

## THE IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING TENSES IN BUILDING A SENTENCE

**Qonita Fathin Suhaila<sup>1</sup>, Khairunnisa Azzahra<sup>2</sup>, Yani Lubis<sup>3</sup>, Muhammad Arval<sup>4</sup>**  
[qonita0403231044@uinsu.ac.id](mailto:qonita0403231044@uinsu.ac.id)<sup>1</sup>, [khairunnisa0403231041@uinsu.ac.id](mailto:khairunnisa0403231041@uinsu.ac.id)<sup>2</sup>, [yanilubis@uinsu.ac.id](mailto:yanilubis@uinsu.ac.id)<sup>3</sup>,  
[muhhammad0403231045@uinsu.ac.id](mailto:muhhammad0403231045@uinsu.ac.id)<sup>4</sup>

Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara

### ABSTRACT

*This community service was carried out in Sangeh Badung village study group in the form of English conversation teaching activities. The use of tenses in conducting English conversation is very important. Therefore, this community service activity aimed to improve the English-speaking skills of students in the Sangeh-Badung village study group. The teaching method applied in the training was the Communicative Language Teaching in Secondary Level method. This English training was a collaboration between the Language Consultant course and the English Study Program. In addition, this activity was carried out offline in order to get the maximum results of learning activities. In these service activities, study group students in Sangeh village were very enthusiastic and active in participating in English conversation learning or training. Students in this study group were given some understanding of the English tenses that were often used, namely simple present tense, simple future tense and simple past tense. In addition, these community service participants also conducted direct conversation exercises with teachers. Therefore, teachers could directly monitor the development process of their students.*

**Keywords:** English Conversation, Teaching, Study Group.

### INTRODUCTION

English is a vital communication medium in Indonesia, serving as a global language. According to Crystal (2003), English plays a significant role in various fields, including tourism, education, economy, and daily communication. This highlights the importance of mastering English in Indonesia. English has a crucial role and serves specific purposes, such as academic pursuits, career advancement, and international travel. As the primary foreign language, English is a compulsory subject from junior high school to higher education in Indonesia (Nurchayani, 2020).

The Ministry of Education and Culture incorporated English language studies starting from elementary school, acknowledging its significance. Early English language learning introduces students to foundational concepts. Kusuma, Zakaria & Djuwita (2017) emphasize that mastering English requires four essential skills

The most important skill to master is speaking skill is the most important skill to master in the world of everyday communication. According to Brown (2000), teaching speaking skill is not an easy thing that is influenced by a number of factors. There are five obstacles encountered by a student in following the learning process including (1) students are still afraid to make mistakes, (2) students do not seem to get the opportunity to be involved in speaking activities in class, (3) there are passive students, so students feel reluctant to be involved in speaking activities, (4) the learning topics presented are less interesting for students, (5) students sometimes still speak softly and slowly so that it is difficult for the teacher to hear. A teacher must be patient when accompanying community service participants to accompany English conversation activities in order to get maximum results. Teachers also need to encourage students to be able to speak fluently in English and students feel comfortable when accompanied by teachers in practicing English conversation.

Tarigan (2013) stated that speaking is the ability to pronounce articulation sounds or words to express, state and convey thoughts, ideas, and feelings. Furthermore, Budiarmo (2019) stated that there are three activities that must be implemented by a teacher in activities in skills lessons. Students should be able to make their own sentences in English so they can improve their English skills. The asking and answering method is a learning method that can be done by students in turns. Participants in this English conversation training seemed very enthusiastic in the teaching and learning process which was carried out with the aim of improving the participants' basic English conversation skills.

## **METHOD**

The research carried out is qualitative research, where researchers go directly to the field and conduct interviews with sources. In this research, we conducted in the environment of campus II UINSU against peer students, namely several students from MPI 2 class. After the interview was completed, we did not forget to take some documentation to complement the accuracy of this data. The purpose of this research is to analyse students' difficulties in learning tenses and being able to distinguish the types of tenses

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

English must be actively mastered both orally and in writing. English is a means of global communication, it is not impossible that the development of increasingly advanced technology requires us to be more active in responding to global information flows as an asset to meet market needs. To master English properly and correctly must go through a teaching and learning process that emphasises the training aspect so that it will be actively involved in expressing opinions freely according to existing conditions. Basically, English mastery consists of listening, writing, speaking, and reading. Through good and correct English language skills, it will open up many opportunities, especially in the field of education. Learning English is quite complicated if the basic understanding is not good, but when we really understand from the basics then learning English is much easier. One example of a basic form in learning English is learning tenses.

Tenses are an important element that is fundamental to learning English. The concept of tenses in English is the method we use to refer to time in the past, present and future. Tenses are verb-based methods used to indicate the time of an action or state related to the time being spoken about. The time used can be past, present and future.

Tenses based on events are divided into 4 parts namely Simple, Continuous, Perfect Continuous, and Perfect. While tenses based on time are also divided into 4 parts namely Past, Past Future, Present, and Future. After looking at the tenses based on the form, there are 16 tenses obtained after the division, namely Simple Present Tense, Present Continuous Tense, Present Perfect Tense, Present Perfect Continuous Tense, Simple Past Tense, Past Continuous Tense, Past Perfect Tense, Past Perfect Continuous Tense, Future Continuous Tense, Simple Future Tense, Future Perfect Continuous Tense, Future Perfect Tense, Past Future Continuous Tense, Simple Past Future Tense, Past Future Perfect Continuous Tense, Past Future Perfect Tense. In the research conducted, we only took 4 forms of Tenses namely Present Perfect Tense, Present Continuous Tense, Past Continuous Tense, and Simple Past Tense.

After conducting interviews with the students involved, it turned out that they experienced a little confusion to distinguish between the four tenses. At first, they thought that there are not as many tenses as mentioned, because not all tenses are used in daily life. To know the basics, we gave some definitions to the students to better understand the parts

of tenses.

### 1. Simple Past Tense

According to Hornby (1975:85), Simple Past Tense is a tense used to describe an activity or condition that occurred in the past, without showing a time attachment to the present. Simple past tense is a verb form used to show activities or situations that occurred at a certain time in the past. The past tense is used as an action that has been completed in the past, and to stop an ongoing action in the past. The simple past shows that an activity began and ended at a specific time in the past (Azar, Betty Schramfer, 2002:27). Then, in one form of tenses, it is divided into 3 types of sentences, namely positive, negative, and interrogative sentences. Positive sentences are sentences commonly used in English statements. This sentence is also commonly used in everyday speech. Negative sentences are sentences that are commonly used to express untruths or state an action that has not been done by the perpetrator. While an interrogative sentence is a sentence used to make a question about the statement that has been conveyed. Formula:

(+) S + Verb 2 + Obj.

(-) S + Didn't + Verb 1 + Obj.

(?) Did + S + Verb 1 + Obj.

Example:

- She drank a glass of milk one hours ago (dia telah meminum segelas susu satu jam yang lalu).
- She didn't drink a glass of milk one hours ago (dia tidak minum segelas susu satu jam yang lalu).
- Did she drink a glass of milk one hours ago? (apakah dia minum segelas susu satu jam yang lalu?).

### 2. Present Continuous Tense

This tense is a verb form used to describe an ongoing event. It is used to describe events that are taking place at the time of speaking, about a period around the present, and to talk about changes in situations (Rahmah, 2010). Formula:

(+) S + Tobe + V.ing + Obj.

(-) S + Tobe + Not + V.ing + Obj.

(?) Tobe + S + V.ing + Obj.

Example:

- We are studying english right now (kami sedang belajar bahasa inggris sekarang).
- We are not studying english right now (kami tidak sedang belajar bahasa inggris sekarang).
- Are we studying english right now? (apakah kami sedang belajar bahasa inggris sekarang?).

### 3. Present Perfect Tense

This tense describes an action that took place in the past and continues into the present, an unfinished action, or an action that has just been completed. (Rahmah, 2010). More simply, this present perfect tense leads to the impact of an action that has been done and its effects can be felt until now.

Formula:

(+) S + Have/Has + Verb 3 + Obj.

(-) S + Have/Has + Not + Verb 3 + Obj.

(?) Have/Has + S + Verb 3 + Obj.

Example:

- She has gone to Ambon (dia pergi ke Ambon).
- She has not gone to Ambon (dia tidak pergi ke Ambon). - Has she gone to the Ambon?

(apakah dia pergi ke Ambon?).

#### 4. Past Continuous Tense

This tense is also known as the past progressive tense, which refers to a situation that happened in the past when another event was also taking place. This past continuous tense can be used when describing an activity that took place in the past, setting the background in a story, explaining two activities that are happening simultaneously, and clarifying the time of an activity. Formula:

(+) S + Was/Were + V.ing + Obj.

(-) S + Was/Were + Not + V.ing + Obj.

(?) Was/Were + S + V.ing + Obj.

Example:

- They were playing football in the yard while mother was cooking a soup (mereka sedang bermain bola kaki di lapangan ketika ibu sedang memasak sop).
- They were not playing football in the yard while mother was cooking a soup (mereka tidak sedang bermain bola kaki di lapangan ketika ibu sedang memasak sop).
- Were they playing football in the yard while mother was cook

After seeing the definition above, the students began to understand the 4 tenses. The use of these tenses is also adjusted to the time when the interlocutor is inviting communication. Of the four tenses used, Present Continuous Tense is the most commonly used form of tenses, because the form of tenses is to express activities that are currently taking place. It is easier to understand because it simply uses a verb whose ending is added with the word -ing as a marker that the activity being done is actually being done in the present. Students also agree that the use of these tenses is very easy to understand and easy to remember, and the formula for using the sentences is also not complicated.

Then, the difference with Present Perfect Tense is in the time used. This tense shows work that has been done in the past and continues to the present. So it can be concluded that this tense is a type of activity that continues from the past (in the sense that it is not far away) to the present. It means that these activities are close together so that the time distance is very close and can be one unit. To distinguish with Present Continuous Tense is simply by looking at the word in the middle. Continuous means the present and Perfect means explaining the time more perfectly, from the past to the present. Then, Simple Present Tense is even easier to understand. This tense focuses on the past only, because this tense describes events that have taken place in the past and have nothing to do with the present. This tense really shows events that have happened in the past. Finally, the Past Continuous Tense. This form of tense can be used in several conditions, one of which is to explain past events and is accompanied by activities that are taking place at that very moment. Both tenses focus on the past, but this tense is associated with events that happened at the same time as the activity being described. More simply, this tense is used to beautify the language by adding activities that are happening at that very moment.

Through our discussion, it turns out that students understand more about some of these tenses, because through discussion with their own language friends are considered easier to understand. These four forms of tenses are very easy to understand and their use is also quite often applied in everyday life so it does not make forgetting in its application.

#### CONCLUSION

Understanding tenses is essential for basic learning in English. After fully mastering tenses, it is necessary to apply them in daily life. Through small communication, it will make the lessons learnt easy to remember and will not be easily forgotten. Mastery of the forms of tenses needs to be improved so that it is not difficult to distinguish them starting

from similar sentence forms, and the most important thing is to master the tenses formula. Formulas are very helpful in distinguishing tenses that are very similar. Through formulas, it will be answered where the difference in the form of a sentence is.

## **REFERENCES**

- Ashri, A., Frayoga, D. N., Fitri, N. Z. N., &Awaliyah, S. M. (2024). Analysis of Tenses Structure in Simple Conversation: Present Simple Tense, Present Continuous Tense and Present Perfect Tense: Indonesian. *AlKaff: Journal of Social Humanities*, 2(1), 75-80.
- Maduwu, B. (2016). The Importance of English Language Learning in Schools. *Warta Dharmawangsa*, (50).
- Mariana, M. (2021). Efforts to Increase the Activity and Learning Outcomes of Class X Students of SMAN 2 Jember Mellui' Huwo Game and Peer Tutoring. *Action: Journal of Classroom and School Action Research Innovation*, 1 (1), 36-45.
- Thariq, PA, Husna, A., Aulia, E., Djusfi, AR, Lestari, R., Fahrimal, Y., & Jhoanda, R. (2021). Socialisation of the importance of mastering English for students. *Journal of Community Service: Darma Bakti Teuku Umar*, 2 (2), 316-325.