

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Research Background

Learning foreign language especially English, is not easy for Indonesian learners. In learning language, the learners must study about the rules of language or grammar that is one of the obstacles generally faced. Brown stated that in learning English, the learners are able to apply language components such as vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation.¹ Unconsciously we use grammar when we are listening, speaking, reading or writing all the time. Grammar is one of the essential components of language. Qur'an also states its importance as stated in the chapter of Abraham verse 24:

أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ ضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا كَلِمَةً طَيِّبَةً كَشَجَرَةً طَيِّبَةً أَصْنَلَهَا
ثَابِتٌ وَفَرْعُهَا فِي السَّمَاءِ²

See you not how Allah sets forth a parable? A good word as a good tree, whose root is firmly fixed and its branches reach to the sky (i.e. very high).³

¹ Brown, H. Douglas. *Teaching by Principles an Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy*. (New York: Pearson Education. 2001). p.232

² Departemen Agama Republik Indonesia. *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya*. (Surabaya: Duta Ilmu, 2009). p.348

³ Al-Hilali, Muhammad Taqi-ud-Din. *The Noble Quran*. at www.noblequran.com/translation/ accessed on November 28th, 2015

The verse above mentions “a good word” that can be inferred by producing the language appropriately. Based on the verse above, grammar is like the root of the tree, it is a fundamental factor in language. Basically, it is a basic component of language which concerns to produce and arrange words into sentences. Therefore, it is a complex system so that in composing a conversation communicatively, it has a role to make understand the second speaker. It means that grammar has rules and forms concretely.

Integration of some grammar parts is needed to arrange words into sentences. They include tenses, noun, pronoun, adjective, verb, adverb, article, gerund, etc. The use of tenses in composing sentences are related to the transformation of verbs based on the time of event. One of the tenses in English is simple present tense used to describe present activities.

Most of students of Junior High School feel difficult in learning grammar especially tenses. There are some reasons why they cannot learn it appropriately. Firstly, their inability in the use of language rules appropriately while arranging sentences. Secondly, their tendency to memorize but they don't have good memorizing toward the patterns of the tense. So, they feel uncomfortable in teaching English and unmotivated to learn it. Finally it can influence the students' achievement.

The above descriptions also happen in some schools in Indonesia, one of them is M.Ts. Raudlatut Tholibin. Based on the observation in this research, students of M.Ts. Raudlatut Tholibin had low competence in grammar especially simple present tense. They found difficulties and make errors in the use of positive, negative and interrogative patterns of the tense. Low participation of students in learning English was also added the weaknesses in learning English process. The reality told that most of them made errors while they arranged sentences of simple present tense. It can be seen as the following statements. 1) Sigit ~~like~~ playing drum. 2) He ~~have~~ black round nose. 3) Maria ~~live~~ in Jakarta. 4) They ~~doesn't~~ bring anything. 5) Tommy and his sister ~~is~~ clever. 6) His brothers ~~is not~~ ugly, but they are handsome.

In this study, the researcher decided to solve the conventional teaching and learning grammar problems as described above. It was needed to make students interested and comfortable in learning grammar especially focused on simple present tense by implementing an attractive learning strategy as a game. The need to integrate game in learning process to create students' interest in learning the material is crucial for not only students of Elementary School but also for students of Junior and Senior High School.

As Vygotsky's argument as stated by Rifa, game has a role on students' cognitive development. It was explained that junior students cannot think abstractly so that the meaning and the object

must be integrated.⁴ Related to the statement, game is an effective way to make students easy in learning English. There were some games that was used in teaching and learning English particularly simple present tense such as twenty questions, scrabble word,etc.

In this research, the researcher used toothpick game in teaching simple present tense. That game was used by English teacher to teach simple present tense rarely. The game used toothpick as a medium of learning. Some people thought that toothpick was an unsequential thing which is commonly used to remove the bits of food between teeth. Conversely, the researcher thought that it could be useful thing in teaching and learning process as a medium. Fiona stated that toothpick game is one of entertaining way to help students to determine the appropriate simple present tense in use.⁵ That was why the researcher proved that it could be a strategy in teaching and learning simple present tense.

Classroom action research was applied by the researcher in this research. It could help teacher to fix teaching learning quality by using attractive and creative learning strategy that made students enjoyed to learn English. Helping students achieve the minimum criterion of passing score, that is sure to change the

⁴ Rifa, Iva. *Koleksi Games Edukatif di Dalam dan di Luar Sekolah*. (Jogjakarta: FlashBooks, 2012). p.12

⁵E-book: Fiona, Coplan.et.al. *Teaching English Young Learners Activity Book*. (UK: British Council, 2012).p.86

teaching and learning strategy. The strategy that implemented to make students' interesting in learning English was toothpick game. It was implemented in teaching and learning simple present tense on seventh students of M.Ts. Raudlatut Tholibin. It was one way to motivate them for improving their mastery on the tense and increasing their achievement actually.

In this study, toothpick game involved students to cooperate with others. They were encouraged to play and work together in groups to reach the goals of learning. That is why it was concluded as a kind of cooperative learning. Beside that, they were demanded to develop their activeness and creativeness in learning process. So that toothpick game invited them to get the best interaction during the lesson.

In conclusion, the researcher decided to write a report of paper entitled, "Improving Students' Mastery on Simple Present Tense through Toothpick Game (A Classroom Action Research on Seventh Grade of M.Ts. Raudlatut Tholibin in Academic Year of 2015/2016)".

B. The Reasons for Choosing the Topic

The researcher has chosen the topic of improving students' mastery on simple present tense through toothpick game as the following reasons.

1. Grammar is a crucial component in English that must be learnt well by students who learn English.
2. Students' competence and interesting in English especially grammar was low because on their mindset English is difficult subject to be learnt. Making students easy to learn it, teacher had to find the appropriate strategy to teach it effectively.
3. Seventh grade of Junior High School is a crucial zone to have time to fun. It was precisely to apply game in their learning process to deliver knowledge about grammar especially on simple present tense.
4. Toothpick game is one of games to teach simple present tense. It is an attractive way as the learning strategy.

C. Research Questions

The following problems will be discussed in this study.

1. What does the implementation of toothpick game in teaching simple present tense for students of seventh grade at M.Ts. Raudlatut Tholibin in the academic year of 2015/2016?
2. What can toothpick game improveth the students' mastery on simple present tense?

D. Objectives of the Research

This study has some goals as the following.

1. To describe the implementation of toothpick game in teaching simple present tense for students of seventh grade at M.Ts. Raudlatut Tholibin in the academic year Of 2015/2016.
2. To find out the improvement of the students' mastery on simple present tense after being taught by toothpick game.

E. Pedagogical Significances

After conducting the research, the researcher expects the result can be useful for the following parties.

1. Theoretically

The result of this research can contribute the development of knowledge for improving students' mastery on simple present tense by using toothpick game as a strategy in teaching and learning grammar.

2. Practically

After being finished this research, it is hoped can contribute some benefits for students, teachers, school, readers, and researcher.

a) The students

This research is expected to motivate them to get easy learning on simple present tense. Beside that, the students

get the clearer comprehension about simple present tense and make them enjoy in learning English.

b) The teacher

It is hoped to help the teacher to improve their attractive teaching strategy of grammar. As the result, the students can have better comprehension that influence into their achievement at last.

c) The readers

It helps them to apply new strategy in teaching grammar especially simple present tense by using toothpick game. Moreover it can help the other researcher to conduct the similar study or the other study in teaching grammar.

d) The school

By conducting this research, it can give positive influence for the future in teaching and learning process, especially in teaching grammar of simple present tense.

e) Theresearcher

It helps the researcher to get new experience in improving the writer's writing skill and knowledge about teaching and learning grammar.