

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

“Language is a system of symbols through which people communicate. The symbols may be spoken, written, or signed with the hands”.¹ Learning English is not easy for Indonesian learners. One of the obstacles that they generally face is the grammar or the language rules. On the other hand, they have to encounter it because it is one the compulsory lessons in school from the elementary level to the highest one.

Many people think of grammar as a rather boring school subject which has little use in real life. If we study the grammar of our native language, the success of learners in acquiring their second language is influenced by some factors, which is one of them is the grammatical mastery of the target language. As asserted by Geoffrey, Margaret and Robert Hoogenraad:

Grammar is a mechanism for putting words together, but we have said little about sound and meaning. We can think of grammar as being central part of language which relates sound and meaning. The meaning of a message conveyed by language has to be converted into words put together according to grammatical rules, and these words are then conveyed by sound.²

It means that the grammatical aspect becomes one of the essential requirements for people, in this case especially for Indonesian learners, to be able to communicate. The language which is produced may become more accurate and meaningful when they communicate in grammatical sentences. Lack of knowledge especially about construction of sentences, for example; the incorrect use of verbs and tenses is the main deficiency of the students. Most of them find themselves incapable of expressing their thought in English and that is why the leaning of grammar becomes the most difficult subject for

¹Charles W. Kreidler, *Introducing English Semantics*, (New York: British Library, 1998), p. 19.

²Geoffrey leech, et. al., *English Grammar For Today*, (New York: Macmillan Press, 2000), p, 4.

them. This situation requires a change, especially in students' attitude and the teaching learning practice in class.

The researcher's consideration in carrying out this research is based on the view that grammar is an essential component of language, so it is important to find and apply a method to teach it effectively. As stated in verse 24 of Surah Abraham that learning grammar is very important aspect to language acquisition.

أَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ ضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا كَلِمَةً طَيِّبَةً كَشَجَرَةٍ طَيِّبَةٍ أَصْلُهَا ثَابِتٌ وَفَرْعُهَا فِي السَّمَاءِ

“Have you not seen how God sets forth a parable? A goodly word like a goodly tree, whose root is firmly fixed and its branches reach to the heavens, of its Lord. So, Allah sets forth parables for men, in order that they may receive admonition”.³

Actually, this verse can be put in language teaching context which states that learning grammar is important. “A goodly word” can be inferred with producing the language accurately and appropriately. The place of grammar is considered as fundamental factors, parable with the root of the tree, which is firmly fixed in the ground. It means that one should possess the basic knowledge of grammar in order to be able to communicate grammatically.

In Muqaddimati Fi-Tarbiyah, according to Ibrahim Nasir in teaching learning process needs media to explain the material, in order to make students understand it easily. He said:

الوسائل التربوية هي كل ما يستخدم من وسائل حسية بغاية ادراك المعاني بدقة
و سرعة

“Mediums of learning are everything being presented from concrete media and aimed to understand the meaning carefully and precisely”.⁴

³Muhammad Zafrullah Khan, *The Qur'an*, (London: Curzon Press Ltd, 1971), p. 230.

⁴Ibrahim Nasir, *Muqaddimati Fi-Tarbiyah*, (Aman: Ardan, Tth), p. 169.

There are many kinds of teaching media that can be used to convey the lesson. Media for teaching language based on Wilburr Schramm can be classified into, visual media, audio media, audio-visual media and games.⁵

Based on tarwiah explanations that “games facilitate language learning because they help language learning to be more meaningful, more memorable and more accessible”.⁶

Based on my observation in SMPN 01 Mlonggo Jepara, the students are shy or afraid of doing grammatical errors, they only passive in the class because as they know that learning grammar usually is passive in the class, this is contrary when they learn speaking or conversation. Actually, many reasons that make the students of SMPN 01 Mlonggo Jepara feel unmotivated, discouraged easily, bored and difficult to memorize the material, its could be caused of monotonous method that the teacher uses in the teaching learning process. This can cause boredom. The teacher explains the material with classical or conventional method like explain in front of class, asking and answering question. Thus, students are less attention and the worst result is stagnant skill without improvement.

One of the basic problems in teaching foreign language is to prepare students to be able to use the target language. Teaching is not an easy job, but it is a necessary one, and can be very rewarding when we see our student's progress and know that we have helped to make it happen. Teacher should be creative and try some alternative ways, for example matching game can give lots of chance to practice grammar for students of SMPN 01 Mlonggo Jepara, teacher also should try to make students active not only in teaching speaking but also when teaching grammar. There are so many techniques to make students interested in studying and practicing. Teacher should motivate and encourage the students of SMPN 01 Mlonggo Jepara with interesting activities, for example teachers can improve students' ability in grammar by

⁵M. Basyiruddin Usman, *Media Pembelajaran*, (Jakarta: Ciputat Press, 2002), p. 132.

⁶Siti Tarwiah, *Games, Song, and Practical Ideas to Teach Language*, p. 5.

using a matching game because the students can learn and try to active and cooperate with their partners as if they were in the real situation.

Considering the above matter, the researcher is interested in conducting an experiment research on the teaching of grammar in irregular simple past tense using matching game technique to the students of SMPN 01 Mlonggo Jepara. In this research the researcher gives two cards consists of question card and answer card that contain of regular verb (verb 1) and irregular verbs (verb 2), students are required to match the card between regular verb (verb 1) into irregular verbs (verb 2) incorrect form. The students must match the cards based on the question of the opposite group. This technique can help the students to cooperate with their partners. And the writer hopes with the cards can improve student's ability in grammar especially irregular past tense form. From this technique the researcher wants to know the result of teaching grammar using matching game technique in irregular past tense.

B. Reasons for Choosing the Topic

Based on my observasion in SMPN 01 Mlonggo Jepara, the students are shy or afraid of doing grammatical errors, they only passive in the class because as they know that learning grammar usually is passive in the class, this is contrary when they learn speaking or coversation. Actually, many reasons that make the students of SMPN 01 Mlonggo Jepara feel unmotivated, discouraged easily, bored and difficult to memorize the material,its could be caused of monotonnes method that the teacher uses in the teaching learning process. This can cause boredom. The teacher explains the material with classical or conventional method like explain in front of class, asking and answering question. Thus, students are less attention and the worst result is stagnant skill without improvement.

Based on the background of the study above, the problem in this research is to know the effectiveness of using matching game to improve students' understanding on irregular past tense to the students of SMPN 01

Mlonggo Jepara. Because, matching game can built the positive interdependence when students are working together in determining their partner. It can make them more enjoyable and relaxing to learn about the material.

C. Research Questions

The problem can be stated as follows:

How is the effectiveness of using matching game to improve students' understanding on irregular verb of simple past tense at the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 01 Mlonggo Jepara?

D. Objectives of Study

The objectives of study are as follows:

To find out the effectiveness of using matching game to improve students' understanding on irregular verb of simple past tense at the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 01 Mlonggo Jepara.

E. LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The scope of English study is so broad. The research may not be able to reach all the aspects to be studied as a whole. Particularly in English learning context, there are so many components that may become the concern of the study such as the students, the textbook used, the materials, the process of teaching and learning, etc. Thus, the boundary of this study specifies on the teaching irregular verb of simple past tense using matching game is more effective than teaching irregular verb of simple past tense without using game in the way for improving students' mastery of irregular verb of simple past tense made by year V111 students of SMPN 01 Mlonggo Jepara in the academic year 20010/2011.

F. Pedagogical Significance

This study is important for five reasons as follows:

1. For the students
 - a. Using matching game will make students interesting in learning English especially in irregular verb of simple past tense.
 - b. Students can use matching game to make good sentence in their language so they will study harder and can master the grammar well.
2. For the teacher
 - a. Teacher can use the result of this study as a reference when they want to improve their ability in teaching grammar.
 - b. Teacher will get new innovative method in enhancing their teaching method. Their method will definitely affect the teaching process quality. In short, the teachers' method will help their students in achieving the best result.
3. For the school

The result of this study can be used to improve English teaching in teaching and learning process.
4. For the writer

The writer can use this method to improve his skill in mastery grammar especially in irregular verb of simple past tense.
5. For the readers

It hopes can give more information and contributes the knowledge.

G. Definition of Key Terms

1. Matching game

“Matching game is one of methods in cooperative study. Cooperative study is based on the philosophy of homo homini socius, that is the philosophy which emphasizes a human being as a social creature”.⁷ In this case matching game use the cards, the students have to match the question

⁷Anita Lie, *Cooperative Learning: Pembelajaran di Ruang-Ruang Kelas*, (Jakarta: Grasindo, 2008), p. 28.

cards with the answer cards between their partner. The students have to know which one the cards are suitable.

2. Improve

According to *Webster's Dictionary* "improve is to bring into more better or excellent condition".⁸

3. Student

"One who is enrolled for study at a school, college".⁹ In this research student who joins at SMP Negeri 01 Mlonggo Jepara 8th grades.

4. Understanding

"Mental process of one who comprehends, comprehension, personal interpretation".¹⁰

5. Simple past tense

"Simple past tense indicates definite time terminating in the past, whether a time word is given or not".¹¹ Actually simple past tense is a tense that it is used to express an event, action or activity happens, begins and ends in the past.

Based on the definition of key terms above we can conclude that the meaning of the use matching game to improve students' understanding on irregular verb of past tense is a game of cooperative study that use the cards, the students have to know which one are suitable between the question cards with the answer cards, the researcher hopes can make the learners more comprehend in express the past event using this method.

⁸David B. Guralnik, *Webster's New World Dictionary of The American Language*, (New York: Warner Books, 1983), p. 304.

⁹*Ibid.*, p. 593.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 651.

¹¹Marcella Frank, *Modern English: A Practical Reference Guide*, (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1972), p. 73.