

CHAPTER 1

INTROUCTION

This chapter concerns with several sub chapters, that is 1). The background of the problems, 2). The identification of the problems, 3). The limitation of the problems, 4). The formulation of the research questions, 5). The objectives, and 6). The significance of the research as elaborated in the following sections.

1.1. Background of the Problems

Multiple choice testing is an efficient and effective way to measure students' ability. The multiple choice tests are published for use in many different schools. The consideration behind the statement is that it comes as the most standardized tests, including school or national examination. Most profitable tests are mainly made up of multiple choice items. Besides, multiple choice tests may give a more accurate picture of how well students have met the standard.

Even though, multiple choice tests have drawbacks, such as, students can guess the answers, the test does not measure deep thinking skills, writing successful multiple choice questions is difficult, and the students cannot organize and express their ideas, this kind of test is still popular because they are truly reliable and objective. This standardized test is also practical. It means that the test is easy to administer and consume less time to be assessed versus other assessments.

Based on the researcher's pre-observation, it was found that several difficulties were encountered by the teachers in SMA Negeri 1 Purbolinggo. In assessing multiple choice tests, there were many crucial things that the teachers must master, but they faced some difficulties in determining the quality of multiple choice tests.

Based on the pre-interview with some teachers in SMA Negeri 1 Purbolinggo, they only believed in the test which was made by MGMP (English Teacher Organization). Because of that, the teachers merely took and administered the tests to the students without prior analysis of their quality. The students were forced to answer all the questions which the teachers did not know how the validity, the reliability, the level of difficulty, the discriminating power, the quality of the alternatives were, which in general, these characteristics were very important in determining the quality of the test. Most of the teachers in SMA Negeri 1 Purbolinggo never assessed the multiple choice tests given by MGMP after or before the tests. So, the researcher was interested in analyzing the multiple choice test items created by MGMP in SMAN 1 Purbolinggo.

Most of the teachers in SMAN 1 Purbolinggo are the members of MGMP. Sequentially, the teachers have their turns to construct multiple choice tests for the final semester test, including the final semester test in 2013/2014 academic year. Basically, multiple choice tests might be somewhat beneficial, if the purpose is to check on the knowledge of the subject taught before. But, some of the teachers reported that some multiple choice tests did not restrain the knowledge of the subject which was previously given. For example, the teachers sometimes do not teach the

students without using the syllabus in curriculum as guidance. They convey the subject when they believe that it is from English books, with no prior analysis. Thus, the content of the test is sometimes not correlated with the materials taught before.

As a matter of fact, the teachers sometimes added some additional competencies to make the students easier to understand the subject. It means that the multiple choice tests might have a bad effect on overall curriculum and instruction. They stated that the multiple choice test was sometimes too easy and too difficult for the students. Because of that, what the students know in a subject was cut down from what the multiple choice test measured. Because, the distracters in the multiple choice test might not be heterogeneous, which made the test weak. From the cases mentioned above, it can be considered that the multiple choice test might not discriminate the more knowledgeable students from the less knowledgeable students.

The teachers were in light of the multiple choice tests created by other teachers that the tests might not be well written. Not only that, they also remarked that the multiple choice tests were sometimes not related to the curriculum. It was also uttered by the teachers that the multiple choice tests might not measure deep thinking skills. Because multiple choice items did not allow for creative responses, the students only had choice of responding (A or B or C or D or E). So, if there was anything more they would like to add or show what they knew beyond what was present, they could not come up their ideas. It is obviously true that the statements above refer to the multiple choice test made by the members of MGMP is considered not good.

The teachers also added that multiple choice tests operated on the assumption that there was only one correct alternative, the students considered picking out correct alternative. Occasionally, the test maker believed that the correct alternative was true, but, the brightest students might indeed find something different about every alternative, including the correct one which was considered wrong. So, the multiple choice tests promoted confusion to students. In that case, it appeared as plausible solutions to the problem for those students who had not achieved the learning objective. In such manner, the multiple choice tests promoted guessing to them.

Considering the facts above, the researcher decided to help the teachers determine the quality of multiple choice tests by using ITEMAN program. ITEMAN is very important for the teachers taking charge of administering test in order to be sure about the quality of the test they use. Consequently, understanding how to interpret and use information based on student test scores is as important as knowing how to construct a well-designed test.

ITEMAN is a software used to analyze test item and determine which test item is good and which is not, based on the criteria of reliability, discriminating power, level of difficulty, and the quality of the alternatives. The data are analyzed automatically by the software; therefore the teachers are made easier and faster to do the analysis. The teachers do not need to acquire complicated mathematic calculation, since the steps are very simple to follow. Not only that, the software program could be used to analyze almost unlimited number of testees in relatively very short time.

As ITEMAN is considered useful, the teachers are more expected to have an involvement in assessing the multiple choice tests using the item analysis program. In

order to utilize the program, the ITEMAN software program should be installed first. Another fact that motivated the writer to conduct this research was his own experience that proved his assessing multiple choice tests to have been easily analyzed by using the program. Because of that, the writer here put an effort on how to find some ways to utilize the program as a treatment to promote the assessment of multiple choice tests. Thus, this research was regarded to as a facilitative way for the teachers to analyze the final semester test.

The researcher used ITEMAN software program which helped the teachers determine the quality of the final semester test and prove whether the test had fulfilled the criteria of a good test or not. Therefore, this research utilized the tool used to analyze the final semester test at SMAN 1 Purbolinggo in 2013/2014 academic year.

1.2. Identification of the Problems

According to the background of the problem, the researcher found several problems that can be identified, that is:

- a. The multiple choice tests might:
 1. Not check on the knowledge of the subject taught before.
 2. Have bad effect on overall curriculum and instruction.
 3. Be too easy for the students.
 4. Be too difficult for the students.
 5. Not discriminate the more knowledgeable students from the less knowledgeable students.

6. Not be related to the curriculum.
 7. Not measure deep thinking skills.
 8. Promote confusion to the students.
 9. Promote guessing to the students.
 10. Not have heterogeneous distracters.
- b. The teachers got difficulties in assessing the multiple choice tests and do not know how to determine the quality of the tests (validity, reliability, the level of difficulty, the discriminating power, and the quality of the alternatives).

1.3. Limitation of the Problems

Considering the identification of the problems, this research is limited that the multiple choice tests might:

- a. Not be related to the curriculum.
- b. Be too easy for the students.
- c. Be too difficult for the students.
- d. Not discriminate the more knowledgeable students from the less knowledgeable students.
- e. Not have heterogeneous distracters.

1.4. The Formulation of the Research Questions

In line with the limitation of the problems, the following research questions are formulated, as follows:

How is the quality of the final semester test at the second year of SMAN 1 Purbolingo in 2013/2014 academic year? In relation to:

- a. How is the validity of the final semester test at the second year of SMAN 1 Purbolingo in 2013/2014 academic year? (Validity is not analyzed by ITEMAN)
- b. How is the reliability of the final semester test at the second year of SMAN 1 Purbolingo in 2013/2014 academic year?
- c. How is the level of difficulty of the final semester test at the second year of SMAN 1 Purbolingo in 2013/2014 academic year?
- d. How is the discriminating power of the final semester test at the second year of SMAN 1 Purbolingo in 2013/2014 academic year?
- e. How is the quality of the alternatives of the final semester test at the second year of SMAN 1 Purbolingo in 2013/2014 academic year?

1.5. The Objectives

In line with the formulation of the research questions, the objectives of this research are:

To find out how the quality of the final semester test at the second year of SMAN 1 Purbolingo in 2013/2014 academic year is, in relation to:

- a. Find out how the validity of the final semester test at the second year of SMAN 1 Purbolinggo in 2013/2014 academic year is (Validity is not analyzed by ITEMAN).
- b. Find out how the reliability of the final semester test at the second year of SMAN 1 Purbolinggo in 2013/2014 academic year is.
- c. Find out how the level of difficulty of the final semester test at the second year of SMAN 1 Purbolinggo in 2013/2014 academic year is.
- d. Find out how the discriminating power of the final semester test at the second year of SMAN 1 Purbolinggo in 2013/2014 academic year is.
- e. Find out how the quality of the alternatives of the final semester test at the second year of SMAN 1 Purbolinggo in 2013/2014 academic year is.

1.6. The Significance of the Research

The findings of the research are expected to be beneficial both theoretically and practically.

1. Theoretically, as a verification of the previous theories of the quality of assessment.
2. Practically, this research may be used to help teachers assess the quality of multiple choice tests by using ITEMAN program.