

**USING CUISENAIRE RODS IN TEACHING PREPOSITIONS
TO THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS**

PAPER

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ABSTRAK

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Sebagai salah satu komponen pendukung dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris, siswa mengalami kesulitan dalam mempelajari *grammar*. Salah satunya adalah karena prepositions memiliki makna dan fungsi yang berbeda dalam kalimat yang berbeda. Selain itu, guru hanya menjelaskan teori tentang penggunaan *prepositions* tanpa menggunakan media yang dapat mempermudah siswa dalam memahami *prepositions* tersebut. Oleh karena itu, siswa cenderung tidak memperhatikan guru di saat menerangkan pelajaran sehingga mereka tidak memahami penggunaan *prepositions*.

Berdasarkan kondisi tersebut, penulis tertarik untuk menguraikan pengajaran *grammar* yaitu penggunaan *prepositions* dalam makalah ini. Media yang penulis gunakan adalah *cuisenaire rods*. *Cuisenaire rods* merupakan satu set batangan yang terdiri dari 10 batangan yang terbuat dari kayu, plastik, atau berupa magnet mulai dari ukuran 1cm sampai dengan 10 cm. Selain itu, media ini juga dapat dibuat sesuai dengan kreasi guru seperti menggunakan kertas karton yang dibentuk menyerupai *Cuisenaire rods* yang dilapisi kertas berwarna. *Cuisenaire rods* dibedakan berdasarkan ukuran dan warna. Setiap batangan yang memiliki ukuran sama juga memiliki warna yang sama. Siswa akan bekerja sama secara berpasangan berdasarkan perintah guru dengan mendemonstrasikan batangan-batangan ini. Dengan menggunakan *cuisenaire rods*, penulis berharap dapat membantu siswa dalam mempelajari dan memahami penggunaan *prepositions*. Selain itu, guru juga dapat menyajikan pelajaran dengan menggunakan media yang lebih menarik dan bervariasi sehingga siswa lebih tertarik untuk memperhatikan pelajaran.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Problem

Grammar is one of important language components in learning English. Students need to study grammar whenever they want to develop their speaking skills in order to be a good speaker. They will be able to produce grammatical sentences if they have good ability in grammar. It can help listener to understand what they say. Grammar is also needed for writer in expressing his or her ideas into writing form. In addition, grammar can also help the reader to comprehend what he or she reads. In other words, grammar really needs to support the students' mastery of those basic skills in order to get success in learning English.

Dealing with the importance of grammar, teaching grammar is integrated with four skills; speaking, listening, reading, and writing, in Junior High School and Senior High School. There are several aspects of grammar that are integrated to the four skills; speaking, listening, reading, and writing such as prepositions, plurals, articles, agreement, and soon. Knapp and Watkins (2005) says that teaching grammar deal with the syntactical aspects of grammar or how the language is organized within sentences; for example, the appropriate use of prepositions, plurals, articles, agreement and so on".

Considering the learning of Grammar at Junior High School, most of Junior High School students still have difficulties in learning grammar. First, the lack of doing exercises out of class. Second, the lack of students' willingness from

themselves in learning grammar. Beside the problems that come from the students, there are also some problem that comes from the teachers. First, most of the teachers only taught grammar to the students by using unvaried materials. Second, the teacher rarely uses good media that can support the teaching and learning process. Meanwhile, good media should be able to make the teaching and learning process become more interested and innovative. Third, the teacher seems unable to find appropriate technique.

Based on the writer's experience during her Practice Teaching (PL) at SMP Pertiwi 2 Padang when she taught the first year of Junior High School Students, prepositions is one of difficult materials that students cannot understand easily. There are three problems that make the students difficult to understand prepositions.

First, the students are confused about prepositions because it have different meaning and function in different sentences. For example the word "on". *On* can be used as preposition related to place in different meaning. For example "I live on Merpati Street", *on* here means the name of street. While, "the black bag is on the table", *on* here means place where the black bag put.

The second factor that made the students difficult to understand prepositions was the lack of practice which means the students did not involve in doing prepositions exercise activities.

The last factor is limited time of school study. It is not enough for the students to learn prepositions. They only studied English at least in three times process of teaching and learning in a week. Meanwhile, the students should have more time to

learn and discussed prepositions with the teacher to make them understand about grammar.

The problem in prepositions did not only come from the students themselves, but also from the teacher. First, the teacher did not explain the materials clearly that make the students lazier to study so that they did not understand about what he or she had already explained. Second, most of the teachers only taught prepositions to the students in monotonous way. The teacher usually just taught the students by explained the lesson and gave the exercise to the students. For example, the teacher gave explanations about prepositions by giving some examples and then asked the students to do the exercise. Third, the teacher did not use a good media that is appropriate to the material for teaching prepositions, so it could not support the process of teaching and learning well. Because of that, it is not surprising that the students get bored and did not pay attention to the lesson anymore.

Based on the problems above, it is important for the teacher to use an interesting media that can increase the students' willingness to learn prepositions. Therefore, through this paper, it is proposed that the teacher will use Cuisenaire Rods as an interesting media in teaching prepositions. By using this media the students will easy to focus on the form of prepositions because they do not only listen to the teacher's explanation, but also helping with the Cuisenaire Rods. As a result, they will understand about prepositions.

B. Identification of the Problem

As mentioned before, there are some problems that are found in learning prepositions. First, the students were difficult to use some words of prepositions because one preposition may communicate more than one meaning; it is depend on how it is used. It can be used as preposition of place in different meaning. Second, the students rarely done exercises that means they did not involve in doing the exercise. Third, limited time of learning that is provided in school is also a factor that made them do not have enough time to learn prepositions.

Whereas the problems that come from the teacher is the teacher did not give clear explanations about the lesson. The second problem is the teacher taught prepositions to the students in monotonous way by giving explanations about prepositions and asked the students to do the exercise. The last problem is the teacher did not have creativity in providing an interesting media that could increase the students' willingness in learning prepositions.

C. Limitation of the Problem

This paper limited the discussion on using Cuisenaire Rods in teaching prepositions to the Junior High School Students.

D. Formulation of the Problem

The problem of this study can be formulated as follow:”How can the teacher use Cuisenaire Rods to teach prepositions for Junior High School!”

E. Purpose of the Paper

The purpose of this paper is to explain how to use Cuisenaire Rods to develop students' understanding in prepositions.