

The Implementation Model of a Diagnostic Test for English Teachers

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<https://doi.org/10.24071/ijels.v1i2.341>

ABSTRACT

Professionalism in teaching is one of the key factors in the success of an English education program. To keep the teachers' professionalism, a refresher program is needed to be conducted to improve teachers' competence. To map out the area of teachers' competence which should be refreshed, a diagnostic test needs designing. After a diagnostic test has been made, the implementation should also be well-conducted to get the representative result. Therefore, this study aims to design an alternative implementation model of a diagnostic test for English teacher. The questionnaire and focus group discussion results show that the proposed model is an appropriate diagnostic test implementation model for teachers.

Keywords: *diagnostic test, implementation model, refresher program*

INTRODUCTION

Recently, Indonesian government concerns on improving the quality of education including English. Since teacher is one of the important factors of the education quality, therefore, the quality of teacher should be adequate. Even though the curriculum has been well-designed by experts but if the teachers as the key factors of the curriculum are not qualified, then the result would not be as qualified as the curriculum.

In Indonesia, there are some problems related to the quality of teachers. According to Prof. Fathur Rokhman., M.Hum Vice Rector for Development and Partnership Semarang State University (SSU), there are three main issues related to the teachers. The first is the inadequate competences of the English teacher. The second is the qualification. The third is mismatched teacher.

To be professional in teaching English, teachers are required to have some competence. Figure 1 shows some indicators of proficient teachers based on TESOL International Association guidelines. There are four basic performance indicators: general proficiency, other contexts, classroom performance, and non native advocate. To meet the international standard proposed by TESOL, the basic competence teachers need to have are adequate listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills in English.

LANGUAGE	PROFICIENCY
PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	
1	General proficiency
	• Demonstrate proficiency in oral, written, and professional English
	• Demonstrate proficiency in social, academic, and professional English
2	Other contexts

- demonstrates familiarity with more than one variety of English
 - varies register according to context
 - 3 Classroom performance
 - Serves as an English language model for learners
 - 4 Nonnative advocate
 - Explain and advocates for NNES teachers
- (TESOL 2008, p.86)

Figure 1. Language Proficiency performance indicators

English language teaching keeps in changing from time to time. Richards and Farrell (2005) state that to anticipate the rapid changing in language teaching, “teachers need regular opportunities to update their professional knowledge and skills, that is, their opportunities for professional development” (p. vii). Teachers need regular competence development programs. The department of education should provide some programs to facilitate teachers.

The government of Indonesia has also developed some programs like improving teachers’ qualification, professionalism, and quality and prosperity. Teachers’ professionalism can be improved by requiring teachers to have bachelor degree as one of the qualification to teach. Besides the formal education, government held training and workshops for English teachers to be more professional. To motivate teachers, the government has also make certification program to increase the quality of teaching.

Besides the trainings and workshops, alternatively, the government can conduct a refresher program. A refresher program is similar to training program, but it is aims to refresh the area of teachers’ competence. For example, if there are a lot of teachers who still weak in speaking, the refresher program will focus on speaking. If a lot number of teachers are still not adequate in writing, the refresher program will focus on writing. Refresher program is design based on the need assessment.

Before conducting teachers’ refresher program, a diagnostic test is needed to be implemented to determine the target of the improvement. The diagnostic test will become the base in deciding what kind of program which is suitable for the teachers. The diagnostic test is used as the need assessment to determine the materials of the program. If the program is properly designed, then teachers’ quality will improve. It means also that the quality of education, especially English education is also improved. To get a reliable result, the implementation model of the test should also be designed. Therefore, this article is trying to identify the best implementation model of the diagnostic test for English teachers’ refresher program.

Diagnostic Test

Diagnostic test is a test which is aimed to diagnose the ability. Brown (2004) states “a diagnostic test is designed to diagnose specified aspects of language” (p.46). The test provides information about students’ competencies in detail. Brown (1996) explains that in diagnostic testing, students’ strengths and weaknesses are specified. It often requires more detailed information about the very specific areas. The definition is also true if we intend the test for teacher. Diagnostic test for teacher is a test which is designed to identify certain aspects of teachers related to their ability to teach.

From the definitions of the diagnostic test, it is clear that a diagnostic test can be used to identify the specific area of teachers’ competence which needs to be refreshed. Hughes (2003) states that diagnostic test is aimed to identify what skills still need to be learnt. Diagnostic test can diagnose the features of English which are difficult, therefore they still need to be learnt. ALTE (1988) in Alderson (2005) says that “The results may be used in making decisions on future training, learning or teaching” (p.4). In this study, diagnostic test is used to identify the teachers’ skills in English

which need to be refreshed to improve their competence. In other words, the test functions as the tool for need assessment of the refresher program.

Need assessment itself is an important process in a language program. As Graves (2000) states, need assessment is necessary to collect information about the current stage of the learners (in this case the teachers) and what they need to learn. Actually need assessment can be conducted in several ways. However, to assess the needs of refresher programs for teachers, a diagnostic test is the most suitable since the number of teachers are so large. A diagnostic test can provide accurate information.

A diagnostic test usually consists of the features of the language which are going to be taught in the curriculum. As Brown (1996) explains, it is usually conducted after the objectives have been formulated but before the materials are designed. Therefore, the components of the diagnostic test are adjusted to the objectives of the programs. As the diagnostic test in this study is aimed to diagnose the teachers' skill in English, therefore the test will include the four skills: listening, reading, writing, and speaking.

The Implementation of Diagnostic Test

After the diagnostic test model has been made, the test then will be implemented to the candidates, in this case the Indonesian English Teacher. In implementing the test there are some procedure which should be followed by test administrators to administer the test successfully. Brown (1996) proposes some checklist as shown in Figure 2.

A. Arranging the physical needs

1. Adequate, well-ventilated, and quiet space
2. Enough time in that space for some

flexibility

3. Clear scheduling

B. Making pre-administration arrangements

1. Candidates properly notified of test
2. Candidates signed up for test
3. Candidates given precise information (where and when test will be, as well as what they should do to prepare and what they should bring with them, especially identification if required)

C. Administering the test

1. Adequate materials in hand (test booklets, answer sheets, cassette tapes, pencils, scoring templates, and so on) plus extras
2. All necessary equipment in hand and tested (cassette players, microphones, public address system, video tape players, blackboard, chalk, and so on) with backups where appropriate
3. Proctors trained in their duties
4. All necessary information distributed to proctors (test directions, answers to obvious questions, schedule of who is to be where and when, and so on)

D. Scoring

1. Adequate space for all scoring to take place
2. Clear scheduling of scoring and notification of results
3. Sufficient qualified staff for all scoring activities
4. Staff adequately trained in all scoring procedures

E. Interpreting

1. Clearly defined purpose for results
2. Provision for helping teachers use scores and explain them to

students
3. A well-defined place for the results in the overall curriculum
F. Record Keeping
1. All necessary resources for keeping track of scores
2. Ready access to the records for administrators and staff
3. Provision for eventual systematic termination of records
G. Ongoing Research
1. Results used to full advantage for research
2. Results incorporated into overall program evaluation plan
Adapted from Brown, J.D. (1996, p. 43)

Figure 2. Testing Program Checklist

The table shows that the implementation of a test should be well-prepared. The administrator should pay attention to the physical requirements, time scheduling, the proctors, and also the staffs who will be responsible for the test. All of those components, all together defines the success of implementing a test. Any kinds of distraction should be avoided to get a more representative result. The result itself should also be interpreted properly to provide information needed in the program.

METHOD

The aim of this study is to find out the best implementation model of a diagnostic test for teachers. In designing the implementation model, this study adopted testing checklist proposed by Brown (1996). The testing checklist consist of nine steps: establishing purposes of the test, evaluating the test itself, arranging the physical needs, making pre-administration arrangements, administering the test, scoring, interpreting, record keeping, and ongoing research. However, since this

study focuses on the implementation model, the procedure began from the third stage, that is arranging physical needs.

The participants of this study were 15 graduate students of English Language Studies, Sanata Dharma University who reviewed the implementation model based on the given questionnaire. They were chosen as they are considered as having adequate knowledge about test and English education. Most of them are also teachers. It means that they can also see the model from the test taker point of view.

There are some procedures of conducting this study. The first is building theoretical framework of this study by reviewing related theories and studies. The second is developing implementation model of diagnostic test for teachers. The third is getting the data of the appropriateness of the model from the result of the questionnaire and from Focus Group Discussion (FGD).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the theoretical review to several related theories, the implementation model of diagnostic test then can be designed (table 1). Adapting Brown's model, the implementation of diagnostic teacher begins from arranging physical needs. This stage is important to be carried out since the physical needs will support the candidates to do the test and to minimize the distraction. The second stage is making pre-administration arrangement in which the candidates are informed any details of the test before they do the test. The third stage is administering the test. On the day of administering the test, all necessary equipment should be ready and the proctors should have been trained. The fourth stage is scoring. Scoring process is done by professional staffs and the result should be given as scheduled without any delay. The fifth is interpreting the score. In diagnostic

test, the result will be used to determine the refresher program design. The sixth is record keeping which is systematically

arranged. Finally, the result of the test should become the source of ongoing research.

A. Arranging the physical needs
1. Adequate, well-ventilated, and quiet space The test will be held in a soundproof room, completed with air conditioner. In one room there will only be 25 candidates. Between candidates there is about 75 cm space. The room is adequate for 25 candidates. 2. Bag room As the candidates are not allowed to bring their equipments except the stationary and identity card, a special room is provided for them to leave all personal items. 3. Enough time in that space for some flexibility The test will be held from 8- 11. The candidates are expected to come 30 minutes before. They have to enter the room 15 minutes before for preparing themselves and for test explanation. The late comer candidates will not be accepted
B. Making pre-administration arrangements
1. Candidates properly notified of test The candidates of the test will be informed any information about the test a month before. 2. Candidates signed up for test The candidates should sign up a week before. 3. Candidates are given precise information about: ▪ the place and the time of the test administration ▪ the candidates should prepare for the test. they should bring the stationary needed on the test, includes pencils (for computer used), eraser, and pen ▪ the candidates should bring identity card and test receipt
C. Administering the test
1. Adequate materials in hand (plus extra) ▪ test booklets, ▪ answer sheets, ▪ recording, ▪ pencils, ▪ scoring templates 2. All necessary equipment in hand and tested (cassette players, microphones, public address system, video tape players, blackboard, chalk, and so on) with backups where appropriate 3. Proctors trained in their duties A month before the test, all proctors have to attend a training to be professional proctors 4. All necessary information distributed to proctors Proctors should be informed about test directions, answers to obvious questions, schedule of who is to be where and when, and so on)
D. Scoring
1. Adequate space for all scoring to take place

The scoring processes are held in a adequate room with small distraction. 2. Clear scheduling of scoring and notification of results The result will be announced within 10 workdays after the test day. 3. Sufficient qualified staff for all scoring activities The scoring activities will be conducted by professional staffs. They have to fulfill some requirement to be qualified in scoring. 4. Staff adequately trained in all scoring procedures The scoring staffs should get a special training on related procedure in scoring
E. Interpreting
1. Clearly defined purpose for results The score is put into scale from 1-5. The areas of the test which lower than 3 on the skill will become the skills area to which the refresher program should be addressed. 2. A well-defined place for the results in the overall curriculum The result of the test will become the base in deciding the material in the refresher program
F. Record Keeping
The result of the test will be recorded systematically by qualified administrators and staffs. It will be well-arranged to be access easily when the information is needed.
G. Ongoing Research
1. Results used to full advantage for research 2. Results incorporated into overall program evaluation plan

Table 1. Implementation Model of Diagnostic Test for Teachers' Refresher Program

After the model has been designed, then it is reviewed by graduate students majoring at English Language Study, Sanata Dharma University as the participants of the study. Some of the participants are also English teachers. They teach from elementary school to higher education (university). The participants filled out questionnaires which consist of close-ended and open-ended questions. From the calculation of the close-ended questionnaire results, the mean is 4.06. The mean shows that the respondents agree to the design of the implementation model. In other words, the proposed implementation model of the diagnostic test is appropriate.

The data from the questionnaire are also supported from the data gained in the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and from the answer of the open-ended questionnaire. According to the FGD and the participants' answers to the questions, the

implementation model is appropriate. The participants in the FGD agreed that the implementation model is applicable. Everything is well-prepared and well-organized start from the pre-administration to the use of the test result. The physical needs are provided adequately. The design of the test venue is comfortable to reduce any distraction. The time scheduling is clear and reasonable. For example, the candidates is going to be informed about the test a month before, therefore the candidates can prepare themselves for the test. The result announcement within 10 workdays is also reasonable since it can give adequate time for the scorer but the candidates do not need to wait for a long time.

CONCLUSION

The data gathered from the questionnaire and from FGD shows that the proposed implementation model of diagnostic test for teachers is appropriate to identify the competency of the English teachers as the base in determining refresher programs for English teachers in Indonesia. The test and the implementation are based on the international standard. Therefore, teachers who pass the test are the teachers who are considered having adequate proficiency to teach not only in Indonesian context but also internationally. Having adequate competency, teachers can teach the students better or improve the quality of English education.

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APPENDIX 1: KUESIONER DESAIN MODEL PELAKSANAAN TES DIAGNOSTIK

Jenis Kelamin :

Jenjang Pendidikan :

Pengalaman Mengajar:

Kuisisioner ini bertujuan untuk mengumpulkan masukan dan saran mengenai model implementasi tes diagnostik bagi guru. Pilihlah nilai yang tepat untuk setiap pertanyaan, dengan indikator sebagai berikut.

1: jika sangat tidak setuju dengan pernyataan

2: jika tidak setuju dengan pernyataan

3: jika ragu-ragu

4: jika setuju dengan pernyataan

5: jika sangat setuju dengan pernyataan

No	Pendapat responden tentang	Skor				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Tempat pelaksanaan tes memadai					
2	Waktu yang disediakan untuk persiapan dan pelaksanaan tes memadai					
3	Jadwal pelaksanaan tes jelas					
4	Peserta mendapatkan informasi yang memadai tentang waktu dan tempat pelaksanaan tes					
5	Materi tes (buku tes, lembar jawab, rekaman, papan tulis, spidol) dipersiapkan dengan baik.					
6	Semua materi tes telah diuji					
7	Pengawas tes terlatih (mengerti semua aturan tes)					
8	Sistem penilaian akurat					
9	Penilaian dilaksanakan oleh ahli					
10	Jadwal penyampaian hasil tes kepada peserta jelas					
11	Hasil tes diinterpretasikan dan digunakan dengan tepat dalam penyusunan program refresher					
12	Hasil tes di simpan dengan baik					
13	Hasil tes bisa menjadi bahan penelitian					

Pendapat dan saran dari responden

1. Bagaimana menurut anda tentang desain implementasi tes yang sudah dibuat?

2. Menurut anda, apakah kelemahan dan kekuatan dari desain implementasi tes tersebut?

3. Apa saran anda untuk meningkatkan kualitas implementasi tes yang dibuat?

APPENDIX 2: THE DATA OF QUESTIONNAIRE RESULT

respondent	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8	F9	F10	F11	F12	F13	Mean
1	5	3	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	3	4,07
2	4	4	3	4	5	5	4	4	5	5	4	4	3	4,15
3	3	4	4	5	4	5	3	5	5	4	4	4	5	4,23
4	4	3	4	5	4	4	4	3	4	4	3	5	4	3,92
5	4	4	2	4	4	4	4	5	4	3	4	5	2	3,76
6	4	4	4	4	3	5	5	4	5	4	4	4	4	4,15
7	5	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	3,84
8	5	5	4	4	5	5	4	4	3	5	5	4	4	4,38
9	4	4	4	4	5	4	5	4	5	4	3	4	3	4,07
10	4	4	4	3	3	4	4	5	4	4	4	3	4	3,84
11	5	4	4	5	5	4	3	4	5	4	3	4	5	4,23
12	3	5	5	4	2	3	5	4	4	3	5	4	3	3,84
13	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	5	5	3	4	4,23
14	4	3	5	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	4	3	4	4,15
15	4	4	4	5	4	5	4	4	5	4	4	4	2	4,07
														4,06