CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

In the digital age, communication has become a fundamental necessity for personal, educational, and professional success. The increasing interconnectedness of societies across the globe has placed a greater emphasis on the ability to communicate effectively using language. As people from different linguistic backgrounds engage more frequently whether through social media, international collaboration, or education the demand for multilingual communication has grown. English, in particular, is widely recognized as the global lingua franca, serving as a bridge in cross-border communication and information exchange. To communicate clearly and effectively, especially in English, mastery of language structure is indispensable. Grammar serves as the backbone of any language, ensuring that meaning is conveyed accurately and without misunderstanding. One of the most crucial elements of clear communication is grammar. Because it was able to utilize proper grammar (Harmer Jeremy., 2007)

Despite its essential role, grammar is often perceived as one of the most difficult and least engaging aspects of learning a language. Students frequently encounter challenges in understanding and applying grammar rules, which are often taught in abstract and decontextualized ways. *PBL* teaching practices such as lecturing and rote memorization tend to dominate grammar instruction in many educational institutions. These methods often fail to spark interest or facilitate meaningful learning. *PBL* grammar texts and exercises often fail to spark interest or provide opportunities to practice in real contexts (Salsabila, 2023). The consequence is a low level of student engagement, superficial understanding of grammatical concepts, and weak communicative competence. Students may be able to memorize rules but are often unable to apply them effectively in real-life contexts.

In response to these pedagogical challenges, educators have increasingly turned to innovative teaching strategies, particularly those that leverage digital technology to enhance engagement and interactivity. One such method gaining attention is Game-Based Learning (GBL). GBL involves the integration of game elements such as points, levels, challenges, rewards, and leaderboards into the learning process. This approach is designed not only to make learning enjoyable, but also to foster active participation, motivation, and deeper understanding. This method utilises game elements to increase student engagement, motivate them, as well as create a fun learning experience (Meiliawati et al., 2024). In the context of grammar instruction, GBL can transform static and repetitive grammar drills into dynamic, interactive experiences where students are encouraged to explore and apply rules through engaging tasks.

Grammar learning, when infused with GBL, becomes more contextual and learner-centered. Instead of merely memorizing grammar rules, students are immersed in scenarios that require them to actively use grammar to progress in the game or achieve a goal. Tools such as Wordwall, *Kahoot!*, and Educaplay are increasingly utilized to support this model. These platforms provide instant feedback, allow for adaptive learning, and sustain motivation through gamified challenges. By incorporating engaging tasks, points, challenges and rewards, gamified learning platforms such as *Wordwall, Kahoot!, Educaplay* and many more can transform grammar practice into an engaging and interactive experience (Niswah, 2022). Moreover, advances in Artificial Intelligence (AI) now enable GBL tools to personalize learning by adjusting difficulty levels and targeting specific student weaknesses, thereby optimizing learning outcomes. Using gaming applications created especially to aid in the learning process is known as game-based learning (Wibawa et al., 2020).

Although GBL has demonstrated its effectiveness in various educational contexts, its application in grammar instruction especially at the secondary school level in Indonesia remains limited. This is a missed opportunity, particularly given the challenges students face in mastering foundational

grammar concepts. Among these, the three basic tenses simple present, simple past, and simple future are crucial. These tenses form the grammatical core of everyday communication and serve as building blocks for more complex structures such as perfect and continuous aspects. Research shows that a strong understanding of these three basic tenses helps students master more difficult forms, such as the *present perfect* or *past continuous*, which have more specific usages and rules (Permana, 2020).

The grammar learning difficulties described above are particularly evident among students at SMAN 3 Bengkulu City. Observational data and teacher interviews indicate that many students struggle with applying grammar rules in both spoken and written contexts. The instructional methods used in the school still rely heavily on conventional techniques such as lecturing and written exercises. Observations show that this is largely due to conventional and uninteresting learning approaches. The lack of interactive elements in these methods fails to stimulate student interest and motivation. Students often feel disconnected from the learning process, which leads to anxiety, low confidence, and poor grammar performance. As a result, they often feel pressured and lack confidence in using English, especially in grammar (Meiliawati et al., 2024).

Quantitative data further reinforces the need for pedagogical innovation. The understanding of grammar among high school students in Indonesia is still quite low, especially in mastering simple tenses such as simple present tense, found that students only achieved an average score of 43.3 in the pre-test related to simple present tense, before the implementation of special methods such as drilling to improve their understanding. This difficulty is generally caused by a lack of vocabulary knowledge and complicated grammar rules, which makes many students feel overwhelmed by English lessons (Ayu Lestari & Nabah, 2019).

At present, Game Based Learning is not yet integrated into the English curriculum at SMAN 3 Bengkulu City. This presents a research gap as well as an opportunity. Although GBL has been proven effective in enhancing

motivation and learning outcomes in other contexts, its impact on grammar comprehension at this school remains unexplored. The Game-Based Learning (GBL) method is not used in the existing educational process as a novel way to aid students in understanding grammar-related content. Thus, there is a pressing need to examine how GBL can be effectively implemented in this specific setting to improve student engagement and academic achievement in grammar.

Moreover, the selection of grade XI students as the research population is strategic. Students in this grade are in a cognitively and emotionally mature stage of development, making them more receptive to innovative and interactive learning methods. Students in grade 11 are better prepared to use cutting edge teaching strategies like GBL their motivation to learn tends to change. They are also approaching national-level examinations, which require a strong grasp of grammar and writing skills. Therefore, providing them with effective grammar instruction through engaging and motivational approaches such as GBL could significantly enhance their learning outcomes.

In conclusion, the growing demand for effective communication in the digital age underscores the importance of mastering grammar. *PBL* methods are no longer sufficient to meet students' needs, especially in fostering engagement and long-term retention of grammar concepts. Game-Based Learning offers a promising alternative, one that aligns with students' digital habits and psychological profiles. However, its implementation and impact on grammar learning at SMAN 3 Bengkulu City remain largely unexamined. Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the effect of GBL on students' grammar understanding, with a focus on the simple present, simple past, and simple future tenses among grade XI students. The results of this study are expected to inform future instructional practices and promote more effective, enjoyable, and meaningful grammar learning in Indonesian high schools.

B. Identification of Problem

The following issues are identified as study material based on the context of the concerns mentioned above: The effect of using GBL on improving secondary school students' grammar understanding in the of digital era.

C. Limitation of Research

This Research is Limited on The Implementation of Game Based Learning on Student's Grammar Understanding in digital era at 11th grade SMAN 3 Bengkulu City in The Academy Year of 2024/2025.

D. Research Question

The researcher developed the following research question based on the problem's background and identifications : Is there any significant effect in using Game Based Learning on improving secondary school students' grammar skills in the age of Digital era?

E. Research Objective

The following goals is anticipated from this research in accordance with the research question that has been described: to determine the effect of GBL affects pupils' grammar development in the digital age.

F. Significance of Research

The benefits to be achieved from the results of this study are as follows following:

1. Theoretical Benefit:

    This research was to the body of knowledge in the fields of AI technology and language instruction. The research's findings wascontribute to a better theoretical understanding of how game based learning influences technological advancement and In the age of artificial intelligence, the research can aid in the development of theories regarding language instruction and learning. It was said in the creation of a more robust theoretical foundation for schooling.

2. Practical Benefits:

   a. For Students:

   This research can help improve students' grammar skills with a better understanding of how the Game Based Learning affects learning outcomes, teachers can design more effective learning programmes and students wasnefit from this research by understanding the contribution of grammar skills to interaction with Digital era technology. This wasassist students in preparing for a future that is increasingly connected to technology.

   b. For Teacher :

   This research assist language teachers in improving the quality of their teaching by understanding how to optimise the Game Based Learning in language teaching and teachers wasunderstand the obstacles and challenges they face in language teaching and can seekvsolutions to overcome these obstacles, resulting in improvements in their teaching.

   c. For Researchers and Students:

   The results of this study provide practical guidance for language teachers in optimising Game Based Learning or adapting teaching approaches to suit the era of Digital era. This wasenhance the effectiveness of language teaching.

G. Definition of Key Terms

The following definitions are provided so that readers have the same understanding or perception for some of the terms used in this study. It also aims to avoid misunderstandings between readers and researchers. These terms are explained below:

1. Game Based Learning

Game Based Learning (GBL) utilizes elements from both digital and non-digital games within instructional activities to enhance student motivation and participation. These activities help foster an interactive learning environment that can support improved academic performance.

2. Grammar Understanding

Grammar is a system of rules and conventions that underlies all languages, with each language possessing its own unique grammatical structure. Grammar plays a crucial role in communication, as using correct grammar enables us to express our ideas clearly and accurately.