

CHAPTER II

STUDENTS' MASTERY OF SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE THROUGH CLIMBING GRAMMAR MOUNTAIN GAME

A. The Definition of Grammar

Cook and Sutter (1980: 1) in their book, the scope of grammar edited by Rahayu (2002) states: "Grammar is a set of rules by which people speak and write. These rules are not always understood consciously because the rules we refer to are those hardly anyone ever thinks about, but wish allow people to use their language easily and naturally most of the time".

The theory states that the "rule" in a language is called grammar; it allows people to speak and to write. It means that when people want to speak or write should be appropriate with the rules of the language itself. Any native speaker of a certain language knows the grammar of his language unconsciously because generally native speakers use their language correctly. It can be different when they should speak with a new language.

B. Grammar and Teaching Grammar

Grammar is essentially about the systems and patterns we use to select and combine words, Silva Joyce & Burns, (1999:4-5). By studying grammar we come to recognize the structure and regularity which is the foundation of language and we gain the tools to talk about the language system.

According to Richards, Platt, and Weber in Nunan (2005:2) grammar is a description of a language and the way in which units such as words and phrases are combined to produce sentences in the language. From this definition, it seems that grammar plays an important role in combining units of language to form sentences. The sentences are acceptable or grammatically if they follow the rules of grammar. Since a communicative purpose and function of language are reflected in grammar, it is a must the language students to acquire good grammar.

It should be admitted, good mastery in grammar will enable people easily to express information, feelings, and ideas in their thought to others. In other words, it can be said that communication failure will happen if people does not master the grammar because the purpose of communication cannot be reached. From that statement, it is clear that grammar is important to be mastered by the students in order to be able to express their feelings, emotions, and to be able to use English appropriately.

Grammar must be a part of communicative language teaching, Burns (2009:15). In line with this statement, grammar always has the important part of communication, so it must be taught from basic in teaching and learning process. According to Burns (2009:24) in teaching grammar, teacher can apply grammar from two main approaches :

1. Contextual Orientations
 - a. Derive grammar from texts
 - b. Choose texts to illustrate grammar
 - c. Focus on grammar required for tasks
2. Temporal Orientations
 - a. Grammar to prepare for skills work
 - b. Grammar to follow up skills work
 - c. Grammar during skills work

C. Game as Interesting Way to Teach Grammar

One of the greatest challenges facing educators today is that of engaging a wide and diverse group of students. Students come to the learning experience with varying degrees of motivation, commitment, ability, and learning styles or approaches. Azriel (cited in Deborah and Fiona, 2005:1) say 'regardless of age or economic, ethnic, or social background, people understand the language of play'. Games offer a medium for students to explore and interrogate information in a fun and interactive way. A passive learning environment will not stimulate them as they are used to greater pace and interactivity in life in general and so it is natural that they will need excitement and interactivity to support their learning. Biggs (cited in and Fiona, 2003:79) says: "Being active while learning is better than being in actives."

Deborah and Fiona (2007:1) say that when we consider how infants and children learn we can appreciate the effectiveness of games as a learning tool. Children love to learn, they see it is as fun, a journey of exploration and excitement. Games play a huge part in that exciting journey, from learning how to count, how to interact with families and people, learning colours and shapes and much more. So if it is an effective and engaging learning tool for children, there is no good reason why it should not work for engaging and developing learning in adults.

Language games can be divided into two further categories: linguistic games and communicative games. In linguistic games the goal of the game is linguistic accuracy: in the case of these grammar games, using the correct grammatical forms. Communicative games have a goal or aim that is not linguistic: successful completion of the game will involve solving a puzzle or completing a picture. However, in order to carry out this task it will be necessary, to use language and by careful construction of the task it is possible to restrict the language to certain grammatical structures and to ensure that these are practiced intensively.

Grammar teaching has often been regarded as a formal activity. This approach is often not effective to teach grammar for some student levels. Willis and Willis (2005:163) has identified different learners in which each learner has his/her own way in learning. They are:

1. Concrete Learners

These learners tend to like games, pictures, films, video, using cassettes, talking in pairs, and practicing English outside class.

2. Analytical Learners

These learners like studying grammar, studying English books, reading newspapers, studying alone, finding their own mistakes, and working on problems set by the teacher.

3. Communicative Learners

These students like to learn by watching, listening to native speakers, talking to friends in English, watching television in English, using English out of class, learning new words by hearing them, and learning by conversation

4. Authority-Oriented Learners

These learners prefer the teacher to explain everything, like to have their own textbook, to write everything in a notebook, to study grammar, to learn by reading, and to learn new words by seeing them.

Most of the beginning English students will have the characteristics of concrete learners in which they prefer to learn grammar in informal approach to formal ones. The formal approach in teaching grammar may affect their basic assumption of the grammar itself. They tend to consider that grammar may affect their basic assumption of the grammar itself. They consider that grammar is a difficult subject to learn. This may become the main cause why

students are not interested and motivated in learning grammar. Based on this statement, the teacher should find other more informal approach in delivering the grammar content to the students. In order to enhance the students' interest and motivation, the grammar lesson should be effective, beneficial, and interesting. To attain that purpose, the teachers should use some well developed ways in order to fascinate the students' intention such as by using songs, verses, problem solving activities, and games.

Jill Hadfield (2003:4) A game is an activity with rules, a goal and an element of fun. There are two kinds of games: competitive games, in which players or teams race to be the first to reach the goal, and cooperative games, in which players or teams work together towards a common goal. According to Saricoban and Metin (2000:3) well-planned games give the learner a chance to practice and internalize vocabulary, grammar and structures extensively. Most games have two characteristics in common: they have rules and they have winners. Rinvoluceri (1995:4) who has written several books on games for teaching grammar, states that games have three particular advantages in the grammar lesson. They are:

1. The students have to take individual responsibility for what they think the grammar is about.
2. The teacher is free to find out what the students actually know, without being the focus of their attention.

3. Serious work in taking place in the context of a game. It lightens and enlivens the classroom atmosphere.

Using games is the most effective way in teaching grammar since it is able to reduce the students stress. The learning process is much effective when the students are relaxed so that they can gain knowledge maximally. Shanahan et al (2006:13) identify five key characteristics, based on research, of effective in class games. These include the game must relate to the learning outcomes; teacher and students must quickly understand how to play the game; the game must not become more important than the learning; the game must motivate students to perform better; and finally students must be able to provide feedback to the teacher on the game.

Games can involve the students in mastering grammar, especially in using simple present tense, which, through games, becomes more enjoyable and attractive. Shelley (2007) has tips for using grammar games in class successfully they are :

1. Organization.

The first thing you should do when start teaching English class is to figure out how to organize your class. The best way to gauge this is to pay attention to your class for the first few days to see what length of time works the

best for them. Additionally, try to have everything ready to go before the students enter the classroom. That way you can go from activity to activity with minimal downtime. This is essential as you can lose control of the class if you do not keep them occupied.

2. Expectations

If you notice that your class is getting noisy or rambunctious, it's time to change activities. Be careful how you use activities that require fine motor skills - or more importantly pay attention to your expectations for activities that require fine motor skills.

3. Variation

You want to make sure your activities appeal to all sorts learning styles, so even when you are using games to teach grammar you'll want to vary the types of things you expect your students to do.

4. Respect

To make games work for you and your class, be sure to operate your class with the utmost respect - both to and from students. This includes teaching your students from the very start that you expect respect at all times. This includes giving encouragement and following the rules.

5. Routine

Even if you only have your students for a short time every week, establishing a routine will help the class go smoothly. Set up a schedule for the type of activities you'll be doing at any given time throughout the class whether it is a game, story or song or whatever you want to do. Then, when you are planning your class, plug in the appropriate activities to each section of time. You should also leave a little time at the end of the class period to allow the students to clean up and gather their things as well as time for you to recap the class, praise the students and tell them good-bye.

6. Nurture.

Perhaps the most important thing you can do with your students is to nurture them every day. Be encouraging, patient and kind while playing games and participating in activities and they'll like you as a teacher and a person which will in turn help them get excited about your class and what you have for them to do every day.

Using games to teach grammar can be both fun and rewarding teacher and student. Just remember to keep them engaged and make sure that your games are truly

teaching the skill at hand and you'll soon have a class full of students who get excited about learning grammar.

D. The Nature of Climbing Grammar Mountain

1. The Definition of Climbing Grammar Mountain

As one of language aspect, grammar is usually considered as a rather boring school subject that has little use in the real life. Some language teachers say that it is difficult to teach grammar to the students. Moreover, grammar is perhaps so serious and central in learning a language in which all ways should be searched and students' energy must be focused. The teacher should try to find the suitable teaching technique of grammar that would be both effective and attractive to the students. Because of the reason above the writer wants to solve the problem using the game that can improve students' grammar competence in the classroom, which is Climbing Grammar Mountain. According to Gunn and McCallum (2005: 39) Climbing Grammar Mountain is a kind of games where the teacher is encouraged to use the sentence from their own students' work or ones that relate to a particular grammar point or weakness currently being worked in the class to motivate the students in order to improve the students' grammar competence. The researcher hopes that by using this game, the students were motivated and their grammar competence can improve.

2. The Advantage of Climbing Grammar Mountain Game

According to Gunn and McCallum (2005:41) there are some advantages of Climbing Grammar Mountain, such as:

- a. To improve the students' understanding of the fundamentals of effective written communication, especially grammatical usage, sentence, construction, paragraphs, and essay development.
- b. To help the students learn from others through such activities as peer review, team work, and group discussions.
- c. The students have solid opportunity to correct the grammatical construction in their own sentence.
- d. To practice their collaborative skill with work together to climb the mountain.
- e. Climbing grammar mountain game provides the students with ones means of accessing grammatical information.

3. Although there are many advantages of game in language learning, game has disadvantages. They are:

- 1) It can present disturbance if teacher cannot control and organize the class to be conducive.
- 2) It takes a bit long time to implementing the game.
- 3) Not all students like play the game.

In this research, researcher tried to solve the disadvantages of Climbing Grammar Mountain Game. To solve the first disadvantages, if the students make noisy and the class did not conductive, the researcher will give more exercise at the end of the game. The second problem, to consume the time, researcher try to minimize the text that given to the students in their group. The last problem , at the end of the game, the researcher will gives the students reward to the group who will obtained the highest score.

4. The Strategy Of Climbing Grammar Mountain

Before using climbing grammar mountain game it is important to the teacher to tell to the students what is going to happen and what is expected by them. Before the game starts, the teacher must demonstrate and explain to the students how to apply the game in the class room. There are some instructions to play the game, such as:

a. For The teacher

Pre activity:

- 1) Before the teacher start the game, ask the students to get into teams of four or five people depending on how many students are in the class.
- 2) Have the students choose a name for their team.
- 3) Start by playing a practice round of the game.

- 4) Provide the whole class with a correct sentence that is fairly easy to identify as correct.
- 5) Ask each team how many vertical feet (up to a maximum of 20) they are willing to award to it.
- 6) Show how you would move a player up the mountain by that many vertical feet.
- 7) Next, provide a sentence that is incorrect. If the students award any vertical distance to it, they must go back down the mountain that many feet. If the students recognize the sentence as incorrect and do not wager any vertical feet on it, they can stay where they are.
- 8) Allow them a chance to correct the sentence for five bonus points.

Main Activity:

- 1) After the practice round, begin the actual play, using the sentences you prepared.
- 2) Draw one sentence at a time.
- 3) Show the first team one sentence and have them make their play. If the sentence is incorrect, give the playing team the first chance to correct the sentence for 5 bonus feet. If that team cannot correct the sentence, open it up to the rest of the class and give the answering team an extra 5

bonus feet. Then, move on to the next team, drawing a new sentence.

- 4) The game continues until you have used all the sentences.

b. For the Student

- 1) Tell to the students that today they are going to race to the top of grammar mountain. In this activity, the students are going to compete against the other mountaineering groups to get the highest point on the mountain before their class time is up.
- 2) In order to climb the mountain, the students will need energy and equipment. These things are available in the form of the sentences.
- 3) When the students teams' turn, for example Rose' team, so they will be given a sentence and they will need to determine if the sentence is grammatically correct or not.
- 4) If Rose' team believe that the sentence is correct, so they can assign 0, 5, 10, or up to 20 vertical feet to the sentence. If it is indeed correct, you will advance that far up the mountain. If the sentence is incorrect, your team will fall down the mountain the number of feet you assigned to the flawed sentence.

- 5) Teams can win 5 bonus feet for correcting a flawed sentence. The team whose turn it is gets the first chance to correct the sentence, and then other teams may try to earn the five bonus feet.

4. The Procedure Of Climbing Grammar Mountain

Climbing Grammar Mountain is easy to prepare and can be adapted to the unique needs of the different classrooms. Here are the steps of the implementation of climbing grammar mountain game in the classroom in teaching simple present tense (Gunn and MacCallum, 2005: 39) :

- a. Draw a vertical climbing line (for a class size of approximately 20 students) on the board or on an overhead transparency. Leave space on the bottom of the transparency to show one sentence at a time.
- b. Divide each line into 10 segments to represent vertical feet
- c. As in the example bellow, mark the segments 10, 20, 30, 40, etc.

CLIMBING GRAMMAR MOUNTAIN			
100	100	100	100
_____	_____	_____	_____
90	90	90	90
_____	_____	_____	_____
80	80	80	80
_____	_____	_____	_____
60	60	60	60
_____	_____	_____	_____
40	40	40	40
_____	_____	_____	_____
20	20	20	20
_____	_____	_____	_____
0	0	0	0
Team 1	Team 2	Team 3	Team 4

- d. Prepare a series of sentences. Some should be correct, and about three quarters should contain one grammatical error per sentence. Choose these sentences from the students' work, or develop sentences to correspond to the particular grammar point or points the class is currently working on. Conversely, the game could be a culminating or review activity and could include one error each from a wide variety of grammatical issues.
- e. Run off the sentences on a transparency and cut them apart. Place them in a paper bag or envelope ready to draw from during the game.
- f. Divide the students into 4 teams or 5 students each. (Organize the number of mountain climbing tracks and teams accordingly).

E. SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE

According to Uchiyama (2006:17) states that simple present tense is that the action is a habit (or another type of repeated action) in the present or that the action is always or usually true.

For example :

Table 1.1 example of a habit in the present and usually true in simple present tense

This is always or usually true	This is a habit in the present
The moon travels around the earth.	I usually eat lunch at the school cafeteria.
Government officials often don't tell the truth.	My neighbor never comes late to class.

1. Usage

According to Uchiyama (2006:18) usage is the way in which a word or phrase or sentence is normally and correctly used. Here are the rules of usage of simple present tense :

1) Simple Present Statements

- a. If the subject is *I, you, we, or they*, use the simple form of the verb.

Examples: I **go** to bed at 11:00.

You **go** to bed at 11:00.

We **go** to bed at 11:00.

George and Gracie (they) **go** to bed at 11:00.

I usually **walk** to the store.

- b. If the subject is *he, she, or it*, add *-s* or *-es* to the simple form of the verb.

Examples: Ralph (he) **goes** to bed at 11:00.

Alice (she) **goes** to bed at 11:00.

Carmen's pet elephant (it) **goes** to bed at 11:00.

Ahmed (he) usually **walks** to the store.

2) Negative Statements

S + do/does + not + simple form.

Examples: Americans usually **do not eat** soup for breakfast.

I usually **don't buy** lunch on Thursdays.

John **does not play** tennis.

Ralph often **doesn't drive** to work.

3) Questions Statements

Question word (do/does) subject + simple form

Examples: **Does** your pet gorilla **bite**?

Do you **buy** your groceries at Alberstons?

What **do** Norton and Trixie usually **do** on weekends?

According to Uchiyama (2006:20) not only statement in simple present tense . in simple present tense there is“verb *be*” . The verb *be* in English is just plain weird. It almost never follows the same rules as other verbs. For the verb *be* have simple present statements, negative statements, and questions. Are all formed in unusual ways. Here it is again for the sake of completeness.

1) Simple Present Statements with *Be*

If the subject is *I* use *am*.

Examples: **I am** a teacher.

I'm often absent-minded.

I am in class every Wednesday at 10:00.

If the subject is *you, we, or they*, use *are*

Examples: **You are** my sunshine, my only sunshine (from an old song).

We are so happy that you didn't eat our cat!

Fred and Ethyl **are** in the kitchen with Lucy and Ricky.

If the subject is a *he, she, or it*, use *is*.

Examples: He **is** a famous doctor in the hospital in his city.

Paris Hilton's rich. She **isn't** an English teacher.

My car (it) **is** in the parking lot at beautiful Chabot College.

2) Simple Present Negative Statements with *Be*

Add *not* after *be*.

Examples: I **am not** a millionaire or a rock star.

I'm **not** rich or famous.

I'm probably **not** in Paris Hilton's address book.

You **are not** my boss, so stop telling me what to do.

Bats **are not** birds.

We **are not** in Kansas any more.

George W. Bush **is not** my uncle.

A wet cat **isn't** very happy.

It's **not** cold; you don't need to wear a coat.

3) Simple present questions with *Be*

Put *be* in front of the subject

Examples: **Am** I taller than your cousin in Utah?

Are George and Gracie married?

Where **are** my car keys?

Why **is** the sky blue?

According to Walker and Elsworth (2000:99) states that in simple present there is modal auxiliaries. Modal auxiliaries are also sometimes called modal verb or modals. The following are modal auxiliaries :

Present :

- Can
- May
- Will
- Shall
- Must
- Ought to

1) Form of Modal Auxiliaries

a. Positive : subject + modal + bare infinitive

Example: I must see you this morning

We must go now

b. Negative: subject + modal + not + bare infinitive

Example: you can not swim

You must not go this afternoon

c. Question: modal + subject + bare infinitive + ?

Example: can you help me?

Will she be here soon ?

2. Subject-Verb Agreement

Subject-Verb Agreement is an agreement in which there is a matching relation between subject and verb (Leech, 1996:33). The main rule of Subject-Verb Agreement is simple. It is said an agreement if both subject and verb show the same kind of inflection.

In other words, singular subjects go with singular verb. And plural subjects go with plural verbs. Here are the rules of Subject-Verb Agreement.

- a. If the noun is singular, the verb must have a-s
- b. If the noun is plural, the verb does not have a -s

The example of those rules can be seen in the examples below:

- a. *The cloth needs washing*
- b. *The clothes need washing*
- c. *She looks beautiful*
- d. *They look tired*

There are some additional rules of Subject-Verb Agreement (Leech, 1996:34). They are:

- a. Where the subject consists of two or more items joined by *and*, the subject becomes plural and is followed by plural verb.

For example: *My brother and I both like cheese.*

- b. Two singular subjects joined by *or* become singular subject and are followed by singular verb.

For example: *I don't know whether Dennis or Kevin loves me deeper*

- c. As subjects, the pronouns *any*, *either*, *neither*, and *none* sometimes take some singular verb and sometimes take a plural verb.

For example: *Her sons are grown up, but none of them is married.*

Her sons are grown up, but none of them are married

- d. Group nouns such as audience, committee, family, government, and team can take plural and singular verbs.

For example: *The committee meets every week*

The committee meet every week

Moreover, Leech (1996:418) states that the – s form of the verb is used only with the 3rd person pronoun or noun phrases which are singular. For the 2nd person pronoun, that is, *you* which can be singular or plural, the verb does not have an – s.

For example : *You (singular) always do the work well*

You (plural) always do the work well.

She always does the work well.

3. Verb Pronoun

In Simple Present Tense, verb has singular and plural form (Leech, 1996:34). The singular verb is formed from the plural verb.

Plural verbs	Singular verbs
Like	Likes
Do	Does

There are some rules of the singular verb spelling (Evans, 1995:33)

- a. Plural verbs ending in *ss, sh, ch, x, and o*, is added *-es* to form the singular verbs.

Miss	Misses
Brush	Brushes
Match	Matches
Box	Boxes
Do	Does

In forming singular verbs from plural verbs ending in *y* in which it follows a consonant, the letter *y* will be deleted and the verb will be added with *-ies*

Bury	Buries
Fly	Flies

- b. When the plural verbs ending in y following a vowel, the verb is added with – s.

Buy	Buys
Say	Says

- c. Adverbs used in Simple Present Tense

There are two kinds of adverbial that are usually used in Simple Present Tense. They are adverbial of frequency and adverbial of time.

- 1) Adverbial of frequency

We often use the simple present tense with adverb of frequency to make clear how often an action takes place.

The following adverbs of frequency are often used in Simple Present Tense (Werner, 2003:43):

Adverbs offrequency	Always
	Usually
	Often
	Frequently
	Normally
	Sometimes
	Occasionally
	Seldom, rarely
	Hardly ever
	Almost never

Never In constructing Simple Present Tense, the adverbials of frequency come before the main verb of a sentence, but after the verb “to be” and modal verbs (can, must, will, etc.)

For examples:

- a) *She always comes late.*
- b) *I rarely go to library.*
- c) *My Father never goes to Bandung.*
- d) *The rainbow is rarely seen in this part of the city*
- e) *She will never forget you*

2) Adverbial of time

The term adverbial of time is restricted to answer the questions “When?.”(Here are some adverbials of time that are used in constructing Simple Present Tense (Werner, 2003:43).

Adverbial of time	On Monday (Sunday, Wednesday, etc)
	Every day (week, month, year, etc)
	In the morning (afternoon)
	Nowadays
	At night (noon)
	Today, tonight, etc.

4. Meaning

Simple Present Tense has three important meanings (Leech, 1996:385-386). They are:

a. A present state

- 1) Simple Present Tense often indicates a state which exists now that refers to a fact which is generally true.

For example : The sun rises in the east.

- 2) Simple Present Tense can also refer to states that can change.

For example : Where does your uncle work?

I'm sorry, I don't know. I think he works in a fashion company.

b. A present habit

- 1) Simple Present Tense refers to an action repeated regularly such as habit or custom.

For examples: Robby smokes.

Anita plays tennis.

- 2) Simple Present Tense can be used with frequency adverbs like always, never, sometimes, ever, usually, often, etc.

For example : Billy sometimes goes fishing in the summer.

c. A present event.

This meaning of Simple Present Tense is less common. It refers to an event which happens at the very moment of speaking.

For examples: I regret that I made a mistake.

I beg you to be more careful.

Besides the three important meaning above, Simple Present Tense also has two other special meanings. They are special because here Simple Present Tense does not describe present time but future or past time (Quirk, 1972 : 16).

1) Referring to future time

Simple Present Tense refers to the future in following cases:

a) When there is a temporal adverbial in the clause

For examples: The plane leaves for Chicago at eight o'clock

b) In conditional and temporal clauses introduced by if.

For example: He'll do it if you pay him.

2) Referring to past time

Simple present with past time reference is used with, for example, the communication verb tell, hear, learn etc.

In the present of the effect of a past communication: John tells me that you have been abroad.