



The Simulation of English Listening as Part of of the National Examination

Rabiatul Adawiah¹, Nihla Afdaliah², Uswatunnisa³, Nur Fadillah Nurkhalis⁴, Muhyiddin⁵

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Correspondensi Author

Bidang Ilmu, Institusi
Alamat Penulis
Email: paramitha_df@yahoo.com

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Abstrak. Bahasa Inggris merupakan salah satu mata pelajaran yang diujikan melalui ujian nasional pada tingkat sekolah menengah atas. Posisinya sebagai bahasa asing tentu akan memberikan tantangan tersendiri bagi siswa. Makalah ini disusun dengan tujuan untuk menggambarkan kegiatan pengabdian kepada masyarakat berupa simulasi sesi mendengarkan sebagai bagian dari ujian nasional pada mata pelajaran Bahasa Inggris. Kegiatan ini dilaksanakan di Madrasah Aliyah Darud Da'wah Wal-Irsyad Baruga Majene yang melibatkan siswa kelas sebagai peserta, dan merupakan kegiatan kolaborasi antara dosen dan mahasiswa program studi Tadris Bahasa Inggris Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri Majene. Simulasi dilakukan serupa dengan tes, dan menggunakan program media Hot Potatoes. Hasil simulasi tes menunjukkan bahwa nilai rata-rata siswa berada di bawah standar nilai passing grade yakni 55. Dari total sepuluh kompetensi dasar, hanya ada empat yang tercapai dengan nilai rerata tertinggi siswa yaitu 63. Enam kompetensi dasar lainnya belum tercapai, dan itu menunjukkan bahwa siswa masih sangat memerlukan kegiatan pembelajaran dan simulasi.

Abstract. English is a subject in the national examination for senior high school students. As a foreign language, learning English gives some obstacles. This article is written to describe a project of community engagement namely a simulation of the English listening section as a part of the national examination. This project was conducted in Madrasah Aliyah Darud Da'wah Wal-Irsyad Baruga Majene by a collaborative team, which consists of the lecturers and the students of the English Language Education Department of Majene State Islamic College. The participants are third-grade students. The simulation was conducted as same as the real test using the Hot Potatoes. The result of the simulation showed that students' achievement did reach the passing grade namely 55. There are ten basic competencies implied in fifteen number. But the students only can choose the correct answer from questions that reflected four basic competencies with the highest average score namely 63. Unfortunately, the students cannot reach other competencies. It seems that the students need more practice and learning activities.

INTRODUCTION

National examination is an evaluation form of the educational levels in Indonesia. According to Indonesian institution number 20 of 2003, the government of Indonesia has set national exams as a nationally standardized evaluation system. The government has a dream to have a similar quality among schools in Indonesia, from Sabang to Merauke. Each educational level has selected subjects to be evaluated in this exam. First, there are only three subjects at elementary level namely Math, Bahasa Indonesia, and Science. The next level, junior high school, adds one subject namely English. So, the students of junior high school should take Math, Bahasa Indonesia, Science and English exams as compulsory subjects. Last, those four subjects still are examined for students of senior high schools. Then there are two additional subjects based on the students' concentration (Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia No 20 Tahun 2003 tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional, 2003).

The government, through the Ministry of Education and Culture, released the national examination result of 2019 and showed the comparative result among provinces (Kemendikbud, 2019). Unfortunately, West Sulawesi province was in the lowest position, especially for vocational schools. It only reached 39.07 average points; meanwhile, other provinces got higher than 40. And DI Yogyakarta province, the highest position got 55.33 average point. It seems that West Sulawesi province should arrange some strategies to increase this achievement. The obstacles may be complicated and come from teachers, learning and teaching facilities, system, or that subject itself; and those may create the student's anxiety (Wiryani & Wardhani, 2016).

As one compulsory subject in the national examination of senior high school level, the English subject consists of listening and reading skills. There are 50 numbers of questions; 15 numbers for listening skill and 35 numbers for reading skill. It is different from Bahasa Indonesia subject that only involves reading skills in 50 numbers of questions. That listening section of English subject implies that the students of senior high school are demanded to have competence in responding to the short conversation and gaining information from some conversations in monolog or dialog form

(Sujana et al., 2016). And they should have the competence to understand the English culture well, because the best response in those conversations is related to cultural knowledge.

Beside the cultural knowledge, the students also face a fact that English is not their daily language. Indonesian societies tend to use their local language as the mother tongue and Bahasa Indonesia as the second language (Sugono et al., 2011). Especially in West Sulawesi, the students only learn it in their English class 3-4 hours a week without an additional program such in international schools. In the listening section, they listen to the conversation of English native speakers. Whereas, they are familiar with their teachers' pronunciation. It is different from English native speakers because of interference from the first and the second language (Maisaroh, 2018). In conclusion, the students should adapt to the English culture and pronunciation in the listening section to find the best answer.

Another obstacle is learning and teaching facilities. Many schools in this province do not have adequate preparation and facilities (Saukah & Cahyono, 2015). Their students cannot access the language laboratory to practice their listening skills, and sometimes they do English listening activity first in the national examination. The system of this exam, using computer-based, is also new and seldom to be practiced in their classroom. It gives a new problem and contributes to low achievement. It means that the students need to be familiar with the technology because computer-based is quite hard for a new user rather than a paper-based test. Those problems can be overcome by utilizing facilities. In this case, the teacher should provide teaching media, supported by the proper facilities, to deliver material well in the class (Satrioso & Friantary, 2019).

Madrasah Aliyah is an Islamic Senior High school of the ministry of Religion as same as boarding school. In former time, Madrasah Aliyah is not popular rather than senior high schools under the ministry of Education and Culture (Hidayat, 2018). But today, they become equal in quality. Madrasah Aliyah DDI Baruga Majene, an Islamic senior high school in West Sulawesi, actually has big potential in facilities, although it is located in a small village. This school has a computer laboratory connected with the server and wifi network. That laboratory also provides speakers and earphones, so the teacher and students can use

the facilities of this laboratory for language improvement purposes. Later, another obstacle occurs. This school only has hardware, but there are no software, program, or media to practice language competence.

According to this case, the English Language Education Department of STAIN Majene initiated to conduct the simulation of the national examination by using interactive media in technology-based. The team chose the Hot Potatoes program because it is free, offline, and easy access. It is also suitable for the form of the English subject in the national exams namely multiple choice. The teacher can design based on their needs and set the time as the real test. Then, the students can know the score directly after doing the test. In conclusion, this multimedia can be a good simulation media for listening skills and make the students familiar with the computer-based test (Almarabeh et al., 2015).

METHOD

The team of this project consisted of the lecturers and the students of the English Language Education Department of STAIN Majene. Then the targets of this project were the 84 third-grade students in Madrasah Aliyah DDI Baruga Majene, who are preparing for the national examination. This project is part of subjects, namely TEFL (Teaching English as Foreign Language) and CMD (Curriculum and Material Development). So the involved students were the fifth-semester students, who have programmed those subjects. The students can experience the real situation of teaching English listening skills and how to create teaching media, which is interactive and appropriate with the students' needs. Last, the project spent four months from September to December, including two steps. The first step includes the process of preparing teaching media using hot potatoes and instructors to maximize the running of this project. The details are: Surveying Madrasah Aliyah DDI Baruga Majene: language laboratory facilities, the third-grade students, and English learning materials.

2. Conducting need analysis related to the listening section of the national examination: basic competence and the previous test.

3. Designing the Hot Potatoes media in three packages of the test, and installing the media in the students' computer.
4. Briefing and describing job descriptions.

The second step is simulation. The team conducted this project in simulation activities and set them as same as the real test of the listening section. The students were divided into three groups, and each group did a different package. The project was conducted in the language laboratory, and the students listened to the recording through the earphone. Firstly, the representative of the team explained tips, tricks, and strategies to choose the best answer. Secondly, the students did the listening test. After the time was over, the students could see directly their score on the screen. Last, the team and the students discussed the result of the listening test. To analyze the achievement, the team chose 33 students as the samples or 40% of the total population as many as 84 students.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Result

The simulation for the listening section was conducted on December 12nd-14th, 2019. There were three groups, so the team spent a day in each group. It consisted of 28 students. Meanwhile, the team consisted of four lecturers and eight students of the English Language Education Department. On that day, the teacher of English also attended this project to see the process and achievement.

The simulation was begun by giving a short explanation. The team explained the basic competencies of listening skills that senior high school students should have to do the test. Those competencies are deciding the main point of conversation, responding invitation in short conversation, responding using sympathy expression in short conversation, stating agree and disagree, deciding the main point of monologue text in item news form, choosing the correct pictures related to conversation, choosing the correct pictures related to detail information of conversation, responding recount text in monologue, responding of short conversation related to like or dislike expression, and deciding detail information of descriptive monologue text.

Those competencies were displayed in 15 numbers of questions following the real test. Some choices were texts (word, phrase, clause,

or sentence), and others were picturers. The team also explained that the source text and questions were on the recording. The screen only showed the answers, and some numbers indeed did not show the answers. So the students should listen carefully to the questions and answers in the recording. Each question was repeated twice, and the used questions words were what, who, where, and when. The main point was that the students should train their concentration. Here were the pictures showing this step:



Picture 1. A lecturer gave explanation before doing test to group A



Picture 2. A lecturer gave explanation before doing test to group B

After the students understood, the students were allowed to begin the test. In this activity, the students of the English Language Education department guided some students of MA DDI Baruga Majene. They told how to use the media and helped when obstacles occurred. One problem was that the students did not have good listening skills. They sometimes did the different numbers between what they saw on the screen and what they listened to on the earphone. Another problem was that they were unfamiliar with the listening test because it was the first time to do that in a language laboratory.

This activity became a good chance for English department students to interact as the candidate of the teacher, and to see the reality of teaching listening in schools. They might

practice the theories that had been learned in the class. Moreover, they saw how technology can support language teaching based on the era's need. Here are the pictures that showed the involving students of English Language Education department in this activity:



Picture 3. A student of English Language Education Department guided some participants in group B



Picture 4. A student of English Language Education Department guided some participants in group A

The next activity was discussing the correct answer. Another additional point of Hot Potatoes is that the user can see the final score at the end of the test. Not only that, but the students also might see the feedback for each question. Guided by the students of the English Language Education Department, the students can check the correct answer. They might see whether their answer was correct or not. Next, the lecturer continued their explanation and discussed every single question. The student gave attention, and some of them asked questions. The picture of this process was below:



Picture 5. A lecturer explained the correct answers of the listening test

The students' scores showed several achievements. The top score was 63, while the lowest score was 27. As information, the standard grade of the national examination is 55.

The team did note-taking on 34 samples of the students and analyzed their score based on the achievement of basic competence. The next table showed the students' achievement:

Table 1. The students' achievement based on basic competencies

No	Basic Competences	Score			Average
		Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	
1	Deciding the main idea of conversation,	70	60	60	63
2	Responding invitation in short conversation	60	50	60	57
3	Responding sympathy expression in short conversation	40	30	30	33
4	Stating agree and disagree	-	-	50	50
5	Deciding the main point of news item in monologue text	60	50	60	57
6	Choosing the correct pictures related to conversation	50	30	40	40
7	Choosing the correct pictures related to detail information of conversation	40	40	30	37
8	Responding recount text in monologue	30	30	20	27
9	Responding of short conversation related to like or dislike expression	70	50	70	63
10	Deciding detail information of descriptive monologue text	40	50	50	47

The table above implied that the students had a good score in two competencies. They can decide the main idea and respond like or dislike expression in a short conversation. They got 63 points in both competencies, and it was the top score. They also passed other basic competencies such as responding invitation in short conversation and deciding the main point of the news item in monologue text. In these competencies, they got 57.

The students, in the most competencies, seemed facing many difficulties in the simulation of the listening section. First, the score of stating agree and disagree competence was only 50. Second, the students got 47 in deciding detail information of descriptive monologue text. Next, the scores of choosing the correct pictures related to the detail information of conversation, responding sympathy expression in short conversation were 37, 33, and 27 respectively. In conclusion, those scores

did not reach the passing grade of the national examination, namely 55.

2. Discussion

English is one of foreign languages, which is crucial to be mastered in this competitive era (Boonying, 2015). The government of Indonesia has a dream that students are able to speak that international language. That is why it becomes a compulsory subject that students should pass in the national examination since the junior high school. But the position of English as foreign language, of course, will influence the students in that language learning. They could feel anxiety because it is not their first or second language (Abrar et al., 2018).

Related studies have been conducted and discover various findings. The problems will occur as long as the students do not practice well (Hamouda, 2013). They could be accent,

pronunciation, speed of speech, insufficient vocabulary, the different accent of speakers, lack of concentration, anxiety, and bad quality of recording. The team has investigated the accent used in the previous listening section tests. Some of them used the British accent, and others used the American accent. It could be a problem for the students of MA DDI Baruga Majene since their teacher did not introduce both accents in the class. Moreover, they are not familiar with the English native speaker's pronunciation.

The team also have checked the quality of recording and earphones, and they are found in good quality. The problem is that the students never practice to use it. They have facilities, but the teacher does not maximize it. The teachers of English in MA DDI Baruga Majene need some training to enhance professional competence. That competence includes how to use technology in the learning process so that learning competences can be reached (Amalia et al., 2019). Not only to the teacher, but it is also additional input to the students of English Language Education. In the future, they are demanded to be the millennial teacher.

The teacher of English should consider using technology in creating interactive media. Beside it facilitates the learning process, the anxiety of the students in English listening skills can be decreased by training students in listening competencies with technology-based (Pasupathi, 2013). This previous study also found that there was a significant improvement on the part of students in acquiring listening skills through technology-based intervention. Based on the students' achievement, it can be seen that the students have not ready for the

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

English is one subject of the national examination. There are two parts of the English examination: listening and reading. This community engagement was conducted to help the students of MA DDI Baruga Majene to do simulation before doing the real test. The team of this project was the lecturers and the students of the English Language Education Department of STAIN Majene. It was held in the language laboratory of MA DDI Baruga on December 12nd-14th, 2019. The simulation used the Hot Potatoes program as interactive media. The students' achievements showed that the students still have low competence in listening skills. According to the passing grade regulation from

English listening section. The school needs to conduct more simulation in the language laboratory so the student may adapt. Hot Potatoes can be one alternative as the media of simulation. It allows the teacher to make interactive, and the students can access it easily (Winkle & MacGregor, 2001).

The listening test of the national examination has been investigated by experts. The characteristic of questions are 45% easy, and 35% moderate, and 20% hard. They consist of 45% general, 25% comprehension, 20% application, and 10% analysis (Yunhadi, 2016). The easy questions refer to the general question, and the answers are commonly mentioned by the speaker. And, moderate and hard questions require the students' comprehension, application, and analysis. In other words, the student should have pragmatic competence to find the answer behind the text.

The pragmatic competence and cultural knowledge help the student to analyze the question and answer (Date et al., 2001). This competence and knowledge should be understood by the students of MA DDI Baruga Majene so they can do some comprehensive, applicative and analytic questions well. For instance, the students only got 33 points in question which illustrating the second basic competence namely to respond using sympathy expression in short conversation. The expression "I am sorry to hear that" sometimes is defined literally by the students. Sorry is a word that spoken when someone does a mistake. Whereas, "I am sorry to hear that" can be used as a sympathy expression. The same problem also occurs in another basic competence such as stating agree and disagree.

the Ministry of Education, they only passed 4 of 10 basic competences. It implies that the students need to practice more.

This project was held successfully because of support from some organizations and individuals. First, the team would like to give acknowledge to the head of MA DDI Baruga Majene, the English teacher, and the third-grade students who allow the team to hold this community engagement project. Second, the team also appreciates the support from the head of STAIN Majene, who always encourages us to conduct this project as a part of Tri Dharma. The team did the community engagement independently without grants from any organization. It is an implementation of TEFL

and Curriculum Material Development classes, so there is a powerful collaboration among the lecturers and the students of the English Language Education department. Hopefully, other projects will be conducted in the future with a collaborative team again. Last, the team does not forget to thank the Indonesia Journal of Community Engagement that has given chance to publish this project.

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