



Analysis of Students' Ability and Their Difficulties in Identifying Passive Voice

AUTHORS INFO

Tira Nur Fitria

Institut Teknologi Bisnis AAS Indonesia
tiranurfitria@gmail.com
085725131910

Dewi Muliasari

Institut Teknologi Bisnis AAS Indonesia
dewimuliasari27@gmail.com

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Abstract

This research investigates the students' ability in identifying passive voice and know their opinions about the passive voice. In this research, 51 students of the 2nd semester from various study programs in ITB AAS Indonesia are involved. The result analysis shows that the students' average is 49.71 of 100 points, the median is 46 of 100, and the students' range scores between the 20 (as lowest score) up to 92 (the highest score). The students' difficulties are including, 1) difficulty in changing active into passive in active, negative, and interrogative forms related to each tenses formula. 2) difficulty in adjusting verbs according to the subject (both singular and plural). 3) difficulty in changing using auxiliary verbs. 4) difficulty in identifying subject and object in sentences. 5) difficulty in changing subject pronouns to object pronouns and vice versa. 6) difficulty in changing identifying passive sentences in multiple-choice form and essay form. 7) difficulty in memorizing, using, and identifying Verb-3 both regular and irregular forms. Most students believe that active sentences are easier than passive sentences because passive sentences are related to mastery of grammar especially tenses. Passive sentences (passive voice) in English use the verb-3 (past participle) both the regular and irregular verb and the auxiliary verb will be used vary depending on the tenses. Students are taught passive sentences after they understand active sentences. All sentences can only be understood properly according to their forms related to time (tenses). To explain passive sentences to students, the teachers/lecturers must start with active sentences first. Sentences in English are affected by the tenses, while sentences in Indonesian do not recognize tenses.

Keywords: *grammar, passive form, passive voice, students' ability, writing*

Introduction

Teaching English cannot be separated from teaching grammar. Teaching English to students, in general, includes four language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and teaching grammar or grammar is not explicitly included in the curriculum for these four skills. Nevertheless, teaching grammar becomes a unity in teaching the four skills above (Suryani & Fitria, 2022). Therefore, it becomes a question for teachers whether it is still necessary to teach grammar in the aspect of teaching English (Fitria, 2021b). With the impression that teaching grammar is not interesting, both for students and teachers. Some teachers try various techniques in teaching grammar, but they still have difficulty giving understanding to students.

Studying tenses, and active and passive voice are the basic building blocks of learning the English language (Kaur, 2018). Active voice is when the subject of the phrase is doing the action of the verb. The active voice accentuates the actor. Active voice is the preferred voice because it is crisper, more concise, and more alive (Yelin & Samborn, 2009). Active sentences are sentences in which the subject acts. While the passive voice is a sentence whose subject suffers (subject to action) from what is stated in the predicate. Not all active sentences can be made passive. What can be changed into passive sentences are active sentences that have an object. Commands and exclamations cannot be used as passive. Often the active voice is more recommended to be used than the passive voice. It is caused because by mentioning the actor as the subject of the sentence, the meaning of the sentence will be clearer without leaving confusion to the reader and not forcing the reader to digest the meaning of the sentence more deeply (Fitria, 2021a).

Passive voice occurs when the subject of the sentence is being acted on. Although passive voice has its merits, it is often not as strong as active voice (Fitria, 2022). In the passive voice, the object of the active sentence becomes the subject of the passive sentence. Verbs in passive sentences in English always use to be with the past participle. (Mustika, 2017) states that in English, passive voice uses the formula "to be + V3 (Past participle)" which is based on the tenses used (time of occurrence). Passive sentences or passive voice are sentences where the subject gets treatment, action, or giving certain verbs in their activities or actions. In other words, the passive voice shows that the subject is the part that is the goal of an action that is being or has been done.

Research on students' ability to write, change or identify active sentences being passive has been done by many previous researchers. First, Aprilia (2011) states that the ability of students to recognize the passive voice in reading literature was categorized as poor to average (55.8). Low motivation, limited time, IQ, teachers' style, class situation, surroundings, family, and classmates were all factors that influenced students' ability. Second, Basri (2017) states that class XI MA DI Putra Nurul Hakim Kediri did not have a good ability in identifying passive voice. Their average score was (15.56). Students felt that all types of passive voices were difficult to identify. Third, Hoterson et al (2019) state that the ability of students to recognize the passive voice in the text was rated as good at level 65. (60-79). It can be proven that 12 of the 30 students who took the exam had a good level, 7 of the 30 students had a fair level, and 11 of the 30 students had a poor level. Fourth, Wahyuni (2019) students' ability to recognize the passive voice in The Jakarta Post News ranges from average to good (60-79), while their knowledge of passive voice is weak at about 33.72 % (0-49).

All previous research conducts about students' ability in identifying passive voice in reading texts also the reason for their difficulties with passive sentences. The main purpose of previous research is also to focus on the students' ability in identifying passive voice. Passive voice also is one of the materials taught in the English 2 course in ITB AAS Indonesia. When in junior or high school students are only taught the basics of active and passive sentences and formulas, while in college students will be accustomed to passive sentences in a broad sense. So, the researchers want to know the students' ability in passive voices. In this research, the researcher uses mid-test in the form of multiple-choice sections and essays to know their ability and opinions about the material of passive voice in tests. Therefore, the objective of this research is to know the students' ability in identifying passive voice and to know their opinions about the passive voice.

Literature Review

In passive voice, the subject of active voice is moved into the position of the object preceded by the preposition 'by' (optional), and the object in active voice is moved into the position of the subject (Joshi, 2014). The passive voice is usually used to emphasize something

done by the perpetrator or if the perpetrator is deemed unimportant. And when we want to find treatment sufferers expressed by the verb (Nugraha, 2013). In the passive sentence structure, the subject becomes the part that is subject to an action or activity. The subject in the passive sentence is not in the position of the actor, but the role of the actor is held by the object. The subject of a passive sentence receives the action rather than initiating it, the passive structure is preferred for expressing inactivity, helplessness, or victimization (Vitto, 2006).

According to Aditya (2022), the passive voice is less usual than the active voice. The active voice is the “normal” voice. In general, passive sentences in English seem more formal and elegant than active sentences, but have certain drawbacks, namely, they are less direct, so sometimes the writing we make does not have a big impact. Although the passive voice itself is rarely used in everyday conversation, studying the passive voice is also very useful because this sentence pattern is often used in scientific and academic writing. The essence of using the passive voice is to vary our style when writing. Besides making writing less boring, these variations can reflect a person's English ability.

Method

This research is descriptive qualitative research. According to Hesse-Biber (2016), Qualitative research is a research method that utilizes qualitative data and is described descriptively, but qualitative research incorporates qualitative data and is described descriptively. But, numbers and percentages can be utilized by a qualitative researcher as a technique to describe some of the significant qualitative themes obtained through collected data. So, this research shows the number and percentage of the data based on the Google Form responses.

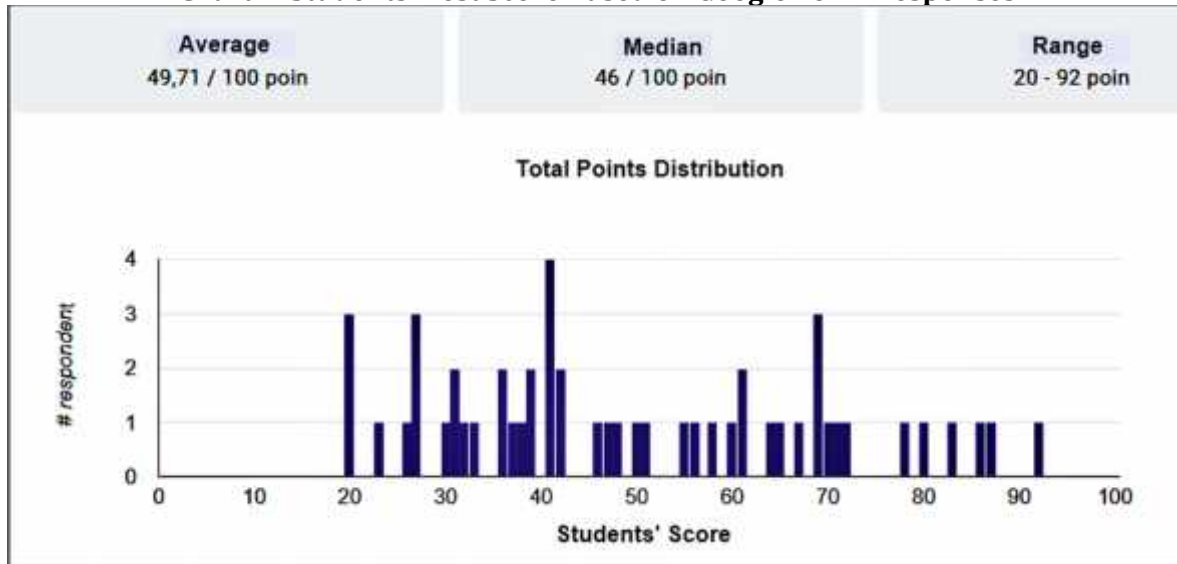
The collecting method uses a test (reading test) and a questionnaire. The test is a research data collection method that serves to measure a person's ability (Sohilait, 2020). Tohardi (2019) states that the test is by giving questions to the respondent or participant (treatment). The type of test is reading text by using a multiple-choice form. Besides tests, a questionnaire may be used to collect a broad variety of facts about an individual or an organization, as well as about their attitudes, ideas, and beliefs (Remenyi, 2012). The type of questionnaire uses closed-ended questions by clicking the possible answer related to their opinions or experience with passive voice. There are 51 students in the 2nd semester from various study programs in ITB AAS Indonesia involved. The researcher give them a test in the form of multiple-choice questions in Google Form which can be accessed on <https://forms.gle/qc3FnCJnczNgF55Z9>. There are 100 questions are must be answered by the students by clicking on the correct answer.

The analysis data uses three steps of qualitative analysis as proposed by Miles et al (2013; Miles & Huberman (1994), including data reduction, data display, and conclusion. In data reduction, the researcher summarizes and selects the main and important things to be used in the research. Furthermore, in displaying the data, the researcher describes the research results that were reduced previously in the form of graphs, tables, or images, and explained them in a description so that conclusions can be drawn.

Findings and Discussion

Findings

This research is to know the students' ability in identifying passive voice and to know their opinions about the passive voice. Below the result of the student's test score in the multiple-choice questions can be seen:

Chart 1. Students' Test Score Based on Google Form Responses

In this research, 51 students in the 2nd semester from various study programs in ITB AAS Indonesia are involved. The researcher gives them a test in the form of multiple-choice questions in Google Form. There are 100 questions are must be answered by the students by clicking on the correct answer. Based on the description, it shows that 3 students get 20 points (correct answer), 1 student get 23 points (correct answer), 1 student get 26 points (correct answer), 3 students get 27 points (correct answer), 1 student get 30 points (correct answer), 2 students get 31 points (correct answer), 1 student gets 32 points (correct answer), 1 student gets 33 points (correct answer), 2 students get 36 points (correct answer), 1 student gets 37 points (correct answer), 1 student gets 38 points (correct answer), 2 students get 39 points (correct answer), 4 students get 41 points (correct answer), 2 students get 42 points (correct answer), 1 student gets 46 points (correct answer), 1 student gets 47 points (correct answer), 1 student gets 48 points (correct answer), 1 student gets 50 points (correct answer), 1 student gets 51 points (correct answer), 1 student gets 55 points (correct answer), 1 student gets 56 points (correct answer), 1 student gets 58 points (correct answer), 1 student gets 60 points (correct answer), 2 students get 61 points (correct answer), 1 student gets 64 points (correct answer), 1 student gets 65 points (correct answer), 1 student gets 67 points (correct answer), 3 students get 69 points (correct answer), 1 student gets 70 points (correct answer), 1 student gets 71 points (correct answer), 1 student gets 72 points (correct answer), 1 student gets 78 points (correct answer), 1 student gets 80 points (correct answer), 1 student gets 3 points (correct answer), 1 student gets 86 points (correct answer), 1 student gets 87 points (correct answer), and only 1 student gets 92 points (correct answer). Based on the chart of students' test scores based on Google Form responses, shows that the student's average is 49.71 of 100 points, the median is 46 of 100, and the students' range scores between the 20 (as lowest score) up to 92 (as highest score).

Table 1. Students' Difficulties in Identifying Passive Form

No	Statements	Students' Response			
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	Passive sentences are related with mastery of grammar especially tenses	9 (18 %)	38 (74 %)	4 (8 %)	0 (0 %)
2.	Having difficulty in changing active into active, negative and interrogative forms related to the respective tenses formula in passive form	7 (14 %)	31 (61 %)	13 (26 %)	0 (0 %)
3.	Having difficulty in adjusting verb according to the subject (both singular and plural) in passive form	12 (24 %)	34 (67 %)	5 (10 %)	0 (0 %)
4.	Having difficulty in changing using TO BE (is, am, are) and auxiliary verbs (do, did, have, has, had)	9 (18 %)	29 (57 %)	11 (22 %)	2 (4 %)
5.	Having difficulty in identifying subject and object in sentences	6 (12 %)	25 (49 %)	16 (32 %)	4 (8 %)
6.	Having difficulty in changing subject pronouns to object pronouns	11 (22 %)	30 (59 %)	9 (18 %)	1 (2 %)
7.	Having difficulty in changing object pronoun to subject pronoun	8 (16 %)	31 (61 %)	11 (22 %)	1 (2 %)
8.	Having difficulty in changing identifying passive sentences in multiple choice form	12 (24 %)	20 (39 %)	17 (34 %)	2 (4 %)
9.	Having difficulty in changing identifying passive sentences in essay form	10 (20 %)	27 (53 %)	13 (26 %)	1 (2 %)
10.	Having difficulty in memorizing, using and identifying Verb-3 both regular and irregular forms	12 (24 %)	27 (53 %)	11 (22 %)	1 (2 %)
11.	Having belief that active sentences are easier than passive sentences	15 (30 %)	32 (63 %)	4 (8 %)	0 (0 %)

Based on the table of students' opinions about the passive form can be seen based on Google Form responses above. In the 1st statement, 9 students (18 %) state "strongly agree", 38 students (74 %) state "agree", 4 students (8 %) state "disagree" and no student (0 %) state "strongly disagree". It shows that most students (74 %) agree that changing or identifying passive sentences is related to mastery of grammar especially tenses. In the 2nd statement, 7 students (14 %) state "strongly agree", 31 students (61 %) state "agree", 13 students (26 %) state "disagree" and no student (0 %) state "strongly disagree". It shows that most students (61 %) have difficulty in changing active into active, negative, and interrogative forms related to the respective tenses formula in passive form.

In the 3th statement, 12 students (24 %) state "strongly agree", 34 students (67 %) state "agree", 5 students (10 %) state "disagree" and no student (0 %) state "strongly disagree". It shows that most students (67 %) have difficulty in adjusting verbs according to the subject (both singular and plural) in passive form. In the 4th statement, 9 students (18 %) state "strongly agree", 29 students (57 %) state "agree", 11 students (22 %) state "disagree" and 2 students (4 %) state "strongly disagree". It shows that most students (57 %) have difficulty in changing using TO BE (is, am, are) and auxiliary verbs (do, did, have has, had). In the 5th statement, 6 students (12 %) state "strongly agree", 25 students (49 %) state "agree", 16 students (32 %) state "disagree" and 4 students (8 %) state "strongly disagree". It shows that most students (49 %) have difficulty identifying subjects and objects in sentences. In the 6th statement, 11 students (22 %) state "strongly agree", 30 students (59 %) state "agree", 9 students (18 %) state "disagree" and 1 students (2 %) state "strongly disagree". It shows that most students (59 %) have difficulty in changing subject pronouns to object pronouns. In the 7th statement, 8 students (16 %) state "strongly agree", 31 students (61 %) state "agree", 11

students (22 %) state “disagree” and 1 students (2 %) state “strongly disagree”. It shows that most students (61 %) have difficulty in changing object pronoun to subject pronoun.

In the 8th statement, 12 students (24 %) state “strongly agree”, 20 students (39 %) state “agree”, 17 students (34 %) state “disagree” and 2 students (4 %) state “strongly disagree”. It shows that most students (39 %) have difficulty changing identifying passive sentences in multiple-choice form. In the 9th statement, 10 students (20 %) state “strongly agree”, 27 students (53 %) state “agree”, 13 students (26 %) state “disagree” and 1 students (2 %) state “strongly disagree”. It shows that most students (53 %) have difficulty in changing identifying passive sentences in essay form.

In the 10th statement, 12 students (24 %) state “strongly agree”, 27 students (53 %) state “agree”, 11 students (22 %) state “disagree” and 1 students (2 %) state “strongly disagree”. It shows that most students (53 %) have difficulty in memorizing, using, and identifying Verb-3 both regular and irregular forms. In the 11th statement, 15 students (30 %) state “strongly agree”, 32 students (63 %) state “agree”, 4 students (8 %) state “disagree” and no student (0 %) state “strongly disagree”. It shows that most students (63 %) believe that active sentences are easier than passive sentences.

Discussion

The passive voice is used to express what happened to the subject. In English, passive sentences are pronounced the same even though these sentences are spoken now (present), future (future), or the past (past). The verbs used in each tense are different because of the time difference. Pragmatically, the meaning contained in the passive sentence is to state the object as the actor and the subject as the recipient of the action (which is subject to action). The difference lies in the adversative and unintentional meaning.

According to Suprato (2012), in Indonesian, passive sentences are structured using the “di”, “ter”, or “ke”, but in English, we use “to be + past participle” depending on the time frame. The context of the sentence must be analyzed to comprehend its meaning. In the passive voice, the object of the active sentence becomes the subject of the passive sentence. Verbs in passive sentences in English always use to be with the past participle. Active and passive sentences can be made with as many tenses as there are. If we change the active sentence to passive or vice versa, we must not change the tenses. In other words, the tenses of active and passive sentences must be the same. In general, in Indonesian itself, the characteristics of active sentences are marked by verbs that have the affix *di-* or *ter-*. Passive sentences in English will be a little more complicated than in Indonesian, which simply replaces the verb.

In English, verbs in passive sentences have various forms according to the tenses. In general, the formula for this form can be concluded as – *auxiliary verb be + past participle*. The main verb in the passive voice must be in the past participle. In passive sentences, the subject of the verb is the object of the active sentence which means that the real subject is not the doer, he is just the subject of the sentence. In the passive voice, the perpetrator is expressed by the phrase “by...”. However, the phrase may be omitted because it is clear who the perpetrator of the verb is. Passive sentences also called passive voice are sentences in which the subject or perpetrator does not take action, but receives the action. Nouns that appear as objects in active sentences will appear as subjects in passive sentences.

The result of the reading test from students of ITB AAS Indonesia shows that the students’ average is 49.71 of 100 points, the median is 46 of 100, and the students’ range scores between the 20 (as lowest score) up to 92 (as highest score). They have difficulty with passive forms such as 1) most students (74 %) agree that changing or identifying passive sentences is related to mastery of grammar, especially tenses. 2) most students (61 %) have difficulty in changing active into active, negative, and interrogative forms related to the respective tenses formula in passive form. 3) most students (67 %) have difficulty adjusting verbs according to the subject (both singular and plural) in passive form. 4) most students (57 %) have difficulty in changing using TO BE (is, am, are) and auxiliary verbs (do, did, have has, had). 5) most students (49 %) have difficulty identifying subjects and objects in sentences. 6) most students (59 %) have difficulty in changing subject pronouns to object pronouns. 7) most students (61 %) have difficulty in changing object pronoun to subject pronoun. 8) most students (39 %) have difficulty changing identifying passive sentences in multiple-choice form. 9) most students (53 %) have difficulty changing identifying passive sentences in essay form. 10) most students (53 %) have difficulty in memorizing, using, and identifying Verb-3 in both regular and irregular forms, and 11) most students (63 %) believe that active sentences are easier than passive sentences. Therefore, students need to have a good understanding of active and passive

sentences.

An easy way to learn passive voice is to remember the form and structure of the sentence itself, the passive voice consists of all forms of words. Starting from the meaning of passive sentences, namely sentences that are used to focus on an action that occurs. To change the active voice into passive voice correctly, students must understand the formula for forming each sentence. By understanding the formula for the formation of each sentence, they will be able to work on various types of requests in questions. So, apart from being able to change active voice into passive voice, they can also change passive voice to active voice. Next, we need to master the logic of thinking from the formation of each sentence. The passive voice formula that is widely used is Subject + be + past participle (Verb3) + by phrase for simple present tense sentences. The active voice is used to tell the agent of an action. Meanwhile, the passive voice emphasizes that an action has occurred. So something that is affected or influenced by a certain action is the subject of the sentence.

There are three ways to form passive voice sentences, namely using tenses, gerunds, and using to-infinitives. In tenses, there are infinitives. Infinitives are grammar terms that refer to various forms of verbs or verbs. In the passive voice, infinitives are usually listed after the modal verb. Meanwhile, gerunds are words that are formed from verbs or verbs but are used as nouns or nouns. In English, gerunds are formed by verb-ing. Usually, gerunds are placed after prepositions or verbs. Finally, passive voice can be formed using to-infinitives. This form is widely used for sentences that occur in the past or past tense. However, it is also commonly found in the present and future tenses.

If students want to make passive sentences from active sentences, students must master the ways to make them, namely: 1). Use "is, am, or are" if the active sentence uses V1. If the active sentence uses verb 1 (simple present tense), use "is, am, are", or is to make the passive sentence. 2). Use "was or were" if the active sentence uses verb 2. If the active sentence uses verb 2 (simple past tense), use "was or were" to make the passive sentence. 3). Insert been between "have and verb 3". If the active sentence uses "have + verb 3 (perfect tense)", insert been between "have and verb 3" to make the passive sentence. However, students must adjust have with the subject in the passive sentence. 4). Add "being" before verb 3 if the active sentence is continuous tense. If the active sentence is a continuous tense, add "being" before verb 3 to make the passive sentence. Students need to remember that the "to be" is adjusted to the subject of the passive sentence. 5). Add "be" before verb 3 if the active sentence uses a modal. If the active sentence uses a modal, add be before verb 3 to make the passive sentence. There are several things students need to pay attention to in making passive sentences, namely: 1. By - By in the passive voice is not required to be written (optional). In other words, students can use it or not. 2. Non-verbal sentences - Non-verbal sentences (without verbs) cannot be formed into passive sentences. 3. Sentences without objects - Sentences without objects cannot be formed into passive sentences.

Teachers or lecturers have a very important role in the success of student learning outcomes. Success depends on the way the teacher conveys learning. English teachers/lecturers teach grammar especially active and passive voice to improve their ability. In improving the students' ability in passive voice, several techniques or methods can be used by teachers or lecturers. Rosanti (2017) states that after using word scramble games, students can make assignments, usually using sentences in the passive voice. Juwariyah (2018) states that the motion and song method improves students' grammar in active and passive voice. While Nurnaningsih (2019) states that the application of the articulation method (recording with video tools) can attract students' interest in learning English in the discussion of passive voice. Paranoan (2020) states that strengthening passive sentence forms in the grammatical order of passive sentences, so the competence in answering passive sentence questions in future questions will be much better. Nurmansyah (2016) states that drilling is the appropriate technique to improve students' ability to construct passive forms. It is supported by Permana (2020) that states the drilling technique of instruction and measures the method's efficiency in improving students' knowledge of passive voice in various tenses. Hasriani et al., (2020) in studying passive voice, with two methods, namely presenting material and providing exercises, so that they can distinguish between active and passive sentences both in oral and written form. The other media also stated by Khairani (2021) that by using the make a matching model with card media, students can increase students understanding of passive voice sentences. (Rismiyati et al., 2021) also have similar points that teaching writing skills by using a verbal card is effective to be used to teaching writing in passive voice. While Sumiyati (2022) states that the window-shopping learning model can increase students' English learning outcomes for

passive voice. Thus, students must be taught using appropriate methods that focus on grammar skills, especially active and passive voice.

Conclusion and Suggestion

Conclusion

Passive sentences in English will be a little more complicated than in Indonesian, which simply replaces the verb. Based on the analysis of the students' scores, it shows that the student's average is 49.71, the median is 46, and the range score is 20 up to 92. The students' difficulties are 1) difficulty in changing active into passive in active, negative, and interrogative forms related to each tenses formula. 2) difficulty in adjusting verbs according to the subject (both singular and plural). 3) difficulty in changing using auxiliary verbs. 4) difficulty in identifying subject and object in sentences. 5) difficulty in changing subject pronouns to object pronouns and vice versa. 6) difficulty in changing identifying passive sentences in multiple-choice form and essay form. 7) difficulty in memorizing, using, and identifying Verb-3 both regular and irregular forms.

Suggestion

One of the grammar materials that is very difficult for students to understand is passive sentences. Students are taught passive sentences after they understand active sentences. All sentences can only be understood properly according to their forms related to time, when the actions contained in the sentence occur, which in English are called tenses. To explain passive sentences to students, the teacher must start with active sentences first. Sentences in English are affected by the tenses, while sentences in Indonesian do not recognize tenses

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