

# **Improving the Eighth Grade Students' Simple Present Tense Mastery by Using Stick Figures at SMP Negeri 5 Jember in the 2016/2017 Academic Year**

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***Abstract:** The aims of this research were: (1) to improve the eighth grade students' active participation in the teaching learning process of Simple Present Tense by using stick figures at SMP Negeri 5 Jember in the 2016/2017 academic year, and (2) to improve the eighth grade students' Simple Present Tense mastery by using stick figures at SMP Negeri 5 Jember in the 2016/2017 academic year. The design of the research was Classroom Action Research (CAR). The research area was chosen by using the Purposive Method. The research subjects were the Eighth Grade Students of VIIIIC at SMP Negeri 5 Jember in the 2016/2017 academic year. The data collection methods were obtained from administering a tense test, observation, giving interview, and documentation. The research was done in 2 cycles to achieve the criteria of success. Based on the results of the research, it showed improvement at the students' active participation and their tense mastery. The percentage of the students' active participation increased from 42% (16 students) in cycle 1 to 79% (30 students) in meeting 1 of cycle 2 and 87% (33 students) in meeting 2 of Cycle 2. Then, the percentage of the students who got  $\geq 75$  in the tense test increased from 57% (21 students) in cycle 1 to 81% (29 students) in cycle 2. It indicated that the results of the research met the criteria of success that stick figures could improve the eighth grade students' active participation and Simple Present Tense Mastery.*

***Keywords:** Stick Figures, Students' Active Participation, Simple Present Tense Master*

## **INTRODUCTION**

In learning English, there are three language components, namely vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation that should be taught integratedly with four skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. Those have to be learnt by the students so that they can use English as a means of communication either in the spoken or written form. Grammar as one of the language components needs to be mastered to improve the language skills. The Indonesian students who are learning English are often confused when they are learning grammar, especially about tense. There are many kinds of tenses and the students should understand to use each type of tenses correctly.

Learning grammar is necessary because the students need to understand what they have read in the form of sentences to understand their meanings. It is supported by Doff (2000) in Widodo (2006:122) that by learning grammar students can express meanings in the form of phrases, clauses, and sentences. Long and Richards (1987) in Widodo (2006:122) state it cannot be ignored, grammar plays a central role in the four language skills to establish communicative tasks.

Before conducting this research, a preliminary study was done by the researcher by interviewing the English teacher on 22<sup>th</sup> August 2016 at SMP Negeri 5 Jember. It was known that most of the students of class eight had problem in learning grammar, the students are often confused when they are learning tense, especially Simple Present Tense. Many students

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felt difficult in making Simple Present Tense because they still make grammatical errors in their sentences, especially the errors of the uses of tense. Besides, the teacher only focused on using the English text book and *LKS (Lembar Kerja Siswa)* that did not motivate the students in learning tenses optimally. The teacher also told that she has never used stick figures as instructional media in teaching tense. Another fact was proved by the students' test score, it was known that VIIIIC had the lowest score of English. The scores of VIIIIC students were mostly below 75. The students who got the score below 75 were 15 students (39%) of 38 students and the students who got the score at least 75 in the test were 23 students (61%) of 38 students. However, the standard minimum score is 75.

Based on the issues above, the researcher was eager to use media in teaching tense. One of the alternative media in teaching tense is stick figures. Wright (1989:2) states the contributions of pictures in teaching are interest and motivation, to give a sense of context of the language and to give a specific reference point or stimulus. Stick figures are one of media that can encourage students to dig up their ideas and build their tense mastery. They construct the words to make sentences/text in coherence and in unity.

There were some previous studies concerning stick figures in teaching learning process. The first study was conducted by Nika (2013). She conducted a Classroom Action Research entitled "Improving the Fifth Grade Students' Vocabulary Achievement by Using Stick Figures at SDN Dawuhan Lor 5 Lumajang in the 2013/2014 Academic Year". In her research, she found that there was an improvement of the students' active participation and their vocabulary achievement by using stick figures. The result of the students' active participation increased in two cycles. The results showed that the average percentage of the students' active participation in cycle 1 was 68.81%. Moreover, the average percentage of the students' active participation in cycle 2 was 81.43%. Meanwhile, the result of the students' vocabulary achievement test increased from 58.62% in cycle 1 to 79.31% in cycle 2. In addition, the other research was conducted by Munifah (2011) entitled "Using Stick Figures to Improve the Students' Ability of Class VIII-E SMPN 1 Kencong to Write Recount Text". From her research, it was known that the use of stick figures could improve the students' ability in writing functional text in the form of Recount Text. It was proved by the result of the students' writing test increased from 60.25% in cycle 1 to 81% in cycle 2. Thus, it is suggested to the English teacher to use stick figures as an alternative media in solving the students' problems in learning tense.

Based on the information from the English teacher at SMP Negeri 5 Jember, the English teacher has never used stick figures as the media in teaching Simple Present Tense to the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 5 Jember. To solve the students' problem of tense (Simple Present Tense), the researcher conducted a Classroom Action Research entitled "*Improving the Eighth Grade Students' Simple Present Tense Mastery by Using Stick Figures at SMP Negeri 5 Jember in the 2016/2017 Academic Year*".

## RESEARCH METHOD

The design of this research was Classroom Action Research (CAR) by using cycle model research design. This CAR used the cycle model in which each cycle included planning the action, implementing the action, observing and evaluating, analyzing the data

and reflecting the actions (Adapted from Lewin 1980 in Elliot, 1991:70). Furthermore, since the students' tense test results in cycle 1 had not achieve the target score, that was 75% of the students got score 75 in the tense test, the action was continued to cycle 2.

The research area was SMP Negeri 5 Jember. It was chosen purposively because teaching tense by using stick figures was never been applied by the English teacher, the English teacher was interested in applying this kind of media in the teaching learning process of tense, the researcher collaborated with the English teacher in conducting the classroom action research to improve the students' Simple Present Tense mastery, and the headmaster of the school gave permission to the researcher to conduct this classroom action research.

The subject of this research was determined purposively because the class had problems with tense mainly the uses of Simple Present Tense.. The subjects were the Eighth Grade Students of SMP Negeri 5 Jember in the 2065/2017 academic year.

There were four data that was used in this research. A tense test and observation were used to collect the primary data. Meanwhile, interview and documentation were used to get the secondary data. Tense test was used to collect the data about the students' Simple Present Tense mastery and observation was done in the classroom during the students' activities in the teaching learning process. The interview had been done in the preliminary study with the eighth grade English teacher of SMP Negeri 5 Jember . Its purpose was to get supporting data about this research, namely the students' problem in English, the materials used in teaching, and the media used in the classroom. Documentation was used to gain the supporting data about the names of the subjects in VIII C class and their scores of English.

This research was considered successful if 75% of the students were active in the teaching learning of tense by using stick figures and 75% of the students got score  $\geq 75$  in tense test.

To find the percentage of the students' active participation, the following formula was used:

Notes:

E = The percentage of the students who participated actively in the teaching learning process of tense (Simple Present Tense) by using stick figures.

n=The students who were active during the teaching learning process of tense (Simple Present Tense) by using stick figures

N= The total number of the students (the research subjects)

(Adapted from Ali, 1993:186)

To find the percentage of the students' who got score at least 75, the following formula was used:

Notes:

E = The percentage of the students who got 75 in the tense test.

n=The number of the students who got 75 in the tense test

N= The total number of the students taking the tense test (the research subjects)

(Adapted from Ali, 1993:186)

## **RESEARCH FINDINGS**

This Classroom Action Research was done in two cycles which each cycle consisted of three meetings. The action was conducted in two meetings and the tense test was administered after the action in the cycle done. The time allocation for each meeting was 2x40 minutes. The total number of the students in VIIC was 38 students.

After conducting the two cycles, the results showed that the use of stick figures was able to improve the students' active participation and their tense mastery. The finding based on the observation data and the tense test gained in cycle 1 and cycle 2.

The percentage of the students' active participation in cycle 1 showed improvement, although it had not fulfilled the target percentage of the research that was 75% of the students were actively involved in the teaching learning of tense. The percentage of the students' active participation increased as much as 19% from 42% in meeting 1 up to 61% in meeting 2. It meant that there were 23 students of 38 students who were active students during the teaching learning process. However, the improvement was less than 75% as this research required. After conducting reflection and revising some problems, the percentage of the students' active participation showed better improvement in cycle 2. Then, the results of the students' tense test in cycle 1 showed that only 57% of 37 students got score <sup>3</sup>75. Meanwhile, the results of the students' tense test in cycle 2 showed that 81% of 36 students got score <sup>3</sup>75. It meant that the students' simple present tense mastery had been improved, because the criteria of the success were determined by at least 75% of the students got score <sup>3</sup>75 in the tense test.

Based on the results of the research, it can be said that the use of stick figures could improve the students' active participation and their Simple Present Tense mastery. The finding of this research strengthened the theory that stick figures is an alternative media to be applied in teaching tense. By using stick figures in teaching tense, the students can see image of the material so that the students can easily get the ideas by correlating what they see from stick figures

In conclusion, the result of this action research proved the action hypotheses as follows:

1. The use of stick figures could improve the eighth grade students' active participation in the teaching learning process of simple present tense at SMP Negeri 5 Jember in the 2016/2017 academic year.
2. The use of stick figures could improve the eighth grade students' Simple Present Tense mastery at SMP Negeri 5 Jember in the 2016/2017 academic year.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

Based on the results of the data analysis and discussion, it can be concluded that the use of stick figures could improve the eighth grade students' active participation at SMP Negeri 5 Jember. The improvement was proven by the percentage of the students who actively involved in the teaching learning process of Simple Present Tense by using stick figures from 42% (16 students) in cycle 1 to 79% (30 students) in meeting 1 of cycle 2 and 87% (33 students) in meeting 2 of cycle 2.. Then, the use of stick figures could improve the eighth grade students' Simple Present Tense mastery at SMP Negeri 5 Jember in the 2016/2017 academic year in two cycles. The improvement could be seen from the percentage

of the students' results of the tense test from 57% (21 students) in cycle 1 to 81% (29 students) in cycle 2.

By considering the research result that the use of stick figures could improve the students' active participation and their Simple Present Tense mastery, the researcher proposes some suggestions to the following people:

1. The readers. It is suggested that the readers of this research results get a reference or some information in using stick figures as the media to improve EFL learners' tense mastery.
2. The English teacher. The teacher is suggested to draw stick figures on the whiteboard directly and correlated to the tense, give practice, and give feedback as well as chance to the students to be active in the classroom.
3. The Students as the Research Participants. It is suggested that the students practice more in learning tense by using stick figures since it motivates and give the students strategy to improve their active participation and their tense mastery (Simple Present Tense).
4. The other researchers. They who have the similar problem are suggested to conduct a further research about the use of stick figures to improve the students' Simple Present Tense mastery by using the same research design or different research design.

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