

The Effect of Game on the Students' Tense Achievement

Julien Arief Wicaksono¹, Gullit Tornado Taufan², Degita Danur
Suharsono³

^{1,2,3} Politeknik Negeri Jember, Jember, Indonesia

Email: Julien_arief@polije.ac.id

Abstract

This research was conducted to investigate the effect of using game on the seventh-grade students' tense achievement at SMPN 2 Balung-Jember. The primary data of this research were collected from the students' scores of tense test. The primary data were collected from the post-test to compare the two different groups after treatment and analyzed the result by using independent sample T-Test (SPSS). Based on the calculation, the result of this research showed that there was a significant effect of using game on the seventh-grade students' tense achievement. It was proved by the value of significant column of t-test table by using SPSS software, and the result was 0.045 which was lower than 0.05 (significant level of 5%). The research results proved that there was a significant effect of using game on the seventh-year students' tense achievement at SMPN 2 Balung-Jember. Therefore, it is recommended for the English teacher to use game as an alternative technique in teaching tenses.

Keyword: Game, Teaching Tense, Students' Tense Achievement

A. Introduction

English has become the most important language since English has been considered as an international language and used by most people in this planet. In Indonesia, English is used as a foreign language that should be mastered by Indonesian people, especially for young generation to face global era in the future, where English will be used as a means of communication with other people from other countries. Because of this reason, English is taught nationally to the students at Junior High School, Senior High School, and even in the University level.

There are four skills in English namely, speaking, listening, writing, and reading. In teaching English, the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) should be mastered by the students. In this case, those four skills cannot be separated from one another. Then, in order to master the four language skills, the mastery of the language components (vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar) is needed.

Grammar is one of the language components which is very important in learning English because by mastering grammar, the students are not only able to produce correct sentences, but they are also able to communicate effectively. Besides, as one of the major components in learning English, grammar should

be learnt and acquired by the students in order to be able to avoid making mistakes that can cause misunderstanding between the speaker and the hearer. In line with this, Crystal (2004) says grammar is the structural foundation of our ability to express ourselves. Moreover, he says the more people are aware of how it works, the more people can monitor the meaning and the effectiveness of the way they and the others use language. It means that by learning grammar, the students will be able to make English sentences more effectively because the learners are able to exploit the richness of expression available in English and use English with limitless linguistic creativity.

In fact, there are still many students facing a lot of difficulties in learning English. One of them is to understand and apply English grammar, especially in learning tenses. It is in line with Nababan's statement (1986:4) that one of the problems in learning English for the students is the use of tenses. It happens because English grammar is different from Indonesian grammar. The students tend to get confused and have difficulty in learning tenses. For instance, the English grammar has a particular verb (form) used for a certain time signal according to the time at which the action takes place in the statement, which is not found in the Indonesian grammar. Therefore, the students get difficulty to memorize the rule of the English tenses and the form of the verbs. As a result, they get bad scores on the tense test.

Based on the preliminary study which was done with the seventh grade English teacher at SMPN 2 Balung-Jember, it was found that the students of SMPN 2 Balung had less motivation in learning grammar, especially in learning tenses. It could be seen from the students' interaction while they were responding the teacher's explanation and questions. Besides, in the teaching learning process, the students almost got no chance to collaborate or to share their knowledge to each other, because most of the time the teacher explained or asked questions only or assigned the students doing tasks on the textbooks or students work sheet (LKS). The teacher only focused on the use of textbook materials without trying to involve the students in the teaching learning process. As a result, the students tended to get bored and lost their interest in learning tenses.

Concerning with the students' difficulty in mastering tense, the researcher tried to find an interesting way for teaching tense. Teaching tense could be done through tutorial (both dialogue and monologue) by using media such as pictures, charts, cards, etc., or by using several techniques such as game, question and answer, drilling, etc. Then, the researcher decided to use game as a technique to teach tense. Nowadays, game is often used in the classroom, not only in English class but also in other subjects, as a technique to conduct the teaching and learning process. By using games, the teaching learning process will be much more enjoyable, and the students will also experience the dynamic use of the language. The atmosphere of relaxation, happiness and fun are concerned primarily with the psychological aspect of the learners. If they enjoy the process of the language learning, they will learn English easily. The learners' emotions are finally resulting in expressing their ideas (Lewis, 1999).

The use of game in teaching and learning process has been widely known. Many teachers use game to make attractive atmosphere and to avoid the

boredom situation in the classroom. Ersoz (2000) states that games are highly motivating because they are amusing, challenging and using meaningful and useful language in real contexts. Besides, Ersoz (2000) also points out that games can be used to practice all language skills and many types of communication. According to Wright et al. (1996:1), games are the best ways to make the students interested in learning English. From the experts' statements above, it can be inferred that games are the best ways in language learning and at the same time make students relax without ignoring their activities in language learning.

Students' motivation and interest are the keys to reach the goal of teaching learning and they (students' motivation and interest) can be improved by using games in teaching learning. As stated by Wright et al. (1996:1), games help and encourage many learners to sustain their interest and work. In playing games, competition is very important because it can stimulate and encourage students to participate in the activity, since naturally, they want to beat the other teams. It is in line with Hansen's statement (1994) as cited by Uberman (1998) that games are highly motivating and entertaining, and they can give shy students opportunity to express their opinions and feelings. It means that students who are not brave enough in expressing some ideas or feelings will be interested in participating in language teaching because they feel that they are just playing games rather than learning language.

Carrier (1985:6) summarized the advantages of using games as follows:

1. Games add variety to range of learning situations.
2. Games can maintain motivation.
3. Games can refresh learners during formal learning.
4. Games can encourage an interest of those students whose feel intimidated by formal classroom situations.
5. Games can make a teacher-student distance less marginal.
6. Games give an opportunity for student-student communication and can reduce more usual student-teacher communication.
7. Games can act as a testing mechanism, in the sense that they will expose areas of weakness.

Snakes and Ladders game has been widely known. Snakes and ladders game is categorized as a board game. According to Boakes (2010), Snakes and Ladders (also known as Moksha Patamu or Leela) was invented in India as a game based on morality called Vaikuntapaali or Paramapada Sopanam (the ladder to salvation). Usually, it is played on a ten-by-ten squares board, numbered from one to 100, by two or more players. Colored buttons/tokens as playing pieces and dice are other important things.

The Snakes and Ladders game used in this research is slightly different from the common snakes and ladders game. The differences are on the board, the problems cards provided, and the rules of the game. There were two different boards that were used by this research. There were a six by four squares board and a five by seven squares board. The researcher also provided questions/problems about the Simple Present Tense and Present Continuous Tense which must be answered correctly before the players roll the dice. It means the players cannot roll the dice if they cannot answer the questions/problems

correctly. The winner is the first player who has reached the salvation, the last square.

The following pictures are the boards of Snakes and Ladders Game which were used in the research.

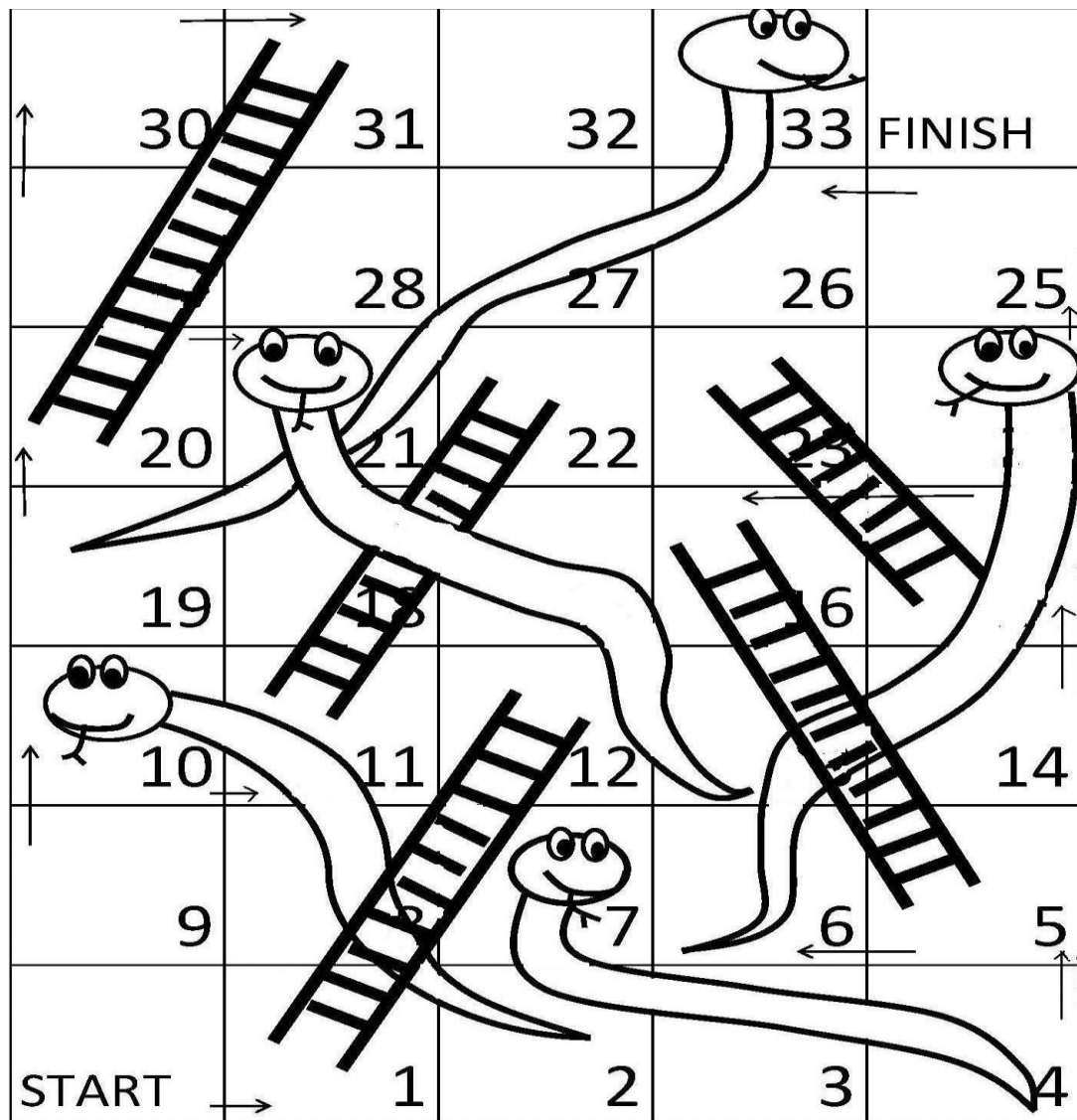


Fig. 001. Snake and Ladder Board Type 1

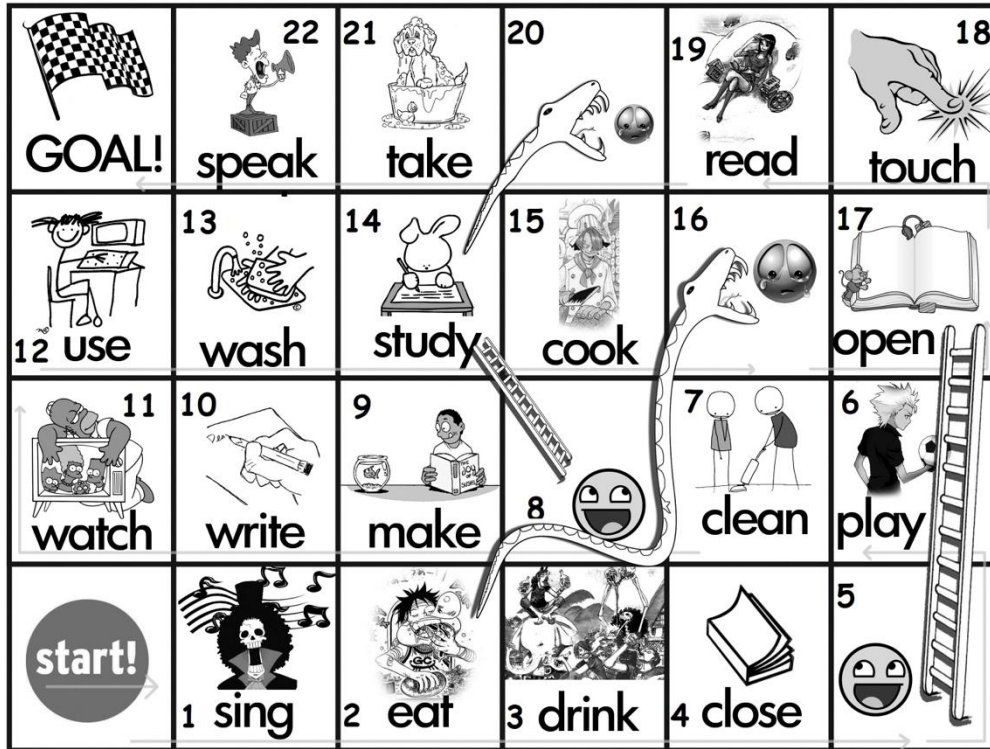


Fig. 002. Snake and Ladder Board Type 2

Below are some examples of the problem cards.

1. Putting the correct form of the verbs in the brackets.

<p>He is _____ breakfast. (eat)</p>	<p>The students are _____ English. (study)</p>
<p>The lesson usually _____ at 7:00 a.m. (start)</p>	<p>I _____ at 9 o'clock at night. (sleep)</p>

Fig. 003. Problem Cards Type 1

2. Choosing the correct form of the verbs provide

<p>The students are _____ English now.</p> <p>a. learn c. learning b. learns d. learned</p>	<p>Andi is _____ football at the playground.</p> <p>a. play c. plays b. playing d. played</p>
<p>I reading a novel.</p> <p>a. do not like c. am not like b. does not like d. are not like</p>	<p>Where do you?</p> <p>a. lives c. lived b. living d. live</p>

Fig. 004. Problem Cards Type 2

B. Research Method

In this research, the researcher used Tense Game in teaching tenses since it had never been used by the teacher at SMPN 2 Balung-Jember. The Tense Game chosen was a snakes and ladders game that was intentionally created to help the teacher to teach tense to the students. The original Snake and Ladder Game could be downloaded in the internet (<http://www.craftscope.com/snakes-and-ladders-game/> and <http://supershy.wordpress.com/alt-materials/teaching-stuff/>). There were many kinds of Tense Games on the internet, but only the type of board game was used since it was easy to modify and practicable to teach tenses, especially the Simple Present Tense and the Present Continuous Tense, in a big class such as in SMPN 2 Balung - Jember.

1. Research Design

The design used in this research was the experimental research design. As stated by Ary et al. (2010:271), the experimental research design is established to test a hypothesis of an experiment. This design was chosen because the researcher wanted to know whether the Snake and Ladder Game had a significant effect on the seventh-grade students' tense achievement at SMPN 2 Balung-Jember. A Quasi-Experimental Design was used in this research. Gibbons et al. (1997) explain that a quasi-experimental design is commonly employed in the evaluation of educational programs when random assignment is not possible or practical.

2. The Research Respondent Determination Method

Research was conducted at SMPN 2 Balung-Jember. Purposive method was used to determine this area. The population of this research was all of the seventh-grade students of SMPN 2 Balung-Jember which consisted of 211 students in 6 classes with 34-37 students every class.

To determine the respondents of the research, the researcher used a homogeneity test, a tense test covering simple present tense and present continuous tense that was given to the whole seventh grade students of SMPN 2 Balung-Jember. Then, the results of the homogeneity test were analyzed by

using the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). Since the results showed that the population was not homogenous (heterogeneous), the two classes which had the closest mean scores were chosen as the experimental class and the control class.

3. The procedures of the research

In brief, the procedures of the research are as follows:

- a. Administering the homogeneity test (tense test, covering simple present tense and present continuous tense) to all the seventh-grade students at SMPN 2 Balung Jember to know the homogeneity of the population.
- b. Analyzing the scores of the homogeneity test by using ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) formula. Determining the two classes to be the experimental class and the control class by choosing the two homogeneous classes. Because the result was not homogenous, the two classes which had the closest mean scores was chosen as the experimental class and the control class.
- c. Giving treatments to the experimental class that was taught tenses by using the Snake and Ladder Game. Then, the control class was taught tenses by using only lecturing technique.
- d. Administering a try out to establish validity, reliability and index difficulty of the teacher-made tense test and analyzing the result. The try out was administered to the class that did not belong to the respondents and had almost the same average mean score with the respondents.
- e. Administering the tense test (posttest), covering simple present tense and present continuous tense as the posttest to the experimental class and the control class after giving the treatments.
- f. Applying the independent sample t-test of 95% confidence interval or 5% significance level by using SPSS to find out the mean difference of both groups. Then, they were compared to know whether or not Snake and Ladder Game had a significant effect on the seventh-year students' tense achievement at SMPN 2 Balung Jember.
- g. Finding the Degree of Relative Effectiveness (DRE) since it was found significant.
- h. Drawing a conclusion from the result of the analysis to answer the research problem.

4. The Description of the Experimental Treatment

The experimental group received the treatment that it was taught tenses by using Snake and Ladder Game, while the control group was taught tenses by using lecturing technique without Snake and Ladder Game. The teaching learning process was conducted in two meetings. The first meeting and the second meeting were teaching simple present tense and present continuous tense. The materials for both the experimental group and the control group were the same except the activities in teaching tenses.

While playing the game in the experimental class, the researcher faced a problem dealing with the number of the students, because there were 9 groups to be monitored. To overcome this problem, the researcher was helped

C. Result and Discussion

The data analyzed in this research was obtained from the students' tense scores of tense test as the post test. The tense test was applied to get data about the students' tense achievement after being given the treatment. The number of the test items was 40 in the form of multiple choice consisting of 20 items of Simple Present Tense and 20 items of Present Continuous Tense. The posttest (tense test) was administered to both of the experimental group and the control group on February 29th 2012 after they had been given the treatment. The post test results were analyzed statistically by using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) especially with independent sample t-test formula to know whether the mean difference between the experimental group and the control group was significant or not. Then, it was consulted to the t-table significance level of 5% to test the hypothesis. The output of the posttest analyzing by using independent t-test of SPSS can be seen in table below:

Group Statistics					
	Class	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
score	experimental	35	67.6429	13.77261	2.32800
	Control	34	61.7647	9.74154	1.67066

Table 0001. Group statistics

From the table above, the number of test takers of the experimental class was 35 students, and the control class was 34 students. The mean score of tense test of the experimental class was 67.64 with the standard deviation 13.77. Then, the mean score of tense test of the control class was 61.76 with the standard deviation 9.74.

Independent Samples Test								
Levene's Test for Equality of Variances			t-test for Equality of Means					
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference

				tailed)		Difference	Lower	Upper			
score	Equal	7.5	.00	2.0	67	.045	5.87815	2.87950	.130	11.625	
	variances	36	8	41					65	65	
assumed											
score	Equal			2.0	61.2	.045	5.87815	2.86543	.148	11.607	
	variances			51	90				92	38	
not assumed											

Table 0002. Independent Samples Test

From the table above, the value of significant column of Lavene's test was 0.008 and it was lower than 0.05. Consequently, the row that must be read was the second row of t-test column. In t-test column, the significant value (2 tailed) was 0.045 and it was less than 0.05. It means that there was a statistically significant difference between the experimental and the control groups.

The result of data analysis in this research proved that the use of the Snake and Ladder Game as a technique had a significant effect on the students' tense achievement at SMPN 2 Balung-Jember. This could be seen from the value of significance (2-tailed) that was less than 0.05 (confidence interval 95%) that was 0.045. It indicated that the result of t-test analysis was significant. From the scores of the post test, it could be seen that the experimental group who was taught tenses by using Snake and Ladder Game got better scores compared to the control group who was taught tenses by using lecturing technique only.

Based on the results of observation done during the treatments given to the experimental group, it was seen that the students were interested in learning tenses and they were more enthusiastic in the teaching learning process. The students' motivation in the class could be seen from their involvement in discussing the material and the exercises during the teaching learning process. The students were enthusiastic in playing the Snake and Ladder Game. Moreover, learning English's tenses through the Snake and Ladder Game provided a non-threatening atmosphere for the students since the Snake and Ladder Game was fun and interesting. The students learned tenses in amusing classroom environment and this situation provided the students practices of using the language in playing the tense game. In other words, the students could use the tenses in the context of the game.

The research finding was in line with the experts' opinions. Ersoz (2000:1) says that language games allow the use of meaningful and useful language which is used in the real context and are able to provide a chance for pupils to use the language that they have learned. Further, Prasad (in Chen, 2003) states that games introduce an element of competition into language-building

activities that provide valuable motivation to a purposeful use of language. Then, according to Wright et al. (1996:1), games can help and encourage many learners to sustain their interest, work, and effort of learning. In line with this idea, Kim (no year) also confirms that all language learners enjoy an element of fun and inventiveness, and language games have long been part and parcel of second or foreign language teaching and learning. Regarding some opinions above, it was clear that the students were able to learn English especially tenses by using games.

In the control group, based on the result of the observation done by the researcher during the teaching learning process by using lecturing technique, the students could be considered as inactive students, only active students who participated well in the group discussion. Although they worked in groups, their individualism in their understanding about the material was also showed when they did the exercises. The students could not understand the material as well as the experimental class.

The results of the previous research findings also confirmed that the use of game had a significant effect on the students' tense achievement. For examples, Puspitarini (2010), Mahajaya (2005), and Fitriyah (2001), who conducted the experimental researches, found that the use of game had a significant effect on the students' tense achievement.

From the above discussion, it could be concluded that the result of this research was not different from that of the previous research in helping the students to learn the English tenses effectively by using the Snake and Ladder Game. In other words, the research showed that the application of games in teaching tenses affected the students' tense achievement. The result of the data analysis proved that there was a significant effect of using the Snake and Ladder Game on the students' tense achievement at SMPN 2 Balung-Jember.

D. Conclusion

The result of the data analysis showed that the statistical value of the significant column was lower than 0.05 (0.045). It could be concluded that the use of the Snake and Ladder Game had a significant effect on the seventh-year students' tense achievement at SMPN 2 Balung - Jember. It was shown by the result of the data analysis of the statistical computation value of the t-test which was higher than that of the t-table. This means that the students who were taught Simple Present Tense and Present Continuous Tense by using the Snake and Ladder Game on the experimental group had better achievement than the students who were taught Simple Present Tense and Present Continuous Tense by using the lecturing technique in the control group.

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