiency, and reading ability can all be improved by engaging with real literature. The teacher is significantly more focused on the needs of the students while using literature-based instruction. Literature is a rich source of linguistic input and can be used as a way to create both referential and interactional meaning, not just as an aspect of the oral and written production of words and phrases and sentences (Choudhary, 2016). Additionally, literature-based instruction is much more child-centered, with the teacher acting as the facilitator rather than "the sage on the stage."

In order to address the difficulties raised in the articles for Azerbaijan (2022), there are several key justifications for incorporating literature into English classrooms. 1) Literature is real content. 2) Reading literature promotes conversation. 3) Literature increases linguistic sophistication. 4) Literature enlightens the complete person. The paper from Azerbaijan could improve English language instruction. Literature can aid young language learners in learning a language as a medium of communication because they are typically interested in learning a foreign language. The lecturers should pay attention to literary and cultural components in addition to linguistic ones in order to make it engaging. The literary works can be utilized to offer a variety of reading, listening, writing, and speaking tasks for classes. The best works of English literature can be presented to the students by the language teacher, inspiring a desire in them to acquire a habit of reading and text-reading techniques. It is possible to study literary materials in their original forms or in reduced or condensed versions. stories in English that are increasingly being written with language learners in mind. Short stories, poetry, novels, plays, and song lyrics are examples of literary writings that can be studied both within and outside of the classroom (British Council, 2022). According to Bose (2022), the language-based approach enables pupils to demonstrate particular linguistic traits in a rigorous and systematic way. By exposing students to the target language and connecting them to specific vocabulary and other features of the language, literary texts are utilized to assist students enhance their language skills. The method is employed in order to: a) educate pupils about how the target language is utilized in literature. Students will be exposed to how language is used in many contexts and genres, which will make studying the target language pleasant and fascinating for them.

3. Research Design and Methodology

3.1. Research Design

Research design refers to the overall plan and structure of a study that aims to investigate a specific research question or hypothesis. In this particular study, an experimental design was employed, specifically the one group pretest-post-test design. The purpose of the study was to examine whether the use of literary texts and stylistic analysis, within a language-based approach to teaching English, could enhance students' competence in grammar skills related to gerunds, participles, and infinitives.

The experimental design was chosen as it allows for testing the effect of the independent variable, which in this case is the use of literary texts and stylistic analysis in language-based instruction. By using an experimental design, researchers can establish a cause-and-effect relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable.

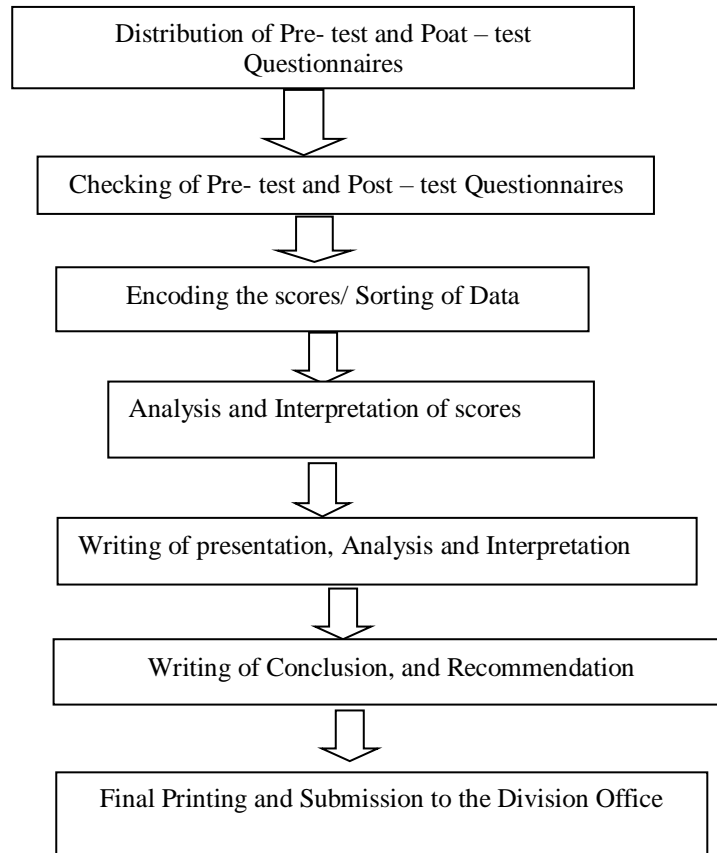
To accurately measure the impact of the teaching approach on students' grammar skills, the researchers employed pretest and post-test measures. The pretest was administered to assess the participants' initial grammar proficiency before any intervention took place. Following the intervention, the posttest was conducted to measure the students' grammar competence after being exposed to the language-based approach that incorporated literary texts and stylistic analysis. By comparing the pretest and post-test scores, the researchers could determine the causal effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable, which in this case was the students' grammar skills.

Overall, the research design employed in this study utilized an experimental approach, incorporating a one-group pretest-post-test design. By employing accurate and precise empirical measurements through pretest and

post-test assessments, the researchers were able to examine the impact of using literary texts and stylistic analysis within a language-based approach on students' competence in gerunds, participles, and infinitives. This research design provided a framework for assessing the causal relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable, contributing to a deeper understanding of the effectiveness of the instructional approach in enhancing students' grammar skills.

3.2. Data Gathering Procedure

This flowchart highlights steps undertaken in conducting this action research.



4. Research Hypothesis

In the conduct of the study, this hypothesis was tested:

1. There is no significant difference between the mean scores in pretest and post-test.

Significance of the Study

This study will be significant in determining the effectiveness of a language-based approach using literary texts in enhancing communicative competence in the English language of secondary students. The following individuals will benefit from the findings of the study:

School Administrators. They may gain insight into the best way they could navigate a language arts program that will support the needs of the teachers and students in teaching and learning communicative competence in English.

Teachers. The findings of the study may encourage the teachers to apply the language-based approach and

incorporate literary texts in developing communicative competence in English among secondary students. By integrating literature and grammar in teaching, they will provide opportunities for students to develop communication competence while enhancing knowledge and awareness in the content of literature.

English Department Heads. The insights gained from this study may energize them to lead collaboration initiatives in enhancing curriculum in English by developing materials using texts in literature to develop communicative competence among students. Furthermore, the insights may guide them in supervising teachers in their instructional practices in the English Subject

Students. As the center of the language-based approach in learning grammar and literature, they may enjoy learning English, language; learn about how to use it effectively through their engagement and study of the literary texts that will increase their understanding of cultures

Researchers. This study may provide substantial information to the next researchers who wish to validate, and justify the findings of this study.

5. Results and Discussion

This chapter presents the data gathered from the pretest and posttest scores of the respondents before and after the experiment. The data are analyzed and interpreted to generate answers to the research problem.

Table 1. Respondents' Pretest Scores of Grammatical Competence in Terms of Gerund

Score	Frequency	Percent	Interpretation
9-10	-	-	Advanced
8-7	3	7.9	Proficient
6-5	8	21.1	Approaching Proficient
4-3	19	50	Developing
0-2	8	21.1	Beginning
Total	38	100	

Table 1 reflects the level of proficiency of Grade 9 respondents in the pretest in gerund before the implementation of the language-based approach. Results show that most of the respondents, 50% or 19, are in the developing level this means that they had acquired 30% -40% of the competence in gerund before they were taught using the LBA. It means that prior to the implementation of Language- Based Approach they show potential in learning verbals. Furthermore, 21.1% or 8 are in the beginning level and approaching level respectively. Those who are in the beginning level had acquired 0-20% of the competence and those in the approaching level had acquired 30%-40% competence. The least number of the respondents, 3 or 7.9% are proficient and had acquired 70-80% of the competence in gerund. Generally, the proficiency level of the respondents is developing indicated by $M = 3.8421$, and have acquired 30%-40% competence in gerund. Pretest in gerund was given before the implementation of a language-based approach to determine the starting point of their competence on which any significant change can be based through post-test after the implementation. This simply means that the respondents may not have any background knowledge about gerunds. Gerund is a verbal that ends in -ing and functions as a noun and as a noun; it can act as a subject, direct object, or subjective complement. According to Lubin (2022), part of the conclusion of the ESL students is that the *ing of the verb implies* the progressive tense. Students have difficulty recognizing between the progressive tense and gerund. As in the case of the respondents in the current study who do not have pre-requisite knowledge in gerund, would rely on their previous knowledge in verb tense. It would be expected that they had a slim competence in gerund when they took the pretest.

Table 2. Respondents' Pretest Scores of Grammatical Competence in Terms of Participle

Score	Frequency	Percent	Interpretation
9-10	-	-	Advanced
8-7	6	15.8	Proficient
6-5	20	52.7	Approaching Proficient
4-3	9	23.7	Developing
0-2	3	7.9	Beginning
Total	38	100	

Table 2 reflects the level of proficiency of Grade 9 respondents in pretest in Participle before the implementation of language-based approach. It can be observed that most of the respondents, 52.7% or 20, are in the approaching level, which means that the respondents had already acquired 50%-60% of the competence in participle before they were taught using the LBA. At this level, the respondents are already approaching proficiency. In the developing level, there are 23.7% or 9, which means they had acquired 30%-40% of the competence in participle prior to the use of LBA. However, among the respondents, there are already 15.8% or 6 who are already proficient which mean they had acquired 90%-100% of the competence in participle even before they were taught using the LBA. The least number of the respondents are 7.9% or 3 who are in the beginning level, which means they had 0-20% of the competence. Generally, the level of proficiency of the respondents is developing indicated by $M=4.9211$ and have acquired 30%-40% proficiency.

The participle is a verbal that functions as an adjective. As a verbal, it comes in two types: the present participle (-ing) and past participle (-d, -ed). Without thorough knowledge about participle, the students may confuse the participle as verb tense. The pretest result just reveals that the respondents did not have any idea about participle and its functions in the sentences.

Table 3. Respondents' Pretest in Pretest Scores of Grammatical Competence in Terms of Infinitive

Score	Frequency	Percent	Interpretation
9-10	-	-	Advanced
8-7	-	-	Proficient
6-5	2	5.2	Approaching Proficient
4-3	22	57.9	Developing
0-2	14	36.9	Beginning
Total	38	100	

Table 3 reflects the level of proficiency of Grade 9 respondents in pretest in infinitive. The analysis of the results of the data revealed that more than half of the respondents, 57.9% or 22 are in the developing level, which means they had acquired only 30%-40% of the competence in infinitive. There are 14 respondents or 36.9% are in the beginning level which suggests that they had 0-20% of the competence in infinitive before they were taught using the LBA. The least number, 5.2% or 2 are in the developing level, which means they had acquired 50%-60% competence in infinitive. Generally, the level of proficiency of the respondents is walloping indicated by $M=3.0626$ and have acquired 30%-40% competence.

Infinitives are used as objects in sentences with a subject at the beginning of some sentences; and as adverbs to modify verbs as well they can also be used as adjectives and/or complements to adjectives. The respondents found it difficult to identify the function of infinitive in a sentence because it is not yet formally taught to them.

Based on the results of the three pretests, it can be observed that most respondents are in developing level in gerund and infinitive and in approaching level in participle. It implies that the functions of infinitive and gerund are more confusing to identify.

Table 4. Respondents' Posttest Scores of Grammatical Competence in Terms of Gerund

Score	Frequency	Percent	Interpretation
9-10	3	7.9	Advanced
8-7	16	42.1	Proficient
6-5	13	34.2	Approaching Proficient
4-3	6	15.8	Developing
0-2	-	-	Beginning
Total	38	100	

Table 4 presents the level of proficiency of Grade 9 students in the post-test in gerund after the implementation of the language-based approach. Most respondents, 42.1% or 16 reached the proficiency level after they were taught using LBA. It means that they had acquired 70%-80% of the competence in gerund. Those who reach the approaching level are 34.2% or 13, which means they had acquired 30%-40% competence while only 7.0% or 3 had made it to the advanced level, which means they have acquired 90%-100%

proficiency in gerund. Generally, the respondents' level of proficiency is approaching indicated by $M=6.2632$, and have acquired 50%-60% competence. From the comparative analysis of the pretest and post-test results, 16 of the 38 respondents who were in the approaching and below levels in the pretest have reached the proficiency level and have acquired 70%-80% competence in gerund after they were taught using the language-based approach. Meanwhile, the 3 proficient respondents in the pretest had made it to the advanced level acquiring 90%-100% competence. Summing it up, only half of the students have gained competence in gerund. The result of the post-test shows that most respondents have improved after the implementation of LBA; however, developing the competence of gerund only 50% of the respondents may be a failure in teaching.

Likewise, Adaje & Onekutu (2019) assessed the grammatical competence of senior secondary students. The results of the data analysis show that the students are weak in question tags, phrasal verbs, subject-verb concord, modal meanings, tense backshift, personal pronoun objective case, correlative conjunction and compound noun plurals. In this study, the respondents' grammatical competence is low because they made errors in identifying the function of the gerund in a sentence.

Fertazzo (2021) wrote strategies in grammar instruction for the students to gain mastery of grammatical concepts. He suggests showing students more examples of grammatical concepts from literature. According to the author, it is best to select examples from texts that interest the students and are at their general reading levels. This practice is especially effective because it shows students that grammatical concepts do not just exist in isolated grammar exercises instead, they are found in the literature. They are authentic tools that are published by writers.

Table 5. Respondents' Post-test Scores of Grammatical Competence in Terms of Participle

Score	Frequency	Percent	Interpretation
9-10	5	13.2	Advanced
8-7	21	55.3	Proficient
6-5	10	26.3	Approaching Proficient
4-3	2	5.3	Developing
0-2	-	-	Beginning
Total	38	100	

Table 5 presents the level of proficiency of Grade 9 students in the posttest in participle after the implementation of the language-based approach. It can be noticed from the results that most respondents, 55.3% or 21, have improved to a proficient level, acquiring 70%-80% competence in participle; 26.3% or 10 in the approaching level with 50%-60% competence, and 13, 2% or 5 respondents reached the advanced level acquiring 90%-100% competence. On the contrary, 5.3% or 2 remained in the developing level with only 30%-40% competence. Generally, the respondents are proficient in participle indicated by $M=7.0526$ and have acquired 70%-80% competence in participle. Comparing the pretest and post-test results, there is a remarkable change from the pretest ($M= 4.9211$) to post-test ($M= 7.0526$). Of the 31 out of 38 respondents who were formerly in the approaching level and below levels only 12 have remained while others became proficient; and 6 students had made it to advanced level acquiring 90%-100% competence. With more practice in the post reading activity, the respondents' competence in the low levels can still be enhanced.

Table 6. Respondents' Post-test Scores of Grammatical Competence in Terms of Infinitive

Score	Frequency	Percent	Interpretation
9-10	1	-	Advanced
8-7	11	29	Proficient
6-5	19	50-	Approaching Proficient
4-3	7	18.4	Developing
0-2	-	-	Beginning
Total	38	100	

Table 6 presents the level of proficiency of Grade 9 respondents in the posttest in infinitive after the implementation of the language-based approach. It can be observed from the result that the greatest number of the respondents, 50 or 19 are in the approaching level with only 50%-60% competence in the infinitive. The respondents in the proficient level are 29% or 11 with 70%-80% competence and 18.4% or 7 in the developing

level with 30%-40% competence. However, 2.6% or 1 respondent have made it to the advanced level with 90%-100% competence. Generally, the respondents are in the approaching level of proficiency indicated by $M=5.8421$ and have acquired 50%-60% competence in infinitive.

Based on the pretest result in infinitive it was found out that they were in the developing level ($M=3.0066$). Compared to the result of the posttest ($M=5.8421$), their proficiency was in the approaching level and with 50%-60% competence. The language-based approach has caused a change in the proficiency level, but the respondents have not reached the proficient level. Particularly, 12 respondents have reached the proficient level acquiring 70%-80 & competence.

In the study of Salman & Hasim (2022), students' grammatical competence in written English was investigated. It is clear that EFL Iraqi students of English have problems in mastering some grammatical components, especially subject-verb agreement in English. However, first-year level students are struggling with these types of grammar problems. It is clear from the findings that the most common are mis-formation errors. This may be due to many reasons. First, the students were confused about choosing the suitable tenses. Second, it is possible that they had difficulties in distinguishing between the singular and plural subject. Third, they found it difficult to decide how to change the verb related to the tense in the sentences. In the current study, respondents are also found deficient in grammatical competence particularly infinitive. They found it difficult distinguishing the function of infinitive in a sentence as a subjective complement or direct object of the verb. This may be attributed to lack of in-depth analysis and thorough drills and practices in written grammar practice.

Table 7. Significant Difference in the Pretest and Post Test Mean Scores

Grammatical Competence	Pretest		Post Test		t	df	Sig. 2 tailed
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Deviation	Standard Deviation			
Gerund	3.8421	1.61958	6.2632	1.67145	-8.635	37	0.00
Participle	4.9211	1.60036	7.0528	1.43220	-9.813	37	0.00
Infinitive	3.0526	1.11373	5.8421	1.36612	-12.655	37	0.00

P-value <.05 Significant P-value>.05 Not Significant

Table 7 reflects the significant difference in the pretest and post-test mean scores. As indicated by $t=-8.635$, $p\text{-value } 0.00 < .05$ in gerund, the result is statistically significant. There is strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis, which means the respondents' level of proficiency in the pretest, and post-test in gerund is significantly different. The difference indicates that there was a change in the proficiency level and competence of the respondents in gerund before and after the implementation of the language-based approach, which can be assumed that the language-based approach has a causal effect on the grammatical competence of the respondents.

As indicated by $t=-9.813$, $p\text{-value } 0.00 < .05$ in participle the result is statistically significant. There is strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis which means the respondents' level of proficiency in pretest and post-test in participle is significantly different. From this result, it can be implied that there was a change in the proficiency level and competence of the respondents in participle after the implementation of the language-based approach. There is an implication that the LBA is effective in teaching participle because the literary texts and practices helped facilitate students' learning increasing their proficiency level and enhancing their competence in grammar.

As indicated by $t=-12.655$, $p\text{-value } 0.00 < .05$ in infinitive the result is statistically significant. There is strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis which means the respondents' level of proficiency in pretest and post-test in infinitive is significantly different. It is implied that there was a change in the proficiency level and grammatical competence of the respondents in infinitives after the implementation of a language-based approach. There is an implication that LBA is an effective approach to teaching infinitives. It can be implied that the use of literary texts and practices can increase the proficiency of the students and improve their grammatical competence in infinitives. The significant difference between the pre-test and post-test mean scores infers that the implementation of a language-based approach effectively increases the proficiency level of the students in verbals as well as improves the grammatical competence of the students. Hence, the implications are that: 1) Language-based approach is effective in learning verbals. 2) Language-based approach provides a variety of learning activities and practices that facilitate the learning of verbals and 3) Literary texts used as materials in learning verbals are relevant, appropriate, and effective materials in learning grammar. These implications are supported by Noam Chomsky's perspective on the language-based approach that capitalized on

innate language ability by proudly explicit instruction and structured practice, enabling learners to acquire grammatical competence.

Contrary to this study, Musa (2022) investigates the effect of grammar teaching methods on students' writing skills in secondary level using the two-group experimental design pretest-post-test method. The results showed that there was no statistical difference between the experimental and control groups in the pretest. The experiment was run, teaching the two groups using different methods. The results indicated that there was a statistical difference between the experimental and control in the post-test. This study is consistent with the current study, as the null hypotheses in both studies were found statistically significant. The current study is also different from the study of Ahem & Khnssa (2018) which investigated the use of context in teaching grammar and its influence on 64 EFL secondary school students' achievement in grammar rules. In this study, two groups of students were subjected to experimental research, the experimental and controlled groups. The result of the study shows that there is no significant statistical difference between the mean scores of the development of the experimental group taught by "Grammar in Context book" in the pretest and the post-test. The result of this two-group experimental design is consistent with the result of the current study, which uses the single-group experimental design. In both studies, the respective null hypothesis was statistically significant.

6. Conclusion

From the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn.

1. The hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the pretest and post-test of respondents in gerund using language-based approach is rejected.
2. The hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the pretest and post-test of respondents in participle using language-based approach is rejected.
3. The hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the pretest and post-test of respondents in infinitive using language-based approach is rejected.

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