THE ABILITY OF MAN 3 MALANG STUDENTS IN USING SIMPLE TENSES

Oleh: WAHYU TAUFiq (00360020)

English

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Considered as a foreign language, English has differences with Bahasa Indonesia. One of the differences that is commonly considered as a big difficulty is the grammar of the two languages. English especially has its own grammar, which its part that has to be understood by the students is the tenses structures.

A teacher must know the students’ ability in using tenses. By knowing the ability, the teacher will be able to choose the right way, level and even the materials suitable to his students. By doing so, the teacher can present the better method to make the subject interesting. If the teacher’s explanation of the subject is clear and interesting, the students will be interested in receiving the materials.

The researcher was interested in investigating the students’ ability of MAN 3 Malang in using simple tenses as the part of the whole tenses. The purposes of this study were to investigate the students’ ability of MAN 3 Malang in using simple tenses in the writing form, and to find out the most difficult and the easiest tenses among those. It was focused on the learners who were learning English at the moment of the study in order to know their problem earlier.

This descriptive research had students of second year of MAN 3 Malang as its population, and 37 students presenting five departments as its sample that was chosen randomly.

The data that was collected from 2nd until 8th December 2004 found that students’ ability in using simple tenses was “moderate”. The easiest tense among the three was the simple past tense, for about 26 students or 70.27% of 37 students was able to make this tense into the right form. The tense considered as the most difficult by the students was the simple present tense, 19 students or 51.35% of them had a poor and a very poor abilities.

In conclusion, the researcher found that the students still got difficulties in using those three tenses. Since the simple tenses were the basic tenses that had to be understood before learning to the other tenses, it was advised that the English teacher gave more exercises in various forms, daily conversation, etc.