

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION



1.1 Background of the study

For the last two years or so that Indonesian Ministry of Education has administered an English EBTANAS to the third year students of senior high school and junior high school. The English EBTANAS is administered annually before the school ends, in late April or early May.

The purpose of the English EBTANAS, however in the senior high school, is to rank the students according to their achievement in the English subject at the high school. The test scores they get (DANEM) can be a lot of help for them in the selection and placement of students in universities. In terms of interpretation of test scores, the English EBTANAS is a norm-referenced test.

The 1986-1987 English EBTANAS for senior high school consists of a 50-item paper-and-pencil test broken down into 10 items of structure, 20 items of vocabulary, and 20 items of reading comprehension. The 50 items are cast in the objective type, i.e., the multiple choice, with five options and the subjective type which is based on a English reading passage.

The English EBTANAS items are based on the syllabus at the senior high school. The English can, therefore, be considered a measure of the extent of the students' achievement in their English subject at the senior high school. Therefore, this study is undertaken to find out whether the EBTANAS as a formal, large scale, "standardized" instrument has fulfilled the conditions of a test construction.

1.2 Statements of the Problem

Based of considerable skill needed in constructing multiple choice and essay test items, the validity of the 1986-1987 English EBTANAS as a measuring instrument of the student's achievement is questionable. The major problem is: How valid is the 1986-1987 English EBTANAS as a measuring instrument and what it claims to measure? This study, therefore, is undertaken to analyse and evaluate the validity of the English EBTANAS, through content analysis and item construction analysis.

Specifically the aforementioned major problem may be state in the following subproblems:

1. What is the learning outcome and content coverage of the 1986-1987 English EBTANAS for senior high school ?
2. To what extent does the item construction meet the principles of constructing multiple choice test items

and essay test items ?

Answer to these questions will together answer the major problem.

1.3 Purpose and Significance of the Study

This study is undertaken to analyse and evaluate the validity of the 1986-1987 English EBTANAS for Senior High School.

1.4 Scope and Limitations

This analytical study will be limited to the paper and pencil part of the 1986-1987 English EBTANAS for senior high school that includes items on structure, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. This study will also be limited to the analysis of the content as they match the objectives. Item construction will also be analysed based mainly on the guidelines or principles of constructing multiple choice items and essay items.

1.5 Assumption

So far, there has always been an assumption that all English instructors are capable of constructing language tests and that these language tests are considered valid and reliable as measuring instruments.

This may not always be the case. Very few have seriously questioned the validity of this English EBTANAS.

1.6 Definition of Terms

EBTANAS. It is the short for Evaluasi Belajar Tahap Akhir Nasional which is an English achievement test administered annually by the Indonesian Ministry of Education, to measure the students' achievement in the English subject.

Achievement Test. It is a test to measure the extent to which an individual student has mastered the specific learning outcomes and content which are described in the syllabus of a teaching program and have been presented in formal classroom situation.

A Norm-referenced Test. It is a test administered with a purpose to compare the level of achievement or performance which is shown by the total group to which he belongs. The test scores are used to rank the students, to compare the behavior of an individual student with the behavior of others.

Objective Test. It is a test of which questions are asked in such a way that there is only one predetermined correct answer. It is objective in terms of scoring.

Subjective Test. It is a test of which the scoring

depends on the subjective judgement. It means different scorers may result different scores.

Validity. It is the degree to which a test measures what it intends to measure.

Content validity. It is the validity of a test which is brought about by appropriate, adequate, and representative sampling of larger sets of activities and learning outcomes to be tested and content to test these learning outcomes.

Multiple Choice Item. it is a question of a test which is cast in the form of a problem and a list of which is cast in the form of a problem and a list of suggested solutions. The problem can be in the form of a question, a complete sentence or an incomplete sentence.

Options. They are the suggested solutions to a problem which consist of the best or correct solution called the key and the incorrect solutions called distractors.

Essay Item. It is a question of a test which is cast in the form of a problem. The problem can be in the form of an informative question, a yes/no question, or an inferential question.

Content Analysis. It is an analysis of test items to determine whether each of the items really test the intended learning outcome, whether the subject matter topic is appropriately selected to test the learning

outcome, and whether the items as a whole represent adequate sampling of learning outcomes and contents.

Table of Specifications. It is a two-dimensional matrix or chart of teaching objectives or learning outcomes and contents or subject matter topics. The learning outcomes are listed along one dimension, and the contents on the other. The intersections between learning outcomes and contents result in learning outcome-content cells which make it possible for a test constructor to indicate the proportion of items to test the learning outcomes and contents.