

CHAPTER I

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1.1 Background of the Study

Testing is an important part of teaching-learning activity. It can be used to know the student's progress and the effectiveness of the program. Both teaching and testing relate to each other. Where there is a teaching-learning activity, of course, there is a test. [Heaton (1975:1)] says that both testing and teaching are so closely interrelated that it is virtually impossible to work in either field without being constantly concerned with the other. Test may be constructed primarily as a device to reinforce learning and to motivate the students, or primarily as a means of assessing the student's performance in language.

Testing has many advantages both for the teacher and the students. For the teacher, testing is used to know the effectiveness of the program. Tests give inputs to the teacher to know the way of his or her teaching. Besides that, tests also help the teacher to diagnose the students' weaknesses and difficulties and measure students' performance as mentioned above. A well constructed classroom test will give the students an opportunity to show

their ability. Tests can also increase the students' motivation to learn better. Gronlund (1982:13) says that a test can directly influence students' learning and the main purpose of testing is to improve their learning.

According to Robert Lado (1961:25), there are some important aspects of language that can be tested, such as reading, writing, speaking, listening, structure, sound, and vocabulary. Troike (1976:87) states that among the three language components, namely sound, vocabulary, and structure; vocabulary is the most important one to consider. In order to communicate with other people, vocabulary is very important because people can usually tolerate a great deal of diversity in sound and grammar or structure but not in vocabulary. Moreover, vocabulary is very important to develop the four language skills, namely reading, listening, speaking, and writing. Long and Richard (1987:305) say that vocabulary is an essential component of language.

At the first year of the Senior High School, the students are expected to master the language skills: namely reading, listening, speaking, and writing with the vocabulary mastery level of 1500 words and structure related to the themes (GBPP 1994:10). In the GBPP, there is a vocabulary list containing words that should be learned by the students. Vocabulary is taught integrated to the other skill.

In senior high school, there are two kinds of tests given to the students, namely formative and summative tests. According to Gronlund (1981:18), formative test is used to monitor learning progress during instruction and to provide continuous feedback to both pupils and teacher concerning learning successes and failures. The tests are given to the students after they have learned one or two units of materials. Gronlund says that summative test is given at the end of a course or unit of instruction and the results are used primarily for assigning grades or for certifying pupil's mastery of the instructional objectives. The results can also be used for evaluating the effectiveness of the instruction.

The formative and summative tests given to the students are integrated tests, in the sense that the test covers reading, functional skills, listening, vocabulary and writing. Only a few words from the vocabulary materials are included in the tests.

However, the writer thinks that it is also necessary for the teachers to measure the students' achievement of vocabulary materials that have been taught. Based on the writer's observation, the teachers do not give a special vocabulary test to measure the students' achievement on vocabulary materials. Therefore this study aims to describe the construction of a vocabulary test for the first year senior high school students.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

As described in the background of the study above, a vocabulary test to measure the students' achievement is needed. The problem is : what is the possible test that can be used to measure the students' achievement in vocabulary ?

1.3 The Objective of the Study

In connection with the background of the study and the statement of the problem, the purpose of this study is to describe the construction of a vocabulary test for the first-year senior-high-school students.

1.4 Definition of Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding, the writer gives the definition of the key term as follows :

1. Testing

Testing is an important part in teaching and learning activity. It is used to know how well the teacher and the students achieve their goal.

2. Vocabulary

It is a total number of word. In GBPP (1994:20), there is the vocabulary list that should be learned by the students.

3. Vocabulary Test

The selection of vocabulary test word is relatively easy in achievement test. These can be drawn directly from the particular text books that have been used in class.

4. Test Construction

Before constructing a test, the writer identifies the objectives of teaching English found in GBPP and matches the vocabulary materials in the text book used.

1.5 Significance of The Study

This study is expected to help English teachers to give more consideration to the construction of good test item to measure the students' mastery in vocabulary.

1.6 Limitation and Scope of the Study

The writer is only focused on the vocabulary test for the first year senior high school students.

1.7 Methodology

This study is a library study. To present the techniques and steps of the test construction, the writer collects the relevant sources from the library.

1.8 The Organization of this Study

This thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter is introduction. The second chapter is review of related theories. The third chapter presents about the testing. The fourth chapter is procedures of a constructing a vocabulary test. And the last chapter is summary and suggestions.