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A dynamic splash of water in shades of blue and cyan, moving from the top right towards the bottom left, creating a sense of motion and freshness. The water droplets are captured in mid-air, with some forming a curved path.

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# Smart Card in Fun Learning Activity to Increase Interest in English Grammar Learning

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## Abstract

Learning English in the classroom, especially grammar courses, is often considered a boring subject because the learning and teaching process is often done monotonously. The Smart Card Learning Model is expected to be able to provide a different atmosphere in the grammar class. At the stage of initiation, introduction, and application, it is expected that this learning model can increase students' interest and enthusiasm in learning grammar. From that point, increasing student interest and enthusiasm is expected to have implications for increasing student grades. This study aims to answer the 3 research problems: 1) What are the difficulties faced by students in Intermediate English Grammar class?, 2) What are the students' perception on Smart Card?, 3) How can Smart Card help students in Grammar?. From the results of the research that has been carried out, students faced the difficulties in memorizing 16 tenses and the boredom in the class related to activities given by the lecturer. Students found Smart Cards was very fun, easy to use and increase students' interest in learning English Grammar. The majority of students want a variety of learning media besides the media commonly used by lecturers such as power points, lectures, and group discussions.

**Keywords:** *grammar, smart card, English Language Teaching*

## A. INTRODUCTION

In the early 1980s, research related to the increase in the ability to master vocabulary tended to be ignored. Attention to increasing vocabulary mastery skills was very lacking, especially in the era of the introduction of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). However, along with the development of English Language Teaching (ELT), some experts have begun to think that the development of vocabulary in students is also as important as the development of structure/grammar especially in learning English (Wilkins, 1972)<sup>[1]</sup>. Wilkins sees that a

person's ability to master English can be seen from his ability to use vocabulary and collocation.

In addition to vocabulary, another aspect that will inhibit communication is grammar/grammar (Wilkins, 1972) [1]. In communication theory, one aspect that must be fulfilled in achieving communicative competence is the aspect of grammar. In his research entitled A Study on English Grammar Teaching Model to Student Majoring College in English Education, Xiao-Hong (2009) [2] argued that the majority of English grammar learning still uses conventional methods. This study also shows that learning with conventional methods makes students bored and enthusiastic about being low.

The importance of grammar has been underlined by several scholars. Mart (2013:124)<sup>[3]</sup> argues that understanding grammar is the key in foreign language acquisition. Moreover, Tomakin (2014: 116)<sup>[4]</sup> states that somebody cannot master a language without learning its grammar because grammar helps him or her.

Additionally, Priya (2015: 447)<sup>[5]</sup> argues that communication becomes coherent and logical by using grammar. Then, Baleghizadeh and Mozaheb (2011: 364)<sup>[6]</sup> state that the learners' age, their proficiency level, and educational background cause the importance levels of grammar to be different. to construct meaningful words or sentences.

Therefore, a method and strategy for grammar learning are needed in addition to conventional methods to increase the enthusiasm of students in learning English grammar. The use of smart cards is expected to be a solution to overcome and avoid the boredom of students in learning English Grammar.

Smart Card is a learning media for Grammar in the form of cards with various types of words. The word is divided into word classes and distinguished by the color of the card. Green card is a Noun Class, a Red Card is a Verb (Verb) Class that contains verbs 1 (infinitive and infinitive + s/es), 2 (past), 3 (perfect) and V-ing (continuous ), Blue Card is an Adjective and a Yellow Card is an Adverb (Adverb) which includes a description of time, place, and method.

As the application of the Fun Learning Activity method, students will be asked to play games with Smart Cards. Students are divided into 3 groups of 5 people. The lecturer provides one category of tenses which will later be made sentences with word cards. One member from each group will come forward to take one-word card as the beginning of the sentence that will be formed. The other group friends will then take the next card to complete the sentence.

When the lecturer mentions "Simple Past Tense" then the first member without prior discussion will take a card that shows the Subject sentence. The second member adds the Predicate by taking a verb card that shows the past or past (V2) form of the verb because the

requested tenses are in the form of Past Tense. Members 3, 4 and 5 take the card to complete the sentence by adding the past tense according to the tenses requested and the description of the place or method according to the context of the sentence because the place and method are not affected by tenses. To add variety in this game, the team with the fastest time composes the correct sentence gets the highest score. And the losing team at the end of the game can provide entertainment for their colleagues in the form of reading English poetry or singing.

The sentences that have been compiled are then examined and observed together to determine whether the choice of words from the compiled word cards is correct. If there is an error, the student will notify and provide the correction. This aims to make students easier to remember because the assessment is given in the form of peer assessment.

The results of the questionnaire were then recapitulated to conclude student acceptance of Smart Card learning media and develop Smart Cards in the next step. completing the Method section explaining how the research was conducted. The length of the 15-20% method with the main contents of this section are (1) research design; (2) population and sample (research target); (3) techniques for data collection and instrument development; (4) and data analysis techniques. For research using tools and materials, it is necessary to write down the specifications of the tools and materials. Tool specifications describe the sophistication of the tools used while the material specifications describe the type of material used.

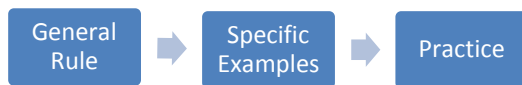
This study comes up with 3 research problems: 1)What are the difficulties faced by students in Intermediate English Grammar class?, 2)What are the students' perception on Smart Card?, 3)How can Smart Card help students in Grammar?.

## **B. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Grammar Learning Strategy**

Brown (2001) [7] mentions two grammar learning strategies that can be used by English teachers; inductive and deductive strategies. This learning can be used interchangeably in class and can be collaborated with other learning media.

*Deductive Approach:*



*Inductive Approach:*



Chart 1. Scheme The difference between a deductive approach and an inductive approach

According to Brown (2001) [8], inductive learning is a learning method that is suitable to be applied in grammar classes for the following reasons: (1) Inductive learning encourages students to acquire natural language acquisition because unwittingly students get the desired language rules. (2) Inductive learning approaches the concept of interlanguage development where students get to progress through the stages of acquiring language rules. (3) Inductive learning allows students to get 'communicative feelings' before getting an explanation from the teacher or lecturer. (4) Inductive learning builds students' intrinsic motivation because they are allowed to find language rules compared to when the language rules are explained/given by the teacher/lecturer first.

***Weaknesses of classroom learning strategies***

a. Less varied learning strategies

Grammar learning experts suggest that grammar learning must use as many strategies as possible to overcome a variety of different student backgrounds, both in terms of social background and language background [9]. However, in reality, teachers use only a few strategies in teaching grammar such as direct translation. This makes the opportunity to practice word building and discussion further in terms of word meaning and use in various contexts to be very limited [10].

This study provides an alternative strategy in teaching English vocabulary to students. This smart card game model has several advantages over the usual strategies carried out by the teacher. Some of these advantages include;

1. Provide opportunities for students to build their own knowledge of words with the context in which the vocabulary is used.
2. Students are more active in finding the meaning of vocabulary that they do not yet know the meaning of. This is in accordance with the mandate carried out by the non-active learning and student-centered learning. Learning like this is felt to be more effective than learning where students only listen to teacher explanations (passive learning).

b. Unrest in learning

The limited strategy applied by the teacher in teaching grammar may be due to several reasons. First, the teacher thinks that by directly teaching formulas and examples, the teacher will save time. In fact, by directly providing formulas and examples, this method will make students passive and easily forget the grammar rules.

Smart Card Learning Model makes students active in searching for the meaning of a word so that students are expected to be easy to remember and longer can remember words and meanings.

### **C. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The study was conducted in the Intermediate English Grammar course with 17-second semester students of English Literature at Ngudi Waluyo University as respondents. This study uses a quantitative analysis design involving one group of students as questionnaire respondents.

The first questionnaire is a questionnaire with open questions given at the end of the Basic English Grammar course in Odd Semester 2018/2019 to find out the constraints of lectures and the expectations of students for Grammar courses at the next level. The questions in the questionnaire are:

1. What is your opinion about Basic English Grammar courses this semester?
2. Do you have difficulty in attending lectures? If yes, what are the difficulties you face?
3. How does the Basic English Grammar lecture take place?
4. What methods are commonly used by lecturers in lectures?

5. What learning media are usually used by lecturers in lectures? What are the advantages and disadvantages of the media?

6. What do you expect from Grammar lectures in the next semester?

The second questionnaire was given after giving the Fun Learning Activity treatment with a Smart Card as a learning medium in the Intermediate English Grammar course. The questionnaire was given in the form of open questions about how students would receive Learning Fun with a Smart Card. Questions in this questionnaire 2 are:

1. What is your opinion about the Smart Card media used in Intermediate English Grammar lectures this semester?

2. Are you having difficulty using Smart Card learning media?

3. What's fun about using a Smart Card?

4. In your opinion, does the Smart Card media help you to increase interest in Grammar lectures?

5. Is the Smart Card appropriate for use in Grammar learning?

6. In your opinion, what needs to be developed from Smart Card learning media?

This treatment is given during 3 meetings at the beginning of the lecture with the aim to increase students' interest in participating in the next lecture.

Smart Card is a learning media for Grammar in the form of cards with various types of words. The word is divided into word classes and distinguished by the color of the card;

a. Green is the Noun Class,

b. Red is Verb (Verb) Class which contains verb forms 1 (infinitive and infinitive + s / es), 2 (past), 3 (perfect) and Ving (continuous),

c. Blue is Adjective and

d. Yellow is Adverb (Adverb) which includes a description of time, place, and method.

As the application of the Fun Learning Activity method, students will be asked to play games with Smart Cards. Students are divided into 3 groups of 5 people. The lecturer provides one category of tenses which will later be made sentences with word cards. One member from each group will come forward to take one-word card as the beginning of the sentence that will be formed. The other group friends will then take the next card to complete the sentence.

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For qualitative research such as classroom action research, ethnography, phenomenology, case studies, etc., it is necessary to add the presence of researchers, research subjects, informants who help along with ways to explore data.

## **D. FINDINGS**

### **Obstacles in Grammar Learning**

The results of Questionnaire 1 show that:

1. What is your opinion about Basic English Grammar courses this semester?  
12 of 15 students felt that Grammar learning was quite difficult.
2. Do you have difficulty in attending lectures? If yes, what are the difficulties you face?  
15 students answered that the biggest difficulty was memorizing 16 sentence patterns.
3. How does the Basic English Grammar lecture take place?  
10 out of 15 students answered that they often felt bored during Grammar lectures.

4. What methods are commonly used by lecturers in lectures?

15 students answered less varied learning methods (power-point presentation, lecture, drilling questions).

5. What learning media are usually used by lecturers in lectures? What are the advantages and disadvantages of the media?

15 students answered that the use of an online game in the form of Kahoot was felt to help students but still encountered obstacles related to internet connections which were often interrupted.

6. What do you expect from Grammar lectures in the next semester?

Students expect more active learning activities more than just answering grammar problems on handouts or writing sentences with certain tenses. The activities related to handouts sometimes get them bored.

By giving this questionnaire, we expected to find out the difficulties faced by students to propose a solution and solve the problems. The results showed the students' opinion on grammar lesson in the previous semester and also students' expectation for the next grammar class.

### **The Role of Smart Cards in Learning**

Smart Cards made with different colors for each class of words will help students memorize the composition of a phrase (adjective + noun) or sentence arrangement (Subject or Noun + The predicate or Verb + Objects with Nouns + Time Description/way) keeping in mind the color arrangement during the game.

Verb Cards provided in various forms of verbs help students to remember and be more careful in using verbs according to the number of subjects and tenses used.

Grammar learning generally works by memorizing English grammar formulas, especially 16 tenses so that sometimes students often find it difficult to distinguish one tense from another related to when its use and what verbs to use.

The existence of the yellow cards which contain adverbial information helps students remember the adverbs of time used with certain tenses. For example, if the Lecturer asks for "Simple Past Tense" to be compiled, then the student should take the past information (yesterday, last night, and so on). Students can learn from each other from the sentences their

colleagues have compiled. If there is an error, students can immediately know the wrong part and the correct form.

A pleasant learning atmosphere like this is expected to be able to eliminate boredom in learning and increase students' interest in participating in Grammar learning in class. The Media Smart Card is also expected to help students memorize English sentence patterns and the different colors of the cards are expected to help students memorize the pattern better since they can observe the color arrangement not only the formula of  $S+V_2+O$ , for instance.

### **Student Admission to Smart Cards**

Questionnaire 2 about student acceptance of the Smart Card showed that:

1. What is your opinion about the Smart Card media used in Intermediate English Grammar lectures this semester?  
15 students answered that the Smart Card used was very pleasant and not boring.
2. Are you having difficulty using Smart Card learning media?  
10 students answered Smart Card fun because the tenses requested by the Lecturer were unpredictable and others answered pleasantly because they involved activities other than sitting and writing and this game was considered challenging because the sentence formed was a form of spontaneity.
3. What's fun about using a Smart Card?  
15 students answered they had no difficulty in using the Smart Card in the class.
4. In your opinion, does the Smart Card media help you to increase interest in Grammar lectures?  
15 students answered that Smart Cards increase their interest in Grammar learning because they are fun.
5. Is the Smart Card appropriate for use in Grammar learning?  
15 students answered that Smart Card is really useful and appropriate for use in Grammar learning

6. In your opinion, what needs to be developed from Smart Card learning media?  
Students expect Smart Cards to be present in a better form and innovated to be applied in other subjects.

The second questionnaire given was expected to assess students' perception of Smart Card. This is important to see the effectiveness of Smart Card on improving students' interest in Grammar class.

## **D. DISCUSSION**

### **What are the difficulties faced by students in Intermediate English Grammar class?**

From these results analyzed from the Questionnaire given at the end of previous Grammar Class, it is felt that it is necessary to involve students more in learning in the classroom so that they do not feel bored because they continue to work on the questions during the lecture. External constraints such as internet connections that are sometimes unstable also need to be anticipated by providing fun and flexible learning media. In this case, the game is considered pleasant by students.

Boredom is such a feeling that appears when the students continuously do the same thing. Since they are in Junior High School, they have been learning English in which most of the teaching and learning processes were done conventionally, through lecturing and book analysis. The teaching methods and strategies are somehow the most influencing part of teaching and learning English grammar in higher education since the students are already mature and their level of thinking has also increased. That's why innovative and out-of-the-box teaching strategies are essential especially to gain the students' attention and interest in learning English Grammar.

Smart Cards are then used in learning English Grammar because this media is innovative and rarely used in grammar classroom. Smart Card is proved to give a new atmosphere in teaching and learning grammar as it is able to involve the students in active and student-centered learning. From the answers of the questionnaires given to the students, it can be seen that the students' interest and enthusiasm increased because of the presence of Smart Card in their grammar class. Teaching and learning process by using smartcard is able to provide the students with both the content knowledge and joy of learning.

The content knowledge can be acquired optimally as the students are involved in the atmosphere of competition. It is because when the students are motivated to win the game, they struggle to overlearn the materials as good as possible so that they will not be defeated

by other groups. This way is proved effective to attract the students' eagerness in studying and understanding the materials being learned.

The joy of learning is present as the basic characteristic of Smart Card is game. Students are more joyful when they are engaged in a game which attracts their curiosity as well as their sense of competing. Moreover, by providing joy and relax atmosphere in learning, the content knowledge, the learning goals, and the standard competence of the subject Intermediate English Grammar can be achieved.

### **What are the students' perception of Smart Card?**

Based on the questionnaire given by lecturer after using Smart Card, students answered that the Smart Card was very pleasant and not boring. It gave a challenging effect on students because they had to deal with unpredictable tenses given by the lecturer and others answered it was fun because they involved in activities other than sitting and writing. This game card was considered challenging because the sentence formed was a form of spontaneity. Most of the students also found that they had no difficulty in using the Smart Card in the class. 15 students answered that Smart Cards increased their interest in Grammar learning because they are fun. They expected Smart Cards to come out in a better form and innovated to be applied in other subjects.

### **How can Smart Card help students in Grammar?**

From the answers, it can be concluded that Smart Card helps students to enjoy the lesson more and give fun and challenging feeling. It also makes them more interested instead of bored because Smart Card involves them in activities so it requires them to be more focus to answer the questions correctly.

By having the perception that Grammar can be fun, it will be easier for the students to enjoy the lesson and finally having more interest in Grammar. The Smart Card not only creating a more enjoyable situation in the classroom but also improves the sense of teamwork in the classroom.

The different colors of the card are considered accommodating the students who tend to learn by visual by giving them the chance to memorize the sentence patterns by colors.

## E. CONCLUSION

Smart Card is effective to increase students' interest in Grammar lesson by giving an entertaining effect on the class and involving students more instead of asking students to work on Grammar problems on worksheets.

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