

EXPLORING STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE GRAMMAR CITY BOARD GAME IN SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE LEARNING

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Abstract

This study investigates students' perceptions of the use of the Grammar City Board Game in learning the simple present tense and describes their learning experiences during its implementation in 11th Grade at SMA Negeri 3 Brebes, Academic Year 2025/2026. A descriptive qualitative design was employed, involving students who participated in grammar lessons using the board game as an instructional medium. Data were collected through Likert-scale and open-ended questionnaires, and analyzed descriptively to identify patterns in students' responses and classroom interaction. The findings indicate that students generally held positive perceptions of the Grammar City Board Game, as it helped them understand grammar concepts more easily and increased their participation, interaction, and engagement during the lesson. Classroom observations further revealed that students were more communicative and enthusiastic compared to conventional grammar instruction. Although limitations were identified, such as the limited number of question cards and time constraints, the results suggest that the Grammar City Board Game can serve as an effective alternative medium for interactive grammar instruction.

Keywords: Students' Perceptions, Grammar City Board Game, Grammar Learning, Simple Present Tense

1. INTRODUCTION

Grammar learning at senior high school levels has become a significant challenge for many students, especially because of the lack of variations in activities in the classroom which makes students bored and not engaged in the learning activity. The writer used Grammar Translation Method (GTM) which belongs to a conventional method to teach grammar. In simple term, Grammar Translation Method is one way to teach and learn second or foreign language (Kaharuddin, 2018). Grammar instruction, especially through the Grammar Translation Method (GTM), is still widely taught in classrooms, even though it is frequently given in a mixed-language format (English and Indonesian), according to Molla (2014), despite the popularity of newer approaches. As stated by Ishchenko et al. (2022) and Rose et al. (2021), the Grammar Translation Method is still a useful strategy for improving foreign language proficiency in English. However, it tends to make the students passive and bored during the learning process.

The English textbook used for grammar instruction lacked of interactivity, according to the researcher's observations from the teaching practicum (PLP) at the school. With few opportunities for students to participate in cooperative or communicative activities, the materials mostly consisted of reading passages followed by written exercises. Therefore, relying only on the textbook could result in passive learning, low motivation, and little involvement by students in class. The researcher took consideration of the importance of implementing more interactive learning strategies after realizing this limitation.

There are many options for teachers to make the lessons more engaging and can encourage students' enthusiasm, one of them is by applying games in the learning process. Higher post-test scores in the experimental group, which demonstrated an improvement in students' grammar proficiency, demonstrated that game-based learning was more successful than traditional instruction (Julianda et al., 2023). One of the games teacher can use is board game. Board game, based on Cambridge Dictionary, is any kind of game played on a board that use pieces which can be moved in certain ways and marked with some patterns. A kind of board game that teacher can

use is Grammar City Board Game. It is an A4-size printable board game which can be used for 3-4 players. The method of playing this board game in essence is similar to monopoly. The writer found this board game suitable to enhance grammar learning, especially with the flexibility and the variations of activities it can make.

Although there are previous studies which focused on the use of board games in grammar learning, there is a few studies which highlight the students' perceptions of board games in grammar learning, especially in learning simple present tense. Moreover, with Indonesian high school context. With this in mind, the writer wants to fill this gap by conducting a research related to students' perceptions on the use of Grammar City Board Game in learning simple present tense.

The writer founds this topic crucial to be explored further since the writer wants to create an enjoyable learning experience without too much pressure. Thus, this study aims to explore students' perceptions with Grammar City Board Game and describe students' learning experiences with the game in learning simple present tense. Since students' motivation and level of engagement have a big impact on how efficiently they learn grammar, it's critical to understand their perspectives.

2. METHODOLOGY

Type of Research

The qualitative descriptive method was used in this study. It described how students feel about using the Grammar City Board Game to learn grammar. According to John W. Creswell & Cheryl N. Poth (2018), qualitative research is a complex and detailed process that incorporates a variety of viewpoints, approaches, and interpretive frameworks that are interwoven like fabric.

Time and Place of Research

The research was conducted from January 5 to January 8, 2026. It took place over four meetings. The study's sample comprised students from one class: XI F4 at SMAN 3 Brebes during the 2025/2026 academic years.

Research Target/Subject

Eleventh-grade students of the second semester of the academic year 2025/2026 at SMA Negeri 3 Brebes were the participants. Total sampling technique was used because the number of students in the class was relatively small and homogeneous, so that the entire population could be sampled without special selection. In this study, all students, approximately 34 students from the selected class were included as participants to obtain a complete and accurate picture of students' perceptions regarding the use of the Grammar City Board Game in learning simple present tense.

Procedures

This study used a descriptive qualitative approach to examine students' perceptions of using the Grammar City Board Game in learning the simple present tense. First, the researcher introduced the Grammar City Board Game and explained the rules and objectives of the activity. The students then played the game in groups and answered questions related to the simple present tense during the learning process. After the activity, the researcher distributed a questionnaire consisting of close-ended and open-ended questions to collect students' perceptions of the use of the Grammar City Board Game in learning the simple present tense. The collected data were then analyzed using descriptive statistics for the close-ended responses and thematic analysis for the open-ended responses.

Data, Instruments, and Data Collection Techniques

To explore students' experiences, perspectives, and responses regarding the use of board games in the classroom, this study collected qualitative data using a questionnaire. The data were collected using 5-likert scale and open-ended questionnaire. The five-point Likert scale was selected because it provides a balanced range of responses, from strongly disagree to strongly agree, allowing students to express different levels of agreement clearly. Open-ended questionnaire let the students to tell their opinions, experiences, and feelings without being limited by predetermined answer choices. Therefore, the answers or the data obtained were richer and more various. Questionnaires were used not only because they are efficient in collecting data, but also from a psychological perspective. Research on language anxiety conducted by Djafri, 2018 shows that students can feel social pressure or fear of being judged when speaking directly, especially in class. With written questionnaires, students had space to think first and expressed their opinions without direct interaction, making them more comfortable and honest in their answers.

Data Analysis Techniques

The data were analyzed using Creswell and Poth (2018) interactive model, which includes:

1. Organizing the Data: organizing and tidying all the data from the results of the research.
2. Reading Through the Data: aimed to understand the data as a whole before coding it.
3. Coding: giving label to relevant parts of the data so that it can be made to a group according to the focus of the research.
4. Developing Themes: identifying patterns or main categories.
5. Presenting the Data: presented through diagrams and tables to show the findings clearly.
6. Interpreting the Findings: give meaning to the results and linking them to relevant theories or previous studies.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Students' Overview on the Use of Grammar City Board Game

Table 3.1 Summary of Students' Responses to Likert-Scale Items

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel comfortable with the idea of employing game as a grammar learning tool	0%	0%	9%	35%	56%
Grammar City Board Game helps increase my confidence when using grammar in speaking or writing	0%	0%	44%	47%	9%
Grammar City Board Game is simple to set up in the classroom	0%	3%	27%	41%	29%

The use of Grammar City Board Game technique can be time-consuming	3%	29%	62%	6%	0%
I had fun when playing the game	0%	0%	18%	32%	50%
I believe that the game improved my understanding of grammar	0%	3%	29%	56%	9%
Grammar City Board Game improves interaction between classmates in the learning process	0%	0%	21%	29%	50%
Grammar City Board Game is suitable for all types of students	0%	0%	29%	41%	30%
I prefer to play game live during class time	0%	6%	50%	29%	15%
The game helps me become more productive in class activities	0%	3%	56%	29%	12%
The game helps me acquire knowledge related to the lesson	0%	3%	12%	65%	20%
The game gives me a positive impact on learning new things.	0%	0%	21%	56%	23%
I would like to use Grammar City Board Game again in future lessons	0%	3%	35%	30%	32%

Although a few unfavorable responses were found, their proportion was small in comparison to the overall positive responses. This suggests that only a few students were uncomfortable or had reservations about using the game to learn grammar. The low number of negative responses suggests that the game's implementation did not elicit significant resistance in the classroom. Most students appeared to accept the game as an appropriate instructional medium and did not think it was unsuitable for grammar lessons. Overall, the results show that students have positive attitudes toward the use of games in grammar instruction, particularly in terms of comfort, acceptance, and relevance to the learning process.

3.2 Students' Perceptions on the Use of Grammar City Board Game in Learning the Simple Present Tense

Table 3.2 Students' Responses to Open-Ended Questions

Theme	Description of Students' Responses
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Enjoyment	Students described the activity as enjoyable, fun, and not boring, and stated that learning grammar through the game made the lesson more engaging
Active Participation	Students reported that interacting with classmates through asking and answering questions made the learning process more enjoyable and active.
Better Understanding	Students reported that the game helped them understand grammar more easily and made learning less difficult.
Teamwork / Discussion	Students reported that the game encouraged interaction, cooperation, and teamwork among classmates.
Need Improvement	Some students reported that the game could become less engaging when questions were limited or repeated, which occasionally led to boredom.

The analysis of open-ended responses revealed four major positive themes: enjoyment, active participation, improved understanding, and teamwork. Many students found the activity enjoyable and engaging, claiming that learning grammar through a game made the lesson more interesting and less monotonous. Furthermore, students reported that interacting with classmates by asking and answering questions helped to foster a more active learning environment. The game encouraged them to participate more frequently than traditional grammar lessons. Several students also stated that the collaborative discussion of the questions in the board game made it easier for them to understand grammar concepts. Furthermore, students emphasized that the activity fostered cooperation and teamwork, allowing them to share ideas and support one another throughout the learning process.

Despite the positive feedback, a few students identified areas for improvement. Some participants stated that the game became less engaging when the number of questions was limited or specific questions were repeated. This occasionally led to boredom, especially among students who had previously encountered similar items. These responses suggest that, while the Grammar City Board Game was generally well received, increasing the variety and number of question cards could improve its effectiveness and keep students engaged throughout the activity.

4. CONCLUSIONS

This study looked at students' perceptions on using the Grammar City Board Game to learn the simple present tense, as well as their learning experiences while using it. The findings show that students have a generally positive attitude toward the game's integration into grammar instruction. The board game helped to increase engagement, active participation, peer interaction, and comprehension of grammar concepts. Classroom observations confirmed these findings, demonstrating that students were more communicative and enthusiastic than in conventional instruction. Although a few students suggested improvements, particularly in terms of the variety and quantity of question cards, the overall results indicate that the Grammar City Board Game can be used as an effective alternative medium for interactive grammar instruction. Further refinement and broader implementation may improve its contribution to grammar learning in various educational contexts.

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