

STUDENTS' COMPETENCE IN USING PARTICIPLE VERBS AT ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT OF UNIVERSITAS MUHAMMADIYAH SORONG

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui kompetensi mahasiswa Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris semester III Universitas Muhammadiyah Sorong (Tahun Akademik 2022-2023) dalam menggunakan participle verbs. Dengan menggunakan metode deskriptif kuantitatif, penelitian ini berfokus pada sampel purposif sebanyak 20 siswa. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa kompetensi siswa dalam menggunakan participle verbs berada pada kategori "cukup" dengan nilai rata-rata 72,55. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa meskipun kemampuan mereka tidak luar biasa, namun juga tidak terlalu lemah. Namun, penting untuk dicatat bahwa pencapaian tingkat kompetensi yang adil menunjukkan pemahaman dasar tentang penggunaan participle, namun masih ada ruang untuk perbaikan. Temuan ini menggarisbawahi perlunya intervensi yang ditargetkan dan latihan tambahan untuk meningkatkan kemahiran siswa dalam menggunakan kata kerja participle secara efektif. Berdasarkan temuan penelitian ini, direkomendasikan agar institusi pendidikan menerapkan intervensi yang ditargetkan untuk meningkatkan kemahiran siswa dalam menggunakan participle verbs secara efektif. Intervensi ini dapat mencakup lokakarya tata bahasa khusus, sesi latihan tambahan.

Kata kunci: *Participle Verbs; Kompetensi Siswa; Tata Bahasa.*

Abstract

This research pointed to investigate the competence of third-semester English Language Education students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Sorong (Academic Year 2022-2023) in using participle verbs. Employing a descriptive quantitative method, the research focused on a purposive sample of 20 students. The analysis revealed that the students' competence in using participle verbs fell within the "fair" category, with an average score of 72.55. This suggests that while their ability is not exceptional, it also is not particularly weak. However, it is important to note that achieving a fair level of competence indicates a basic understanding of participle usage, but there is room for improvement. This finding underscores the need for targeted interventions and additional practice to enhance students' proficiency in using participle verbs effectively. Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that educational institutions implement targeted interventions to improve students' proficiency in using participle verbs effectively. These interventions could include specialized grammar workshops, additional practice sessions.

Keywords: *Participle Verbs; Students' Competence; Grammar.*

Introduction

Grammar holds a central role in the realm of language learning, constituting a pivotal component within the language system. It is widely acknowledged that grammar serves as the foundation for comprehending and mastering languages, embodying a set of rules that govern linguistic structure and usage. Particularly in the context of English language acquisition, grammar assumes paramount importance as a fundamental tool for effective learning (Lin et al., 2020). Beyond its technical aspects, English grammar is instrumental in fostering a deeper understanding of the language and cultivating social proficiency within various contexts. By grasping the nuances of English grammar, learners not only enhance their language proficiency but also develop valuable communication skills essential for navigating diverse social settings (Amalia et al., 2021). Therefore, a comprehensive understanding of grammar is indispensable for individuals seeking to engage proficiently in the English language and its associated cultural contexts.

Grammar is a fundamental sub-skill for mastering English. It forms the building blocks of language, and without a solid grasp of grammar, learners will struggle to construct sentences and express themselves effectively. One of the common challenges students face in learning English is grammar. Though particular academicians suppose that grammar have to be highlighted because, without it, EFL learners will end up with fluent but not precise English (Andriani et al., 2021; Rao, 2019; Shintani et al., 2013; Tolentino & Tokowicz, 2014), others argue for a more communicative approach that prioritizes fluency over grammatical perfection. While fluency allows learners to communicate effectively and express themselves freely, accuracy ensures that their messages are conveyed with precision and clarity (Wael et al., 2023). Therefore, a comprehensive language learning approach should prioritize both fluency and accuracy, with a focus on developing a solid foundation in grammar alongside opportunities for meaningful communication and language use. By striking this balance, EFL learners can achieve a well-rounded proficiency that enables them to confidently navigate various linguistic contexts and effectively communicate their ideas some perceive it as a tedious subject, finding it confusing and difficult to understand. According to (Saputra et al., 2023) students experience anxiety when they encounter difficulties in constructing sentences that incorporate various parts of speech and participle verbs accurately. It is emphasized that a solid understanding of basic grammar serves as the foundation of knowledge essential for students. This foundational knowledge not only aids in the creation of grammatically correct sentences but also instils confidence in students' language proficiency. Furthermore, mastering basic grammar principles enables students to navigate more complex linguistic structures with ease, facilitating effective communication in both oral and written contexts. This can lead them to avoid grammar altogether. Particularly challenging for some students is verb conjugation, which involves understanding why verbs change tense (present, past, future) within a sentence.

Grammar plays a vital role in constructing English sentences. Without it, clear communication becomes impossible. While students may have been learning English for a considerable time, errors can still persist. This could be due to the influence of their native language on their English, a phenomenon known as mother tongue interference (Wael et al., 2018). In English sentences, the verb must agree in form and meaning with the subject. Achieving a detailed understanding of subject-verb agreement goes beyond simply ensuring grammatical accuracy; it also significantly enhances the overall coherence and readability of language. When verbs and subjects harmonize correctly, sentences become clearer and more structured, facilitating smoother communication and comprehension for both writers and readers. Thus, mastering subject-verb agreement is

crucial for effectively conveying meaning and maintaining fluency in written and spoken English (Rifiyanti et al., 2023).

Mastering English grammar, especially participle verbs, empowers students to construct grammatically correct and understandable sentences. Participle verbs, while sometimes complex, are an essential area of study for university English students. Participle verbs play a fundamental role in the English language, serving as versatile grammatical elements that enhance sentence structure and convey complex meanings. Understanding participle verbs is essential for effective communication and proficient language usage. In this introduction, we will explore the nature of participle verbs, their various forms, and their functions within sentences. Participle verbs are verb forms that function as adjectives or adverbs in a sentence, rather than as the main verb. They come in two main forms: present participles, typically ending in “-ing,” and past participles, which often end in “-ed,” “-en,” or have irregular forms. These verb forms can also function as participial phrases, adding descriptive detail or providing additional information within sentences.

One key aspect of participle verbs is their ability to create participial phrases, which consist of a participle along with its modifiers and complements. Participial phrases can add descriptive detail, provide background information, or modify nouns or pronouns within sentences. For example, in the phrase “the running dog,” “running” functions as a present participle modifying the noun “dog.” However, many students struggle with using participles, particularly when differentiating between past and present participles and when incorporating them with adverbs in sentence construction (Saengboon et al., 2022). Many university students, including those in English Departments, struggle to differentiate between gerunds and present participles. This confusion often stems from the similar “-ing” form used in both verb types. One potential cause of this weakness might be a lack of sufficient practice with participle verbs in their learning activities.

In the English language, participles are verb forms that serve auxiliary functions rather than acting as the main verb in a sentence. These forms are typically categorized as either present participles, which end in -ing, or past participles, which end in -ed or may have irregular forms, as discussed by (Gu, 2020). Understanding the role and classification of participles is fundamental in grasping their usage and functions within sentences. Present participles are often used to indicate ongoing actions or as part of progressive verb forms, while past participles are commonly employed in perfect tenses or passive voice constructions. Delving into the nuances of participles enhances one’s proficiency in English grammar and facilitates clearer communication in both spoken and written contexts. The written discourse crafted by the author of the article proves significant within the context of the situation at hand. Language serves as a crucial link between the text and its surrounding context, with a distinct thematic structure guiding this connection. This thematic structure is intricately linked to the syntactic construction of the text. Consequently, the textual meaning finds expression through the clausal structure, encompassing both active and passive sentence forms (Halliday et al., 2004). This elucidates the intricate relationship between linguistic structures and the conveying of textual meaning within a given context. By understanding this interplay, readers can delve deeper into the layers of meaning embedded within written discourse, enriching their comprehension and analysis of textual content.

Studies relevant to the issue of learning grammar, particularly the utilization of participle verbs, have been carried out in various countries and regions (Akib & Ohorella, 2018). The data analysis revealed that the students’ proficiency in using gerunds and present participles was low. This was evident from the percentage breakdown of students’ scores: out of 43 students, 3 (7%) scored very poorly, 19 (44.2%) scored poorly, 20 (46.5%) scored fairly, and 1 (2.3%) scored well, with none achieving a very good score.

The mean test score was 5.41, categorizing overall performance as poor. The findings suggest that factors such as unfamiliarity with gerunds and present participles and difficulties in memorization impacted students' proficiency in using these forms. (Adaje & Ikyase, 2023) The research evaluates the proficiency of first-year English for Academic Purposes (EAP) students at the University of Agriculture, Makurdi, in using simple past and past participle forms of irregular verbs in English. The data analysis, employing frequency, percentage, and mean scores, demonstrates that these students lack sufficient understanding of simple past and past participle inflections of irregular verbs. Specifically, they struggle to correctly employ the simple past forms of verbs like *rend*, *saw*, *flee*, *stride*, *slay*, *shut*, *spit*, *grind*, *speed*, *heave*, and *spring*, as well as the past participles of verbs such as *bend*, *strew*, *sew*, *swell*, *bereave*, *cleave*, *tread*, *lie*, *split*, *spread*, *cost*, *fling*, *swing*, *string*, *ring*, *shrink*, and *swim* in English. To address this issue, the study suggests regular practice for EAP students in mastering the simple past and past participle forms of the two hundred and fifty English irregular verbs, utilizing exercises involving sentence construction and essay writing.

Additionally, study from Syafi'I (2021) Following data analysis, the researcher's conclusion was that the prevalent errors among eleventh-grade students at SMK Taruna Masmur Pekanbaru were primarily misformation (40 errors or 56.3%), followed by omission (17 errors or 23.9%), addition (13 errors or 18.3%), and misordering (1 error or 1.4%). These findings shed light on specific areas where students may need additional support and guidance in their language learning journey. Furthermore, understanding these common errors can inform educators' strategies in addressing and rectifying them effectively.

Ismani & Simamora (2021)uncovered challenges faced by students in utilizing participle forms, including Present Participle (22.52%), Past Participle (63.73%), and Perfect Participle (33.52%). Notably, students struggled the most with Past Participle, particularly when employing it after specific verbs and replacing relative pronouns. This difficulty was closely followed by Perfect Participle. Additionally, students encountered challenges with Present Participle, particularly in its usage as a substitute for relative pronouns and after certain verbs. The percentage of each difficulty was calculated by dividing the number of incorrect answers by the total number of correct answers in the test. This highlights the areas where students require further support and targeted instruction to enhance their proficiency in using participle forms effectively. Understanding these challenges can inform educators' strategies in addressing students' needs and promoting their linguistic development in the realm of participle usage.

While prior research has concentrated on learning English grammar through either a traditional or functional lens, examining both English as a first language (L1) and second language (L2) contexts, the present study endeavors to delve into the realm of learning English grammar within an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) environment, specifically in Indonesia. Additionally, this research seeks to address the gap in literature regarding effective grammar instruction in EFL contexts, ultimately aiming to enhance language learning outcomes for Indonesian learners of English. Although students may have encountered them in high school, the transition to university-level English often requires more nuanced understanding and application. In light of this, the researcher aims to investigate the ability of English Language Department students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Sorong to use participle verbs effectively. The researcher formulates the following question about to what extent can third-semester English Department students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Sorong (2022-2023 academic year) differentiate and use participle verbs accurately in their writing and/or speech?

Research Method

This study adopts a quantitative research approach, focusing on a non-experimental design that does not involve direct classroom intervention. Instead, it serves as a case study exploring the competence of third-semester students in the English Language Department at Universitas Muhammadiyah Sorong during (2022-2023 academic year). Purposive sampling was employed, specifically selecting the participants, consisting of 20 students, to ensure a targeted representation of the student population. Data collection involved several steps. Firstly, the writer developed a research instrument (test) and sought consultation to ensure its validity. Subsequently, the test underwent a trial phase to assess its reliability. This phase included administering 20 multiple-choice questions and 10 completion form tests sourced from relevant literature on participle verbs. The purpose of employing this test was to gauge students' proficiency in using participle verbs, with a total of 20 items categorized into two types of questions exclusively focused on participle verbs. This research will gather data from a participle verb test administered to students, aiming to assess individual scores as well as the mean score of the student cohort. Upon obtaining these scores, they will be categorized into four classification rates: A (90-100) very good category, B (80-89) good category, C (70-79) fair category, and D (0-69) poor category. The data analysis will involve three main steps: firstly, determining the individual scores of each student in each cycle; secondly, grouping these scores into the predefined categories; and finally, calculating the percentage of students' scores within each category (Rahmawati, 2020).

Findings and Discussion

The objective written test, as previously mentioned by the researcher, was intentionally designed to assess the English Students' Competence in using Participle verbs. This test was structured with two components: firstly, students were instructed to convert sentences into the past continuous tense, and secondly, they were prompted to complete sentences using the correct participles, with main clauses provided as clues. Following data collection, the researcher proceeded to assess and evaluate students' performance both statistically and descriptively. The final step involved strengthening and validating students' scores or achievements by quantitatively analysing their work and descriptively examining it through simple syntactical analysis. These data provide insight into the students' proficiency in using participle verbs.

Students' Competence to Use Participle

In order to gauge students' proficiency in utilizing Participle verbs, the researcher intended to employ the mean score as a metric to obtain an objective assessment. This method allows for a comprehensive evaluation of students' overall performance, providing valuable insights into their understanding and application of Participle verbs in various contexts. By calculating the mean score, the researcher aimed to derive a quantitative measure that accurately reflects the collective competency of the student population in this particular linguistic area. Additionally, this approach enables the identification of trends and patterns in students' usage of Participle verbs, facilitating targeted instructional interventions and curriculum enhancements to address any areas of weakness or misunderstanding. Through this rigorous and systematic evaluation process, the researcher sought to gain a thorough understanding of students' abilities and inform effective pedagogical strategies tailored to their learning needs.

Table 1. Students Score in Objective Test of Participle Verbs

No	Students	Students' Score	Qualification
1.	AJ	55	Poor
2.	AP	90	Very Good
3.	AM	75	Fair
4.	FBI	65	Poor
5.	FRS	65	Poor
6.	EF	65	Poor
7.	FT	75	Fair
8.	FS	60	Poor
9.	GK	91	Very Good
10.	TR	80	Good
11.	SY	75	Fair
12.	SL	75	Fair
13.	RTW	80	Good
14.	RL	75	Fair
15.	PR	75	Fair
16.	FR	65	Poor
17.	ISN	70	Fair
18.	ISK	60	Poor
19.	LID	70	Fair
20	EN	85	Good
		Total = 1451	
		Average = 72.55	Fair

The data provided presents the scores of 20 students in a particular assessment related to the usage of Participle verbs. Each student is represented by a unique identifier (e.g., AJ, AP, AM, etc.), and their corresponding scores are indicated alongside. The scores range from 55 to 91, with various students achieving different levels of performance. The qualification categories assigned to the students based on their scores are as follows: (1) Very Good: Scores of 90 and above were 2 students, (2) Good: Scores between 80 and 89 were 3 students, (3) Fair category: Scores between 70 and 79, (4) Poor: Scores below 70 were 7 students. The total score for all students combined is 1451, and the average score across all students is calculated to be 72.55, falling within the Fair category. This data provides insight into the overall performance of the students in the assessment, highlighting the distribution of scores and the average level of proficiency among them in using Participle verbs.

The data presented above reveals a total score of 1451, with an average score tabulated at 72.55 falling within the fair category. This numerical representation provides insight into the collective performance of the participants in utilizing participle verbs. The average score serves as a useful metric to gauge the overall proficiency level, indicating a satisfactory understanding of the use of participle verbs among the participants. However,

while the average score falls within the fair category, further analysis of individual performance and specific areas of strengths and weaknesses may be warranted to gain a more nuanced understanding of the participants' competence in this linguistic aspect. Additionally, exploring factors contributing to variations in scores and identifying effective teaching strategies to enhance comprehension and application of participle verbs could be valuable for optimizing language learning outcomes.

Table 2. Percentage of Students' Classification of Using Participle

No	Classification	Score	Frequency	Percentage
1	Very good	90 – 100	2	10
2	Good	80 – 89	3	15
3	Fair	70 – 79	8	40
4	Poor	0 – 69	7	35
Total			20	100%

The table above illustrates the distribution of Students' Competence levels in using a principle. It reveals that a small percentage, only two students (10%), achieved a very good rating, while three students (15%) attained a good rating. A larger proportion of students (40%) obtained scores placing them in the fair category, while an equal number of students (35%) fell into the poor category. Overall, it is evident that the majority of students' abilities in using Participle Verbs are neither significantly impressive nor exceedingly deficient. This analysis prompts further exploration into the factors influencing students' performance and suggests the need for targeted interventions to enhance their proficiency in this area. Additionally, considering the distribution of scores across different competency levels can inform instructional strategies tailored to address specific areas of improvement.

Based on the finding of this research, the data analysis shed light on the collective performance of participants in utilizing participle verbs. With a total score of 1451 and an average score of 72.55 falling within the fair category, it is evident that the majority of students demonstrate a satisfactory understanding of the use of participle verbs. However, further examination of individual performance and specific areas of strengths and weaknesses is warranted to gain a deeper understanding of students' competence in this linguistic aspect. While only a small percentage of students achieved a very good rating (10%) This category includes students who scored between 90 and 100 in the assessment, indicating a very high level of proficiency in using Participle verbs. A good rating (15%) students falling into this category scored between 80 and 89 in the assessment, demonstrating a solid level of proficiency in using Participle verbs. A larger proportion fell into the fair category (40%) The Fair category encompasses students who achieved scores between 70 and 79 in the assessment, indicating a satisfactory level of proficiency in using Participle verbs. However, a notable percentage of students also fell into the poor category (35%) Students classified as Poor scored below 70 in the assessment, suggesting a need for improvement in their proficiency in using Participle verbs. This breakdown provides a clear overview of the distribution of students across different proficiency levels based on their scores in the assessment, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of their performance in this particular linguistic aspect. This distribution highlights the need for targeted interventions to enhance students' proficiency in using participle verbs, especially for those in the fair and poor categories. This emphasis on grammar aligns with the findings of Rullu & Marto (2021) who identified intralingua transfer applying patterns from their native language as a key reason for student errors in sentence construction. The distribution of students' competence levels provides additional insight into the variations in performance.

Exploring the factors contributing to variations in scores is essential for identifying effective teaching strategies to improve comprehension and application of participle verbs. Factors such as teaching methodologies, instructional materials, and individual learning styles may influence students' performance in this area. Further supporting this point, (Khan et al., 2023) found that students commonly struggle with the morphological form, functional purpose, and syntactic sentence structure aspects of using present, past, and perfect participles in English. This aligns with the challenges caused by intralingua transfer, where students might unknowingly apply patterns from their native language that differ from English participle usage. By understanding these factors, educators can tailor instructional strategies to address specific areas of improvement and optimize language learning outcomes.

Moreover, considering the distribution of scores across different competency levels can inform the development of instructional strategies tailored to address specific areas of improvement. For example, additional practice exercises or targeted instruction on specific grammatical concepts related to participle verbs may be beneficial for students in the fair and poor categories. According to Prasongsook, his research findings shed light on the syntactic parts posing the greatest challenges for students in accurate translation. These include "referred subject," "perfect participle adverb phrase," and "specific words," which emerged as the top three difficult areas. Additionally, students encountered difficulties in accurately translating "past participial adjective," "present participle as adverb phrase," and "passive voice verb." These findings underscore the intricate nature of syntactic structures in translation tasks, highlighting the need for targeted instructional approaches and support to enhance students' proficiency in navigating these complexities (Prasongsook, 2017).

The findings highlight the need for targeted interventions to enhance students' proficiency in using participle verbs. By understanding the factors influencing students' performance and tailoring instructional strategies to address specific areas of improvement, educators can effectively support students in developing their linguistic skills and achieving their learning goals.

Conclusion

Analysing the data presented in the preceding chapters, it can be deduced that the students' proficiency in using participle verbs remains at a fair level. This assertion is supported by the average mean score of 72.55 falling within the "Fair" category. While this indicates a grasp of fundamental participle verb concepts, it also suggests a need for improvement. A "fair" level of proficiency may limit students' ability to express themselves with full clarity and nuance in both written and spoken English. Precise use of participles can elevate the sophistication and complexity of their communication. Recognizing the current research's design as a case study, it is acknowledged that further empowerment of this study is warranted in the future. Additionally, future researchers may consider this study as a foundation upon which to build and expand, leveraging its findings and insights to develop and refine instructional approaches aimed at enhancing students' proficiency in using participle verbs.

Based on the gathered insights regarding undergraduate students' performance in utilizing English participles, it is evident that English grammar presents distinct and challenging grammatical units for them to grasp. The complexity of these units poses difficulties in learning and acquisition, resulting in incomplete understanding among students regarding English participles. Specifically, undergraduate students encounter challenges in various areas such as absolute construction, dangling participle, the perfection component of participles as an adverbial, past participle of intransitive verbs, and the compound gerunds. Additionally, they struggle with distinguishing between

participle usage and that of the infinitive. Furthermore, difficulties arise in discerning between gerunds and present participles, as students are uncertain about differentiating between present participle and gerund forms that appear identical. Addressing these challenges requires targeted instructional strategies and interventions aimed at enhancing students' comprehension and proficiency in navigating the complexities of English participles. Moreover, fostering a deeper understanding of the nuances between different participle forms can significantly contribute to students' overall language competence and communication skills in English.

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