CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses some topics related to: the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the statement of hypothesis, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, the scope and limitation, and the definition of key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

Language is an important aspect in life. In Indonesia, English as the foreign language has an important role not only to the students who want to enroll themselves into the higher educational institutions but also the people who look for better job or positions.

Language as a tool for communication is needed by people. People need to communicate with others to share their ideas, opinions, or arguments. In sharing ideas, opinions, or arguments, the clear and understandable speeches or sentences are needed. A clear and understandable sentence will be easily accepted by the listener or reader. That is why, it is important to learn how to speak or write the sentences based on the sentence structure or the grammatical sentence.

Harmer (1999: 1) states grammar is partly the study of what forms or structures are possible in a language. According to Riley and Parker (1998: 1), grammar is sort of the “government” of word which contains rules and regulations that help words get along with each other. Grammar is important to learn because it is the key of constructing the language. Grammar is used to communicate with other
people in order to make understand what a speaker said or a writer wrote. In processing language, we are not only trying to make sense the sentence but also to understand the speaker’s or the writer’s intention about what they are saying or writing.

One of grammar aspects is tense. Tense as one of grammar aspects is needed to be learnt. Tense is a classification system for verbs that indicate the time of the action which happens (Riley and Parker, 1998: 286). For Indonesian students, tense is difficult because in our language we do not have a tense. Moreover, according to Azar (1999: 6-7) tense has been divided into 12 kinds and distinguished into 3 types. Each of those types is classified into 4 kinds of present tense, 4 kinds of past tense, 4 kinds of future tense and each kind has different function in the application.

Besides in oral communication, tense is also used in written communication. Tenses are often used in the kind of text, such as simple present tense used in descriptive text or simple past tense used in narrative text. For the students who learn grammar about tenses, they can learn the text and the tenses used in the text. In Junior High School, especially in the eighth grade, the students learn about the descriptive text with simple present tense and the narrative text with simple past tense as the language feature of the text.

In Junior High Schools, there are some kinds of students’ books to be used, such as “Scaffolding English Junior High School”, “English on Sky”, “English in Focus”, etc.. In learning English, the eighth grade students of MTs. Surya Buana Malang use “English on Sky” as their students’ book.
The students’ book entitled “English on Sky” as in Junior High School’s curriculum, contains some kinds of text followed by some kinds of tense as one of the grammar materials. In this book, there are five types of tense taught to the students in the eighth grade of Junior High School. They are simple present, present progressive, simple past, past progressive, and present perfect tense.

In reality, students still have some difficulties in learning tenses. That is why the teacher’s creativity is needed to explain and teach about tenses effectively. With interesting techniques, hopefully the students will be interested in receiving the material easily.

Game is an entertaining activity or sport, especially one played by children, or the equipment needed for such an activity. According to Paul (in Halimi et al, 2010: 72), through games, students can learn things in a fun way. Playing fun and interesting games can promote and maintain the students’ motivation and interest in learning English. Playing games allows students to explore and become familiar with words and phrases. Wright et al (2006: 2) say games provide one way of helping the learners to experience language rather than only study it. Games also help teachers to create condition in which the language is useful and meaningful.

“Phrzazzle Me” is a game about rearranging jumbled words that consist of noun, pronoun, to be, verb, adjective, adverb, and preposition to be arranged into sentences. This game is invented by Marcelo Montecinos. It is made from rectangular wooden pieces with a word on each side with color that show learners what goes with that. Learners follow the color to make a correct sentence. “Phrzazzle
Me” could be done everywhere and every time. Through this game, it is expected that the students would be more interested in learning tenses effectively and happily.

The previous research conducted by Maksidaturohmah (2004) entitled “The Effect of Using Flannel Board in Demonstrating Grammar on the Six Grades Students’ English Achievement at SDN Suruh Wadung 03 Kademangan Blitar” concluded that demonstrating grammar using flannel board significantly gives better result to the students’ English achievement. This research used true experimental research design. She divided the sixth grade that consist of 42 students into two groups, control and experimental group. The experimental group was given the treatment by using flannel board in demonstrating the grammar materials which contains the words, sentences, by showing pictures and sentences, whereas control group was taught without using flannel board. The result showed that the students enjoyed more in studying English by seeing and studying the pictures and colourful words placed on the flannel board.

Another research conducted by Meizaliana (2009) entitled “Teaching Structure through Games to the Students of MAN 1 Kepahiang Bengkulu” stated that game is fun, interactive and exiting. In playing game, students can study English structure in a relax atmosphere and interestingly. This research used true experimental research design. There were 39 students in the experimental group and 38 students in the control group of tenth grades. Both groups got a different treatment, the experimental group was taught through games in teaching structure and the control group was taught without games in teaching structure with the same material. The result showed that teaching structure through structure games (Present Continous
Tense game, Jumble Sentence game, Imperative Sentence game, If (Conditional Type II) game, Eliciting “Yes” and “No” game, Adjective + Noun Phrase game, Adverbs and Adjective game, and The Longest sentence game) was better than teaching structure conventionally.

By knowing the result both of researches, the researcher realizes that an interesting techniques in teaching English, especially grammar can help the students learn grammar effectively and improve their English achievement. The difference between this research and both previous researches is that the researcher wanted to implement a game with a quasi experimental research design.

From the background above, the researcher wanted to find out more information about teaching English using “Phrazzle Me” game. “Phrazzle Me” game was chosen to teach grammar because this game would be a more interesting activity in learning English than the conventional technique used before. The researcher chose this research to be conducted at MTs. Surya Buana Malang because this school declares as a bilingual school but the students still have difficulties in learning English especially grammar.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Based on the background above, the problem of this research is:

“Does teaching English using “Phrazzle Me” game improve the students’ grammar mastery at MTs. Surya Buana Malang?”
1.3 Statement of Hypothesis

In order to give tentative answers of the result problem, the hypotheses are formulated as follows:

- Null hypothesis (Ho): Teaching English using “Phrazzle Me” game cannot improve the students’ grammar mastery at MTs. Surya Buana Malang.
- Alternative hypothesis (Ha): Teaching English using “Phrazzle Me” game can improve the students’ grammar mastery at MTs. Surya Buana Malang.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

Based on the research question above, the purposes of the study is:

“To know whether or not teaching English using “Phrazzle Me” game can improve the students’ grammar mastery at MTs. Surya Buana Malang.”

1.5 Significance of the Study

The result of this research is expected to give more information about how to teach English especially grammar with “Phrazzle Me” game. Moreover, it is expected to give a contribution to the teacher in teaching English especially in improving the students’ grammar mastery, so that the students have better achievement. For the readers, it can give more knowledge about teaching English using “Phrazzle Me” game.
1.6 Scope and Limitation

This research focuses on improving the students’ grammar mastery by using “Phrazzle Me” game. The aspect of grammar to improve is tenses; simple present tense and simple past tense. In addition, this research is limited to the eighth grade students of MTs. Surya Buana Malang with class 8B as the control group and class 8C as the experimental group.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding in this research, the researcher wants to clarify the following key terms:

1. Phrazzle Me is a game that consists of making phrases of two or more words, by putting them on a table or on the floor, horizontally or vertically, in a way that can be read from left to right or from top to bottom. Made up of rectangular wooden pieces with a word on each face. (Montecinos, 2002)

2. Game is an entertaining activity or sport, especially one played by children, or the equipment needed for such an activity. (Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, 2008)

3. Improve is to become or make something better. (Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary 4th edition, 2008)

4. Grammar Mastery, Grammar is sort of the “government” of words. It contains rules and regulations that help words get along with each other. (Riley and Parker, 1998). Mastery means comprehension, understanding, knowledge, and control. (Lutz, 1995). It means the excellent ability or quality to do something
well. The student who is said to have the mastery of grammar means he/she has learned the grammar well.