CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Research

Grammar is language element which has an important role in mastering four language skills, namely: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Those four language skills are the fundamental of learning language because language learners can be called to be successful if they are able to master those four skills and mastering grammar is important as the main bridge of them. Reaching the success of standard competence and basic competence should be supported by students’ understanding in language substance. Learners are not able to reach the target of language in both written and spoken communication well without mastering grammar eventhough grammar is not the goal of learning English. Grammar should be taught and learned in order to have linguistic competence as one primary basic for communicative skill (Jufrizal, 2010:11).

Learners need to learn grammar in order to produce a good sentence and meaningful in both written and spoken language. Swan (1987: xvi) states that grammar is the rules that say how words change to show different meanings, and how they are combined into sentences.

Grammar has function to make it easy for two people who communicate each other in written and spoken language. Thus, teacher has crucial role in teaching and learning grammar process. At any rate, there are
still many problems which are found in teaching and learning grammar. As an English teacher candidate, it is a responsibility to investigate and find out the reasons for students’ failure in learning grammar and analyze the reasons then give the solution of it. There were several problems that were found based on the pre-observation and interview done on March 2013 in Muhammadiyah Junior High School of Purwokerto. First, learners’ perception about grammar still became a difficult material to be mastered in which they did not want to make them a bit busy in memorizing the pattern of tense, especially simple past tense. They felt difficult in catching the explanation of grammar because they lack understanding of the use of verbs and how to change into opposition. Thus, they were not able to create a good sentence by applying the pattern of simple past tense. Second, an English teacher still used lecturing method in teaching and learning process as a monotonous method that made the learners lack motivation and attractiveness in learning grammar. Third, learning tenses will be faced by the learners along English will be learned at Senior High School. The learners have to learn several genres in which involve tenses, for example the learners have to learn narrative, recount, or anecdote which use simple past tense in Senior High School. Thus, to support the success of genre based teaching and learning, grammar is important to be taught and learnt as soon as possible. Those previous problems became the reasons why the learners did not be interested in learning English and made a teacher candidate had to create an innovative way to reach the goal of teaching and learning grammar.
Grammar does not need to be taught specially, it is simply as complement to support the success of understanding and text production. Teaching and learning grammar has the characteristic to persuade the learners to learn actively, creatively, effectively, and fun. Thus, it is able to be done in various interesting way. One of the ways is creating a fun learning atmosphere through games because change and success come from different atmosphere. Game brings relaxed atmosphere, motivates the learners and also slacks off during teaching and learning process conducted. Wright (1984:1) states that games help and encourage many learners to sustain their interest and work, and it also helps the teacher to create contexts in which the language is useful and meaningful. For this reason, most learners appreciate games and enjoy to participate in even they are not familiar enough with the rules of the game. One of the games that is able to be used is board game because it can create a fun teaching and learning process to attract the learners in learning simple past tense.

Board game is kind of game in which pieces are placed, removed, or moved on a board based on rules of the game (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/board_game). The board consists of spaces which can be picture or message on particular space. This game is played by two or more students. The rule of the game is each student takes turn to roll the dice and moves around the spaces on the board, and play the game. The object of this game is students may enjoy learning simple past tense. Meanwhile, it can encourage students to master and memorize the pattern of
simple past tense because board game can stimulate the learners’ interest easily and appropriately.

As a media, board game gives an easy way for learners in understanding more the material learnt, especially in applying simple past tense in both textual and contextual as learning simple past tense consists of pattern and meaning. Thus, board game can be a tool of delivering the material and exercises effectively. It is also believed that board game can motivate students to be active and to get fun (Chang & Cogswell, 2008: 3). Moreover, board game provides not only well-designed games to create interesting environment and engaging atmosphere but also provide non threatening, playful and competitive games in which to focus on the teaching and learning materials (Elizabeth & Treher, 2011: 3). Meant that a board game which was designed by the teacher candidate could help the learners in understanding the material more without feeling difficult in catching and answering the questions provided as the exercises on the board game while they enjoyed the game. This game has disadvantages. As the game was played in a group, it would be difficult for the teacher to evaluate students individually. Nevertheless, playing this game, learners would understand more and eliminate the statement out of their minds that grammar was still difficult to be learnt and mastered.

According to the previous descriptions, board game was solution and usefulness of media which could be used in teaching simple past tense. Furthermore, there were several contributions would be obtained in terms of
curriculum and pedagogy. In terms of curriculum, board game which was implemented in the lesson plan would help teaching of materials run well and organized. It could help the learners in understanding materials easier. In terms of pedagogical implication, it would provide fun atmosphere in teaching and learning process for both the teacher and the students. Applying this media, it would stimulate the learners to learn simple past tense because it was fun learning activity in which they could learn and master simple past tense while they were enjoying the game. Meanwhile, teaching simple past tense using board game could be used as one of considerations for teacher in providing learning media and created a good atmosphere in the classroom.

B. Reason for Choosing the Topic

The reasons for choosing the topic were as follows:

1. Grammar still becomes a material in which learners do not want to be busy in memorizing the pattern of each tense. They feel difficult in catching the explanation from an English teacher as they lack understanding how to use the verb and change it into its opposition in the pattern, especially understanding simple past tense.

2. An English teacher still uses a lecturing teaching that makes the learners lack motivation and attractiveness in learning grammar. It is needed to create an interesting way such a board game because it will create a fun way and easy to be implemented and played by the learners as it has simple rules.
3. Learning tense will be faced by the learners until English is learned at Senior High School. The learners have to learn several genres in which involve tenses. Thus, tenses are better to be taught by applying fun way, especially simple past tense by using board game.

C. The problem of the Research

To create a systematical approach in solving the problem, the teacher candidate formulates the problems as follows: “Is board game effective for teaching simple past tense?”

D. Aim of the Research

The aim of the research is to know the effectiveness of using board game for teaching simple past tense.

E. Clarification of the Key Terms

To make clear the title, the key terms of the study are clarified as follows:

1. Effectiveness

   Effectiveness occurs based not on the specific of interaction, but rather on simple fact that the experiment is being conducted (Tuckman in Widya, 2013:5).

2. Grammar

   Michael Swan (1987: xvi) defines grammar as the rules that say how
words change to show different meanings, and how they are combined into sentences.

3. Board Game

A board game is a game that involves counters or pieces moved or placed on a pre-marked surface or “board”, according to a set of rules.


4. Teaching

Brown (2000:7) states that teaching defined as showing or helping someone to learn how to do something, giving instruction, guiding in the study of something, providing with knowledge, causing to know or understand.

5. Simple Past Tense

Hall (1993:173) states that simple past tense indicates a past action that occurred at a definite time in the past, whether that time is stated or not.

F. The Contribution of the Research

This study will give some benefits for some elements, are:

1. For the Students
   a. The students will be motivated and interested in Learning English, especially in learning simple past tense, and
   b. The students will get a new experience in understanding simple past tense through fun way.
2. For the English Teachers

   English teachers can be inspired to create and provide fun teaching and learning process by using board games in order to engage a good atmosphere for the learners during teaching and learning process conducted.

3. For the Institution

   This study will be an input for the institution to improve and develop the teaching and learning in English subject. It also will be a scientific data of the students’ English grammar mastery for the institution, and then it will be able to formulate new plans based on the finding.