

# USING “THE ADD A WORD” GAME IN TEACHING GRAMMAR TO JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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## Abstrak

Artikel ini ditulis untuk menjelaskan bagaimana cara menerapkan pengajaran tata bahasa kepada siswa sekolah menengah pertama dengan permainan “The Add a Word”. Kemampuan siswa menengah pertama dalam memahami tata bahasa Inggris masih sangat kurang. Ini disebabkan karena mereka menganggap belajar tata bahasa itu sulit dan membosankan. Untuk itu guru harus dapat menggunakan cara yang tepat agar siswa nyaman dalam belajar tata bahasa. Salah satu cara yang cocok adalah dengan menggunakan “The Add a Word” game. Pada permainan ini siswa disuruh membuat kalimat, tapi setiap siswa hanya mengucapkan satu kata saja. Guru memberikan satu topik, lalu siswa pertama memulai dengan satu kata, siswa seterusnya melanjutkan dengan satu kata juga untuk melanjutkannya.

*Keywords: grammar, teaching grammar, JHS students, game*

## A. Introduction

Learning to master a language is a kind of learning process in which people use the language to communicate with others in a social life. English as an international language should be master for a world-wide communication and to function well in an international community. Because of that, Indonesians students are required to learn English in order to compete with the students from others countries in this globalizations era.

One of the most important language components is grammar. By using grammar, a language can be used communicatively; it tells us how to construct a sentence and use it in actual of the language. Grammar is also the way of how language components are arranged when we speak, listen, write, and read. Consequently, grammar is needed to support all of the four skills because it is the foundation of the language.

It is difficult to teach and learn grammar because the English grammar has many kinds of rules and patterns (Parrot, 2001). Those rules and patterns should be used correctly to produce meaningful sentence. Through learning grammar, students would be able to master the rules of how English sentences were formed.

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Note:

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They would be able to arrange and combine words into a good order to form phrases, clauses, and sentences.

In English sentences, word order is important. In constructing well-formed grammatical sentences, the word order in sentences should be correct. If the word order of a sentence is changed, the meaning may change too. A complete sentence requires, minimally, a subject and a predicate or a noun and verb.

Occasionally, Based on the writer's experience in teaching practice at SMP 1 Canduang there are several problems occurred in the process of teaching learning grammar. Those problems can be classified in to two sides; the students' side, and the teachers' side. From students' side, the students tend to be pattern-oriented in learning tense. They try to memorize the pattern instead of to understand the use and characteristics of the tenses.

From the teacher side, there are also some problems in teaching grammar. First, the technique that is used by the teacher is not motivated and interesting for the students. Basically, classroom technique plays importance role in teaching grammar. In the classroom practice, the teacher should provide the students with motivated and interesting techniques. If there is no such motivated and interesting technique in language classroom, there will be no attention; such condition will lead to the failure of teaching learning process. Secondly, most of the teachers in junior high school are text book-oriented in teaching grammar. This old technique is boring for the students. So, the teacher should find an appropriate technique to teach English in order to make learning more fun and can activate the students to learn.

Grammar is one of the main points to succeed in learning English and also one of the keys in mastering the English skills. Ur (1988:4) states that "grammar may be roughly defined as the way a language manipulates and combines words (or bits of words). Similarly, Brown (1994) believes that grammar is a system of rules governing the conventional arrangement and relationship of words in a sentence. It can be concluded that grammar tell us how to construct a sentence.

Meanwhile Gerot & Wignell (1994:2) asserts that grammar is a theory of language about how the words are composed and work. Collerson (1994) defines grammar as the way how the language is constructed when we speak, listen, write, and read. And in her other book, Ur (1966:75) confirms that grammar is sometimes defined as the way words are put together to make correct sentences. Furthermore, Klammar (2000) adds that grammar is he rules that governs the grouping of the words of the language into meaningful patterns. It means that if someone understands grammar he / she will be able to find the meaning of the words directly.

Purpura (2004) explains that the grammar of a language is the description of the way in which words can change their forms and can be combined into sentences in that language. It means that, grammar is a kind of rule that describe how the sentences of the language are formed. He thinks that in learning grammar of a language, we will learn how to combine words into good sentences. It adds grammatical sentences are those which speakers of the language accept as well-formed; ungrammatical sentences are those which they cannot accept. It means that there grammar decides which sentences is permissible to use and which one is

not permissible to reflect the meaning of the sentences that related to main purpose of language.

Teaching grammar states explicitly the rules of language, list the words and their pronunciations, and aid in learning a new language or dialect. Therefore, the teacher should teach grammar entirely, because grammar is essential parts of language.

In order to make the process of teaching and learning grammar more effective and efficient, according to *Permendiknas* No. 41/ 2007, there is a standards process that might be applied in the process of teaching and learning. It has some way that teacher may apply in teaching grammar by using add a word games.

From the opinions above we can say that grammar is the foundation of the language. Grammar is one of important features that should be learnt by the students, so we cannot learn a language without grammar. Also teaching grammar in school should be done systematically.

Arif Saricoban and Esen Metin, authors of "Songs, Verse and Games for Teaching Grammar" explain how and why games work for teaching grammar in an ESL classroom. They say, "Games and problem-solving activities, which are task-based and have a purpose beyond the production of correct speech, are the examples of the most preferable communicative activities." They go on to explain that grammar games help students not only gain knowledge but be able to apply and use that learning.

Additionally, games have the advantage of allowing the students to "practice and internalize vocabulary, grammar and structures extensively." They can do this because students are often more motivated to play games than they are to do desk work. Avedon (1971) further argues that "games spur motivation and students get very absorbed in the competitive aspects of the games; moreover, they try harder at games than in other courses". In other words, games stimulate students' interest in classroom activities and as a result, students become motivated and willing to learn.

Based on the background above, the writer would like to propose an activity that can make junior high school students be interested in learning grammar by using The Add a Word Game.

One of the appropriate techniques that can be used by the teacher in teaching grammar is a game. Through the game junior high school students can enjoy learning as they love to play. By using a game provide enjoyment and relaxation. One of an appropriate game that can make the junior high school students enjoy learning grammar is The Add a Word Game.

The purpose of this paper is to give a description of implementation of The Add a Word game in teaching grammar to junior high school students. This game is expected to be one of a new way in teaching grammar which is effective and fun to students.

## **B. Discussion**

The Add a Word Game is a game that can be applied to make students interest in learning grammar. Here the writer chooses the descriptive text that uses

simple present tense for first grade of junior high school students. The teacher can use this to make students in junior high school enjoy in learning. There are some stages that are used in applying The Add a Word Game as mentioned on the following sub topic.

### **1. Preparation**

In the preparation stage, the teacher prepares everything related to the game as mentioned below:

- The teacher makes lesson plan which include the activity and step in applying “The Add a Word” game.
- The teacher prepares projector, laptop or computer and speaker in the classroom.
- The teacher prepares recorder to record what word students say in this game.
- The teacher prepares pictures related to the topic, and a funny video.
- The teacher gives some questions about the topic to activate students’ background knowledge so that they can understand the topic will be given.
- The teacher has to understand the game so that it can be served to students.

### **2. Teaching Procedure**

Below is one of model of applying The Add a Word Game in teaching grammar. The material chosen is descriptive text that uses simple present tense. The procedure of teaching consists of three stages. They are pre- teaching, whilst-teaching, and post teaching stages.

#### **a. Pre Teaching**

The beginning of the teaching process is called pre-teaching stage. It’s usually about five to ten minutes. The teacher starts the lesson in the classroom. The activity involved in this stage are praying, greeting, and checking student’s attendant list. Then, it is continued to check student’s readiness for the lesson. Teacher makes sure that the board is clean, the classroom is clean, no garbage on the floor, students is on their seats, and the sitting arrangement is steady.

Teacher may also do apperception and motivation in this stage. Apperception means the activity which emphasizes to recall what students have learned in the previous meeting. Also, teacher motivates students to follow the upcoming lesson, do brainstorm for the next lesson.

Here the teacher chooses descriptive text that uses simple present tense. The teacher suggests the topic about their house. Teacher asks how look likes the students’ house, for example: how many rooms do you have. May be there are several different answer from the students. The teacher points one student and asks the answer.

#### **b. Whilst Teaching**

In this stage, the process of the learning is aimed to reach Basic Competence which is done interactively, joyfully, challengingly, and motivationally. Whilst teaching activity is the main activity in which the lesson begins to be introduced, delivered and practiced during the class. This may be done for about 70 minutes. This stage is divided into three parts; exploration, elaboration and confirmation:

Exploration; the teacher assesses students' background knowledge of a topic. For the first, the teacher shows the picture. The picture is about describing something, here the teacher chooses to describe house. The purpose of the picture is only as opening and introduction before coming to the core lesson.

Elaboration is performed as playing The Add a Word game. Here, teacher explains about the game. The teacher may suggest one topic to get things started. The topic is about house; it is related to the video or picture above; describing house. The teacher asks one student to say one word as the beginning of sentence. As a beginning of the sentence, the first student may say one of the all subjects, for example “I”. Everybody just says one word not more.

Then, a second student must say a word which continues the sentence. The second student should pay attention, because if they did not hear the word before, so they cannot continue the sentence. They should think the next appropriate word to continue sentence. They should remember the pattern or the word order of simple present tense. So, the second student should continue by saying one word. A third student, so must continue by saying one word too. In this game, the students continue the sentence until someone says a word that does not fit syntax grammatically. They should stop the sentence there. At the end of the game teacher and students discuss the error that stopped the sentence. If the sentence comes to a logical end without error, the next student may say "period" and begin a new sentence with a new word. After students make one sentence then the teacher write the complete sentence on the white board.

Here is the illustration:

Example 1:

- ❖ Teacher : The topic is “Describing Your House”
  - ❖ First student : “I...”
  - ❖ Second student : “...live...”
  - ❖ Third student : “... in...”
  - ❖ Fourth student : “... a...”
  - ❖ Fifth student : “...big...”
  - ❖ Sixth student : “...house...”
- ➔ Complete sentence: I live in a big house.

The first sentence is identification. This sentence identifies a house. It is a big house.

Confirmation is the last part in whilst-teaching stage. Here teacher check students' understanding by asking some questions about simple present tense.

### c. Post Teaching

In the last section of the meeting, the teacher and students conclude the lesson. Teacher re-emphasizes again lesson they just learned. Teacher may end the class by leading the students to watch a funny video or sing a song together to refresh them after studying. Then pray together and say good bye.

In conclusion, “The Add a Word” game is played in whilst teaching. This will make the students become spirit and enthusiastic in learning grammar and the class will be more fun and lively. So, the junior high school students do not easily get bored and can enjoy learning process as one of their characteristics that they

difficult to be engaged in serious learning and they need something that can attract their interest. It means that this game is the solution.

### **3. The Advantages of Using The Add a Word Game in Teaching Grammar**

Using The Add a Word game in teaching grammar to junior high school students gives many advantages for both the teacher and especially for the students. The advantages are:

1. A game helps teachers create particular context where language is most meaningful and useful. This makes the students want to communicate with others so they can get their points across during the game.
2. It is increase students' motivation. This can be seen from students' attention and participation. As they play the game together, they are trying to think what the next work to continue the sentence. If they have no attention to find the word, they will lose. Then, it can motivate students to learn more and more.
3. It will transform a boring class into a challenging class. Also, it will realize student's boredom. In a class in which grammar is taught traditionally, by providing a word and the translation written on the board for instance, students find their boredom easily. In contrast to a class in which grammar is taught by games, that class is far from boredom. The students have a challenge in learning grammar by game.
4. It is reduce students' stress. Naturally, it is easier to the students if they learn without getting stress. Many students are getting stress while learning. They have to face words they do not know the meaning, spelling, and pronunciation. These make the stress level in the class is higher. If they stress, they will lose attention, motivation, and comfortable feeling, so, game which naturally are for fun, can be applied in the class. "The Add a Word" game brings enjoy, fun, relax situation. Students who are free from worry and stress, they can learn easily.
5. Games are student-centered in that students are active in playing the games, and games can often be organized such that students have the leading roles, with teachers as facilitators.

### **C. Conclusion and Suggestion**

Based on previous discussion, it can be concluded that teaching grammar to junior high students is not an easy thing. The characteristics of the students have where they easily get bored in learning and they think learn grammar is difficult, it needs appropriate technique to teach grammar to them which is fun and interesting. "The Add a Word game" is appropriate one in teaching grammar to junior high school students.

In pre-teaching stage, teachers do some activities: praying, greeting, and checking student's attendant list, continued to check student's readiness for the lesson. Teacher may also do apperception and motivation in this stage. Apperception means the activity which emphasizes to recall what students have learned in the previous meeting. Also, teacher motivates students to follow the upcoming lesson, do brainstorm for the next lesson.

In whilst-teaching stage, there are some parts here: exploration, elaboration, and confirmation. First in exploration, teacher assesses students'

background knowledge of a topic. Teacher shows a video about describing house and asks students about the video. Then teacher explain about the simple present tense.

Second in elaboration, this part is playing the game, teacher explains about the game. First student just say one word, and next students also say one word to continue the sentence. After students make one sentence, teacher writes on the white board. . In this game, the students continue the sentence until someone says a word that does not fit syntax grammatically. They should stop the sentence there. At the end of the game teacher and students discuss the error that stopped the sentence. If the sentence comes to a logical end without error, the next student may say "period" and begin a new sentence with a new word. In confirmation, teacher checks students’ understanding by asking some question about simple present tense. Post-teaching stage, teacher and students conclude the lesson. Teacher may also give a funny video.

“The Add a Word” game has several advantages. Besides this game is an easy way, it increase students’ motivation, will transform a boring class into a challenging class, it reduces students’ stress, it makes students interesting in learning grammar.

Through this paper the writer would like to give some suggestions for the teachers related in teaching grammar for junior high school students. Thus, “The Add a Word” game can be use to teach grammar. The writer gives some suggestions and it may be useful for them.

It is recommended to the teacher using appropriate technique in teaching grammar than the traditional one (the teacher only teaches the students by English textbook and later ask students to answer those questions, which relate with the topic that is being taught) because today’s education demands the teachers to be attractive and creative in the learning process. In addition, the teachers should encourage themselves to create new and creative ways of teaching one of is by using game, including “The Add a Word” game. So, the students more interested in learning grammar. “The Add a Word” game not only can be implemented in junior high school students’ level but also in senior high school students’ level. It depends on how the teacher applies.

**Note:** This article is created based on writer’s paper with advisor Don Narius.

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