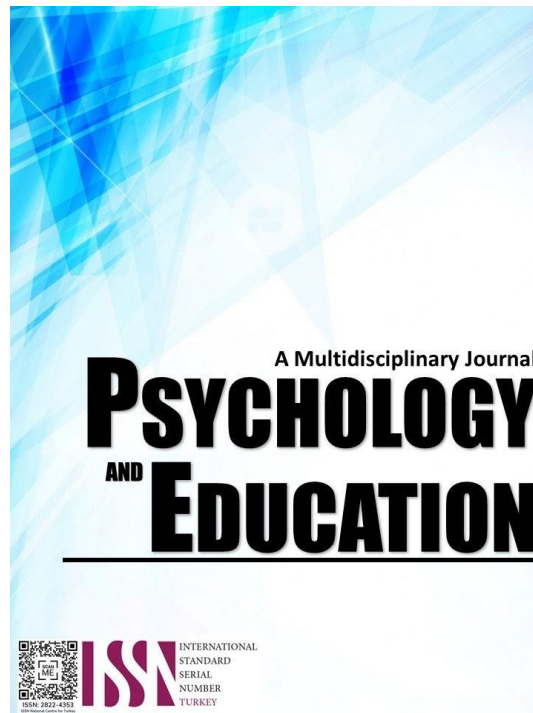


# **INTEGRATED GRAMMAR APPROACH IN TEACHING PHILIPPINE LITERATURE AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF MATATAG LEARNERS**



## **PSYCHOLOGY AND EDUCATION: A MULTIDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL**

Volume: 39

Issue 1

Pages: 79-90

Document ID: 2025PEMJ3745

DOI: 10.70838/pemj.390109

Manuscript Accepted: 05-05-2025

# Integrated Grammar Approach in Teaching Philippine Literature and Academic Performance of MATATAG Learners

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## Abstract

The Philippines faces significant challenges in improving English language proficiency, particularly in reading comprehension, as evidenced in international assessments like PISA. This research investigated the efficacy of the Integrated Grammar Approach in Teaching Philippine Literature to Grade 7 MATATAG learners at Tacurong National High School, focusing on English grammar skills and comprehension of complex texts. The study employed a quantitative, true-experimental design with control and experimental groups, utilizing a lottery method to randomly select 40 students from each group. Data were collected through pre-tests, post-tests, and experts' validations of the integrated grammar worksheets. The study found that using an integrated grammar approach significantly improved the grammar skills of both control and experimental groups, in enhancing the students' understanding and use of grammatical concepts within the context of Philippine literature. The developed Integrated Grammar Approach in Teaching Philippine Literature worksheets revealed a very high level of validity in terms of content, organization, mechanics, and overall package. The study concluded with a promising strategy for connecting grammar lessons to real-life situations of Grade 7 learners. The study recommends that the Department of Education may prioritize the development and dissemination of integrated grammar materials, promote professional development programs focusing on this approach, and encourage use of diverse instructional strategies and materials to enhance student engagement and learning, ultimately contributing to the nationwide effort to strengthen English proficiency, foster critical reading skills, and prepare Filipino learners to meet the demands of global communication and 21st-century literacy standards, thereby equipping students with the essential competencies needed for academic success, career readiness, and active participation in an increasingly interconnected world.

**Keywords:** *integrated grammar approach, Philippine literature, MATATAG curriculum, language proficiency*

## Introduction

Teaching contributes a fundamental part in developing different people and societies, stimulating critical thinking, innovation, and social progress. In the presence of different approaches to learning, revisions and changes in the implementation of curriculum happen in different parts of the world and some students faces a pressing literacy crisis, most especially with Filipino students consistently lagging behind in reading comprehension, particularly in Grade 7. But reaching upright learning results calls for a thorough awareness of the difficulties students encounter and the complexity of educational systems. There is a need to look at the field of literacy development, especially the need of a more integrated approach to teach Philippine literature in view of the MATATAG Curriculum.

In the global context, the power of literature transcends generations, shaping societies through the art of storytelling. Nonetheless, millions of learners worldwide struggle to engage with literature due to poor reading comprehension. According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2023), 617 million children and adolescents globally fail to achieve minimum proficiency in reading. This literacy crisis is intensified by poverty, limited access to quality education, and ineffective teaching methodologies (World Bank, 2022). Furthermore, a lack of culturally relevant reading materials further hampers literacy development in low- and middle-income countries (Hanushek & Woessmann, 2023). In turn, this knowledge gap contributes to poor awareness of how reading materials with cultural relevance affect literacy development in countries with low or middle incomes.

In the Philippines, literacy challenges are evident. The 2018 PISA results revealed that Filipino students ranked last in reading comprehension among 79 countries, a trend that persisted in the 2022 assessment, with many students performing below the minimum proficiency level (OECD, 2019; DepEd, 2022). Factors such as overcrowded classrooms, inadequate teacher training, and limited access to instructional materials contribute to this performance gap (Bernardo & Ocampo, 2023). These challenges are particularly relevant in Grade 7, where students transition to more advanced content, including Philippine literature, requiring higher-order comprehension skills. With this empirical gap, there is a lack of extensive study on the particular elements that contribute to the problems with literacy that students find themselves directed in Grade 7.

Consequently, with 80% of students falling below the national standard for reading competence, Region XII is experiencing the same difficulties as the rest of the country. The majority of students in this region achieve a performance level of 1b on the PISA, which demonstrates fundamental abilities such as the ability to read simple sentences with the use of visual prompts (DepEd Region XII, 2023). This features the important need for solutions that bridge the gap between foundational language abilities and literary interpretation. In light of this practical gap, there is a requirement for the implementation of solutions that can bridge the gap between essential language abilities and literary analysis in the region.

At Tacurong National High School, the largest institution in the City Schools Division of Tacurong (CSDT), these issues are

particularly urgent. As Grade 7 learners delve into the MATATAG Curriculum, which emphasizes Philippine literature, they face challenges in comprehending complex texts. The MATATAG Curriculum aims to cultivate internationally competitive learners by focusing on literature, history, and critical thinking (Alvarado, 2023).

However, traditional methods often prioritize textual analysis while neglecting grammar, which is crucial for understanding literary works (Rakhimova, 2023). There is also a methodological gap in this context since there is inadequacy of studies on the effectiveness in integrating grammar instruction into the MATATAG Curriculum, specifically for teaching Philippine literature.

The Integrated Grammar Approach offers a solution by linking grammar instruction with literary analysis. Research shows that this method improves linguistic and interpretive skills, enabling deeper engagement with texts (Ellis, 2021; Richards & Renandya, 2022). For Grade 7 MATATAG learners, mastering grammar concepts such as subject-verb agreement, tense consistency, and sentence structure can significantly enhance their ability to analyze Philippine literature, which includes narratives, poetry, and plays reflective of the country's diverse culture and history (Barlis et al., 2023; Olipas, 2024).

This study addresses these research gaps by evaluating the approach's impact on the academic performance of Grade 7 students in Tacurong National High School. The findings will inform curriculum development and teaching practices, contributing to improved literacy outcomes in the region.

## Research Questions

This study determined the Integrated Grammar Approach in Teaching Philippine Literature and Academic Performance of MATATAG learners at Tacurong National High School, Brgy. New Isabela, Tacurong City, Sultan Kudarat, during the second quarter was conducted by the school. Specifically, this sought to answer the following:

1. What is the level of validity of the integrated approach lesson exemplar in terms of:
  - 1.1. content;
  - 1.2. organization;
  - 1.3. mechanics; and
  - 1.4. over-all package?
2. What is the level of the Grade 7 students' grammar skills in the control and experimental groups during the Pre-test and Post-test results?
3. Is there a significant difference between the level of the Grade 7 students' grammar skills of the control and experimental groups in the Pre-test results?
4. Is there a significant difference between the level of the Grade 7 students' grammar skills of the control and experimental groups in the Post-test results?
5. Is there a significant difference in the mean gain scores between the control and experimental groups?

## Methodology

### Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research design, specifically a true-experimental method and descriptive-evaluative technique, to evaluate the effectiveness of integrated grammar approach worksheets in teaching Grade 7 English. Quantitative research, as a systematic approach, utilizes numerical data and statistical analysis to examine relationships, test hypotheses, and draw conclusions about a phenomenon (Rahman & Islam, 2022). This methodology provides a comprehensive and systematic framework for investigating the intervention's impact on student learning, allowing for the measurement and analysis of changes in students' English grammar skills.

The True-Experimental design is utilized to establish that the integrated grammar technique improves student English grammar, unlike descriptive evaluative research methods (Doyle et al., 2019). The true-experimental approach of quantitative research provides controlled comparisons between control and experimental groups (Saha, 2024; Rahman & Islam, 2022).

The control group gets conventional instruction, whereas the experimental group uses integrated grammar worksheets. This controlled comparison separates intervention effects, allowing researchers to better evaluate its efficacy. The descriptive-evaluative method clarifies the integrated grammar approach and its application. Data is collected and analyzed to characterize the intervention's characteristics, features, and results (Doyle et al., 2019).

As a result, the combination of quantitative research, true-experimental design, and descriptive-evaluative approaches were ideal for this study since it provides for a thorough and varied examination of the integrated grammar approach's efficacy. These methods considered the study's context and features to understand the intervention's influence on student learning. The quantitative study allowed the researcher to evaluate and assess students' English grammar abilities, while the true-experimental design isolates the intervention's effects. In deepening comprehension of the integrated grammar approach and its execution, the descriptive-evaluative method improves the study.

## Respondents

The respondents were Grade 7 MATATAG learners at Tacurong National High School during the School Year 2024-2025. DepEd Order No. 010, s. 2024, issued on July 23, 2024, provides policy guidelines for the implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum, serving as a primary guide for teachers and instructional leaders. The order also serves as a guide for teachers in selecting subject matter, implementing teaching strategies, using learning resources, and applying assessment tools. In this study, each Grade 7 section in TNHS comprised 40 students, resulting in a total of 80 students.

Additionally, to ensure a rigorous and representative sample, a random sampling technique, specifically a lottery method, was employed to select participants for both the control and experimental groups. As a result, this technique involves intentionally selecting participants who possess specific characteristics relevant to the study while incorporating an element of randomness to minimize bias (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

To select the control and experimental groups, a list of all Grade 7 students was compiled. Each student's name was written on a separate slip of paper and placed in a container. A lottery method was then used to randomly select 40 students for the control group and 40 students for the experimental group. This method ensured that each student has an equal chance of being selected for either group, minimizing the influence of pre-existing differences between the groups and enhancing the validity of the study's findings (Noor et al., 2022).

In addition to the student participants, master teachers and the department head in English also participated in the study, specifically in the validation and evaluation of the integrated grammar worksheets. Consequently, their expertise was necessary in assessing the worksheets' content, organization, mechanics, and overall package, ensuring that they have aligned with the research objectives and meet the needs of the Grade 7 students.

This study employed a random sampling technique, specifically a lottery method, to select participants for the control and experimental groups. Given the study's context with two Grade 7 sections of 40 students each, a suitable alternative sampling is purposive sampling. This technique involved intentionally selecting participants who possessed specific characteristics relevant to the study while incorporating an element of randomness to minimize bias group (Alex, 2024). This method is particularly useful for minimizing bias and promoting the generalizability of the findings to a larger population of Grade 7 students. In this case, the researcher has chosen to utilize the two existing sections at Tacurong National High School as the control and experimental groups, making use of the existing structure and minimizing the need for additional recruitment efforts.

Accordingly, the population consisted of all officially enrolled Grade 7 students at Tacurong National High School in the School Year 2024-2025. A complete and accurate list of all Grade 7 students were compiled. Each student's name was written on a separate slip of paper and placed in a container. A lottery method was used to randomly select 40 students for the control group and 40 students for the experimental group. This method provided a controlled environment for examining the successful outcomes of the integrated grammar approach. This method also made it possible to conduct an analysis that is more focused and efficient about the influence that the intervention has on the English grammar skills of the Grade 7 MATATAG Learners.

## Instrument

A five-point Likert Scale evaluation scale was used to assess the integrated grammar worksheets on subject verb agreement. The Classroom Assessment K to 12 Basic Education Program (Adopted from DepEd, D.O. 8, s, 2020) were also utilized to evaluate the learners' grammatical abilities.

Moreover, to measure students' level of grammar skills during and after the intervention of the integrated grammar approach, the adopted Common European Framework of References for Languages (CEFR), an international standard for language ability and comprehension, modelled by Jones (2021) and Benjamine (2024), was used.

## Procedure

Upon the completion of approval sheets to properly conduct the study, the research started as soon as it was approved by the Dean of the Graduate School at SKSU. The researcher used all available resources to address the research issue. A letter was sent to the Superintendent of Schools in Tacurong City asking that the researcher conduct her study at Tacurong National High School and utilize her official time to collect data.

Letters were sent to the principals of Tacurong National High School, V.F. Griño National High School and to the learners, inviting their participation in the research following ethical considerations. In addition, authorization was obtained from the school principals to utilize the teacher's official time to teach, distribute the questionnaires, and administer the Pilot Test, Reliability Test, Pre-test and Post-test.

The researcher next constructed and created integrated grammar approach on subject verb agreement, kinds of sentence and tenses of the verbs' worksheets. Using the Evaluation and Validation Instrument developed by the SKSU IMDC, it was reviewed and validated. This evaluation and validation instrument were used by administrators, and a few of Filipino English Master Teachers. The researcher administered both a Pre-test and Post-test. The experiment was conducted during the students' vacant time in the afternoon.

The K to 12 Assessment Tool was used to evaluate the academic accomplishments of learners during the second quarter Pre-test and Post-test, as well as their performances using a scale derived from DepEd, D.O. 31, s. 2020. The evaluation team evaluated the survey questionnaire.

There was a collection of forms and data, and the results were examined and interpreted. The waterfall diagram depicted the difficulties of the preceding phase (Figure 3). After reviewing the worksheets on subject verb agreement developed by the researcher, the students took a pre-test and post-test. The researcher/teacher next used integrated grammar approach on subject verb agreement worksheets, kinds of sentences, and tenses of the verbs to the experimental participants and a standard instructional platform to the control participants. Students were then given a post-test to assess the quality of the worksheets. Eventually, the IGS's Final Management was approved.

## Results and Discussion

### *Evaluation of the Experts and Master Teachers in English on the Level of Validity of the Integrated Grammar Approach Lesson Exemplar in terms of Content, Organization, Mechanics, and Overall Package*

Table 1. *Summary of the Level of Validity of the Integrated Grammar Approach Lesson Exemplar in terms of Content, Mechanics, Organization, and Overall Package*

Indicators	Mean	SD	Verbal Description
Content	4.95	0.23	Very High Extent
Organization	4.97	0.17	Very High Extent
Mechanics	4.91	0.29	Very High Extent
Overall Package	4.95	0.22	Very High Extent
Overall	4.95	0.22	Very High Extent

Table 1 provided a comprehensive overview of the validity assessment of the integrated grammar approach lesson exemplar, designed to enhance English grammar skills among Grade 7 MATATAG learners, underwent a rigorous validity assessment. The results, summarized in Table 5, demonstrated that the lesson exemplar achieved a very high level of validity across all four key indicators: content (4.95), organization (4.97), mechanics (4.91), and overall package (4.95). The mean scores for each indicator ranged from 4.91 to 4.97, with standard deviations consistently below 0.30.

This suggested that the lesson exemplar was well-designed and met high standards of quality in terms of its content, structure, presentation, and overall effectiveness based on the evaluation of experts.

Moreover, the high content validity, with a mean score of 4.95, indicated that the lesson exemplar aligned well with the MATATAG curriculum objectives and provided accurate and relevant information (Admiraal et al., 2019; Pingil, 2022). This alignment was important for effective learning and ensured that the materials met the specific needs of MATATAG learners (Aquino, 2024).

Similarly, the lesson exemplar also demonstrated a very high level of mechanics validity, with a mean score of 4.91. This indicated that the materials were well-structured, free from errors, and visually appealing, which were essential for clear communication and engagement (Matsuo & Aihara, 2021; Pingil, 2022).

Furthermore, the lesson exemplar achieved a high level of organization validity, with a mean score of 4.97. This indicated that the materials were logically structured and easy to navigate, contributing to effective learning (Matsuo & Aihara, 2021; Nurmalia & Nuraeni, 2021; Liu, 2022).

Finally, the overall package validity, with a mean score of 4.95, signified that the lesson exemplar was a comprehensive and engaging resource that effectively integrated content, mechanics, and organization (Portana et al., 2021; Matsuo & Aihara, 2021; Pingil, 2022). This comprehensive approach aligned with the MATATAG curriculum's emphasis on 21st-century skills (Aquino, 2024) and ensured that the materials were well-suited to support the diverse needs of learners (Admiraal et al., 2019; Dizon & Sanchez, 2020).

Conclusively, the consistently high validity scores across all indicators suggested that the integrated grammar approach lesson exemplar was a valuable resource for improving English grammar skills among Grade 7 MATATAG learners. Its strong content, mechanics, organization, and overall package contributed to its effectiveness in promoting student learning and engagement.

Table 2. *Level of Grammar Skills in the Pre-test and Post-test of Both Control and Experimental Groups*

Groups	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Control			
Pre-test	17.10	3.88	Beginner (Basic)
Post-test	24.40	3.54	Intermediate (Independent)
Experimental			
Pre-test	18.03	3.54	Beginner (Basic)
Post-test	30.60	3.37	Intermediate (Independent)

Table 2 reports the mean scores and standard deviations of the control and experimental groups' grammar skills in both the pretest and posttest. This data provided a clear picture of how the integrated grammar approach impacted the English grammar proficiency of Grade 7 learners.

The control group, who received traditional instruction, showed a moderate improvement in their grammar skills. Their mean score increased from 17.10 in the pretest to 24.40 in the post-test, placing them at the Basic Level in the pretest and advancing to the Intermediate Level in the post-test. This indicated that while the traditional approach did contribute to some learning, it was less effective in promoting a significant increase in grammar proficiency.

In contrast, the experimental group, who engaged with the integrated grammar approach, demonstrated a much more significant improvement. Their mean score rose from 18.03 in the pretest to 30.60 in the post-test, moving them from the Basic Level to the Advanced Level in the post-test. This significant improvement of their scores in grammar proficiency suggested that the integrated grammar approach was highly effective in enhancing their understanding and application of English grammar rules.

These findings aligned with the research accentuating the effectiveness of integrated grammar instruction in improving language skills (Qasserras, 2023). A study by Alfares (2024) also stressed the benefits of connecting grammar instruction with meaningful contexts, such as literary analysis, as it promoted deeper understanding and application of grammatical concepts. Furthermore, research by Bhatt (2020) suggested that drawing learners' attention to grammatical forms within communicative tasks, as the integrated grammar approach did, could be particularly effective in improving grammar proficiency.

Additionally, when viewed through the lens of the CEFR framework, it indicated that the integrated grammar approach was successful in accelerating the experimental group's language proficiency. The experimental group moved up two levels on the adopted CEFR scale, while the control group only moved up one level. As a result, this difference highlighted the significant advantage of the integrated grammar approach in promoting a deeper understanding of English grammar concepts and their application in the literature and real-world.

Table 3. *Z-test Results of Pretest in Both Control and Experimental Groups*

Groups	N	SD	Mean	z-computed	p-value
Control	40	3.88	17.1	-1.11	0.27
Experimental	40	3.54	18.03		

\*Not significant 0.05

Table 3 presents the results of a z-test comparing the pretest scores of the control and experimental groups. The z-test is a statistical method used to determine if there is a significant difference between the means of two groups (Howell, 2024). The results of the z-test indicated that there was no significant difference between the pre-test scores of the two groups. The p-value, which represented the probability of observing the observed difference in means if there was no real difference between the groups, was 0.27. This p-value was greater than the commonly used significance level of 0.05, indicating that the observed difference in means was not statistically significant.

Most importantly, this z-test finding emphasized that both the control group and the experimental group started with a similar level of English grammar proficiency. This was fundamental for evaluating the effectiveness of the integrated grammar approach. Since both groups started at a similar baseline, any significant differences in their post-test scores could be more confidently attributed to the intervention using the integrated grammar approach lessons.

To conform with the findings, the result aligned with research stressing the importance of pre-testing in evaluating the effectiveness of interventions (Moyo et al., 2022). On the other side, a study by Bukhari (2020) stated the need for examining pre-test data to determine if there were any pre-existing differences between groups, which could influence the results of the intervention. In establishing a similar baseline, the researcher could isolate the impact of the integrated grammar approach on the experimental group's post-test scores.

Table 4. *Z-test Results of Post-test in Both Control and Experimental Groups*

Groups	N	SD	Mean	z-computed	p-value
Control	40	3.54	24.4	-8.02	0.001
Experimental	40	3.37	30.6		

\*Significant at 0.05

Table 4 exhibited the results of a z-test comparing the post-test scores of the control and experimental groups. In this case, the results of the z-test indicated that there was a significant difference between the post-test scores of the two groups. The p-value, which represented the probability of observing the observed difference in means if there was no real difference between the groups, was 0.001. This p-value was less than the commonly used significance level of 0.05, indicating that the observed difference in means was statistically significant. Significantly, this z-test result revealed a significant difference in post-test scores between the experimental

and control groups, thereby strongly implying that the integrated grammar method was absolutely important in the observed improvement.

These results were consistent with studies that demonstrated how well integrated grammar teaching worked to enhance language proficiency (Kumari et al., 2024). In order to promote a deeper comprehension and application of grammatical principles, a research by Hussein et al. (2021) stressed the advantages of tying grammar education to relevant situations, such as literary analysis. Additionally, the integrated grammar method, which highlighted grammatical forms in communicative tasks, had been shown to be particularly successful in enhancing grammar competency (Christensson & Seiberling, 2021). These results were supported by the considerable difference in the experimental group's post-test scores when compared to the control group, which indicated that the integrated grammar approach was a viable method for improving students' English grammar proficiency in Grade 7.

Table 5. *Z-test Results of the Mean Gain Scores Between the Control and Experimental Groups*

Groups	N	SD	Mean	z-computed	p-value
Control	40	3.86	7.30	-5.51	0.00
Experimental	40	4.65	12.58		

\*Significant at 0.05

Table 5 shows the results of a z-test comparing the mean gain scores of the control and experimental groups on post-test. The z-test results indicated that there was a significant difference between the mean gain scores of the two groups. The p-value, which represented the probability of observing the observed difference in means if there was no real difference between the groups, was 0.00. This p-value was also less than the commonly used significance level of 0.05, indicating that the observed difference in means was statistically significant.

Essentially, this finding suggested that the observed difference in mean gain scores was unlikely to have occurred by chance, strongly suggesting that the integrated grammar approach had a significant impact on the experimental group's grammar skills. This result was also consistent with studies that underlined how well integrated grammar teaching worked to enhance language proficiency (Alqahtani, 2022; Richards & Renandya, 2022; Marzuki et al., 2023). As pointed out by Risko (2024) and Ellis (2021), relating grammar teaching to relevant situations, such as literary analysis, was essential for encouraging a deeper comprehension and application of grammatical ideas.

Additionally, the integrated grammar approach supplementary learning activity sheets, which featured grammatical forms in communicative tasks, had been shown to be particularly successful in enhancing grammar competency (Christensson & Seiberling, 2021). These results were supported by the considerable difference in the experimental group's post-test scores when compared to the control group, indicating that the integrated grammar approach in teaching Philippine Literature was a practicable method for improving students' English grammar proficiency in Grade 7.

Conclusively, the researcher found a more confident approach to reading literary works and an apparent increase in their capacity to spot and fix grammar errors in their writing, and more engagement in class discussions. Moreover, the researcher noticed among these students a growing interest in Philippine literature. Given that students could relate grammatical ideas to the specifics of the language employed in Philippine literary texts, the integrated grammar approach proved to make the topic more interesting and relevant.

## Conclusions

This study provided compelling evidence that the integrated grammar approach is a highly effective and relevant tool for enhancing the English grammar skills of Grade 7 MATATAG learners. It demonstrated how integrating grammar instruction within the context of teaching Philippine literature not only improves students' grammar proficiency but also fosters a deeper appreciation of literary texts. By connecting grammar lessons to real-life contexts such as literary analysis, the approach made learning more meaningful, engaging, and student-centered. This instructional method enriches the teaching and learning process, encouraging active participation and deeper comprehension of both language and literature.

The findings also underscored the importance of continuous professional development for educators, particularly in adopting and implementing innovative, student-centered strategies like the integrated grammar approach. Its success suggests that this method not only benefits individual learners but can also contribute to the development of a more literate, culturally aware, and engaged learning community.

In light of these findings, several key actions are recommended to maximize the approach's potential. Teachers are encouraged to adopt validated integrated grammar materials, which have proven to be highly effective. They should also pursue professional development opportunities to deepen their understanding of this approach and enhance their instructional strategies. Incorporating a variety of teaching methods, such as role-playing, group discussions, interactive games, and technology-based tools, can further boost student engagement and accommodate diverse learning needs.

Furthermore, grammar instruction should be made more meaningful by embedding it in relevant contexts like literary analysis. Teachers

are encouraged to integrate Philippine literature into grammar lessons, helping students connect language learning with cultural and literary exploration. Collaboration among teachers and school administrators is also vital in creating a supportive environment that promotes both grammar mastery and a love for literature. Additionally, future researchers are encouraged to explore the long-term effects of the integrated grammar approach across various grade levels and subjects to determine its broader applicability and sustained impact on student achievement and engagement.

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