

Chapter I

Introduction

1.1 Background

Vocational school students are expected to work on vocational fields such as hotels and tourism, shipping, aviation, and a variety of technical fields are trained here. Vocational students have to be able to communicate in English as English is a bridge for international communication and the key to international science, technology, and commerce. And for that reason, it is important to have a standard measurement test in English competence and the test should be accepted in work field. Therefore, the students of vocational high school are suggested to have the TOEIC (Test of English for international communication)

National Education Minister's Regulation No 22/2006 on Education Content Standard (and No 23/2006 on Graduates Competency Standard /SKL) introduces the Education Unit Curriculum (KTSP) in Indonesia. This curriculum gives wider autonomy for each school to develop their own curriculum by taking into account the potentials of schools and the surrounding region. It is mentioned in the KTSP English curriculum that the language skills to be covered by the students are listening, speaking, reading, and writing with special emphases on reading skills. Reading and listening are important skills to be mastered by the students in Indonesia as those are measured in TOEIC and *Ujian Nasional* (Final Exam). However, most of the teachers pay more attention to reading practice in their teaching and give less consideration to the other skills. This is a problematic area needing attention in our contemporary English education. Unlike in some other schools, in SMKN 3 the facility for language learning is quite complete. It has a language laboratory, including a screen, projectors, and other equipments. The

teachers there usually teach the students by using audio and visual equipment. Thus, the listening skill in this school has better proportion than any other school with less facilitation.

Alexander (1967:14) explained that reading is one of the most important skill in learning language that has further practice of language that have already met through listening and speaking. Furthermore, students can apply it in writing. It is in line with Cartledge (1972:32) who says that compared to the four skills involved in language learning, the one which is likely to be the most useful for students of foreign language is reading. This is probably the other reason why some teachers put more emphasis in reading skills than the other four skills.

However, besides reading, the ability in comprehending listening material is as important as reading skills. Omaggio (1986) suggested that listening and reading comprehension are both highly complex processes that draw on the knowledge of the linguistic code (language-form), cognitive processing skill (the skill to process in the mind), schema based understanding (background knowledge), and contextual cues both within and outside the text. Both skills can be characterized as activities of assigning meaning. The purpose of both reading and listening is to generate the intended image from the input and react appropriately. But the effect of prior knowledge and context also seem to be instrumental in both reading and listening tasks.

As stated by Lado (1961) there are some differences between reading and listening comprehension. In reading, students are able to proceed at their own speed and go back to reread what they may not have grasped at once, while in listening they must adjust to the speed of the speaker. Thus, it comes to result in some specific difficulties for the students with regard to the different characteristics.

This study is focused on finding the correlation between the students' reading comprehension and their listening comprehension ability as measured in TOEIC. The

investigation is expected to provide concerned parties with some useful information in order to be applied in the teaching of English in SMK and other school in general, and also help the students to improve their English competence.

1.2 Theoretical framework

Here, the sub-chapter will cover theories about reading comprehension, listening comprehension, and the similarities and differences between reading and listening comprehension.

a. Reading Comprehension

The Michigan Department of Education state the definition of the reading as the process of constructing the meaning through the dynamic interaction among the readers existing knowledge, the information suggested by the written language, and the context of reading situation.

Furthermore, the word comprehension has a related meaning with reading. Reading comprehension means the ability to extract meaning from a text. Considering the purposes for comprehending, Parrot (1993:154) list some sub-skills that are involved in efficient reading comprehension. They are abilities to recognize the communicative function of a text, obtain the main ideas from a text, identify specific details, distinguish main ideas from supporting details, recognize the speakers' or writers' attitude towards the topic and towards the listener or reader, infer ideas and information, not explicitly stated, anticipate or predict 'the content' of the text, recognize familiar words, infer the context of the discourse, use the context to understand the meaning of familiar words.

b. Listening Comprehension

Listening is the language modality that is used most frequently. It has been estimated that adults spend almost half their communication time listening, and students may receive as much as 90% of their in-school information through listening to instructors and to one another.

Listening involves a sender (a person, radio, television, etc), a message, and a receiver (the listener). Listeners often must process messages as they come, even if they are still processing what they have just heard, without backtracking or looking ahead. In addition, listeners must cope with the sender's choice of vocabulary, structure, and rate of delivery.

Listening comprehension consists of two words; listening and comprehension. Listening is defined by Garfinkel (1986) as a mental process made up of the following essential elements: hearing, decoding, comprehending and responding. So, listening comprehension is an activity of paying attention to and trying to get meaning from something we hear (Underwood:1996).

Furthermore, there are several types of listening that come from different perspectives. Galvin (in Rost,1990:11) suggests four type of listening they are transactional listening, interactional listening, critical listening, and recreational listening.

The purpose of transactional listening is to learn new information. The interactional listening is for recognizing personal component of message. In critical listening the purpose is to evaluate reasoning and evidence. While recreational listening is for someone who is appreciating random or integrated aspects of event.

c. Similarities and Differences between Reading and Listening Comprehension

There are some similarities and differences between reading and listening comprehension. The similarities are both skill need highly complex process in order to obtain the knowledge of the

linguistic code, cognitive processing skill, background knowledge, and contextual cues (Omaggio:1986).

Furthermore, both skills above can also be characterized as problem solving activities, involving the formation of hypothesis, the drawing of inferences, and the resolution of ambiguities, and uncertainties in the input to assign meaning. According to Stevick (1984) the purpose of reading and listening is to generate the intended image from the input and react appropriately. The other similarity is readers and also listeners construct meaning by recognizing their previous knowledge to accommodate new information and concepts (Omaggio, 1986:23).

However, there are some differences between reading and listening comprehension. According to Lado (1961), the language difficulties that students have in reading are substantially the same as in understanding it aurally with three main differences. First, in reading, they are able to proceed at their own pace and allowed to re-read what they may not have grasped. Otherwise, in listening they must adjust to the speakers speed. Second, perceiving graphic differences in symbolization is easier than perceiving differences in sound articulation that are not significant in the native language of the students. Some sound contrasts may be bypassed in listening as well as reading due to other clues in the discourse. But, in reading, it is possible to distinguish the graphic differences without having to rely on the context.

Third, there are differences in the language used in writing and speaking. The sentences used in writing tend to be more complex and to contain more complex modification structures than those used in speaking. The vocabulary met in reading has a far greater range than those ordinarily used in speaking. Furthermore, the length of the utterances found in reading is greater than the length of utterances heard in conversation and in lectures and speech.

1.3 Research question

To gain data needed for this research, the following questions is formulated:

“Is there any correlation between students’ reading comprehension and their listening comprehension on TOEIC ?”

1.4 Aim of the research

The main problem in conducting this research is to investigate the correlation between reading and listening comprehension based on students score in TOEIC.

1.5 Significance of the Research

For many years reading and listening skills have been very important in language learning in school. It is in line with Alexander (1967:14) that in learning language, reading is significantly one of the most important skills. By reading, learners can have further practice of language that has already met through listening and speaking. In addition, students in the classroom spend most of their time listening to the teacher’s explanation. The study by Wilt (as cited in Robinson 1983:13) proves that the students in the classroom situations spend 57.4% of the time listening. Those are also why TOEIC test only measure the English-language listening comprehension and reading skills of individuals whose native language is not English. The correlation between reading and listening skills is inevitable in language learning.

There are a lot of methods and approaches have come and gone in teaching and learning process. Nowadays, many teachers especially in high school often emphasizes the English language learning through reading skill only and disregard listening skill aspects. On the opposite, reading and listening skills are very important in language learning process.

The explanation above describes the significance of the research exploring the correlation between listening and reading comprehension to the teaching of English in school. The comprehensive understanding to the result will give practical advantage on the development of the teaching and learning process in the classroom. They are useful for the teachers and provide insight to facilitate them to choose better methods and approaches in teaching English language. This research also expected to add more valuable information to the various contemporary theoretical bases in listening and reading comprehension field.

1.6 Hypothesis

The writer sets the following hypotheses:

H₀: “There is no significant correlation between the students’ reading comprehension and their listening comprehension of TOEIC”.

1.7 Scope of the Research

The purpose of this research is to study and observe the correlation between reading and listening comprehension. This study use TOEIC to examine the nature of the link, since it consists reading and listening tasks which in the end will represent both of the skill generally. The research will discuss any possible correlation between two skills above among the students of SMKN 3.

1.8 Research Methodology

This is a correlational study which investigates the correlation of reading with listening comprehension. The significant part of this research is to find the correlation between reading as independent variables and listening as dependent variables. There are further explanation about research site, respondents, research instruments and procedure below.

1.8.1 Research Site and Respondents

The research takes place at SMKN 3, a vocational school majoring in Business Management and Tourism. The population of this study was the third year students of SMKN 3 enrolled in Academic Year 2005/2006 which was consisted of 380 students participating in TOEIC International test. Seventy five students are randomly taken to become the respondents.

1.8.2 Research Instruments

TOEIC International test was administered to measure the student's English proficiency. The people who take TOEIC test are employees in international corporations, job applicants, students in business, vocational, and trade schools, community colleges, and students in the business track of English language programs/schools. Every grade in vocational school has their own score that must be completed by the students. There are three levels of TOEIC score:

1. Novice level for the first grade (10-300)
2. Elementary level for the second grade (305-450)
3. Intermediate level for the third grade (455-600)

The test consists of 200 questions to be completed within 2 hours and is divided into two sections. Section I, the listening section, contains 100 questions to be completed in 45 minutes.

Section II, the reading sections, contains 100 questions to be completed in 75 minutes. The proficiency of the participants is expressed as a numerical score between 5 and 495 for both the listening and reading parts, giving a total score between 10 and 990.

The test materials are followed:

PART 1 – Listening Comprehension, pictures	For each question, there is a photograph in the test booklet; the examinee hears 4 short statements, and must choose the statement which best describes the photograph. The statements are not printed in the test booklet. Settings include offices, street scenes, restaurants, laboratories, etc.
PART 2 – Listening comprehension, question - response.	For each item, the examinee hears a question, followed by 3 responses. Neither the question nor the answer is printed in the test booklet. The examinee must choose the correct answer to the question.
PART 3 – Listening comprehension, short conversation	For each question, the examinee hears a 3-part exchange; they then read a short question and 4 possible answers to the question. Situations encompass work-related discussions, meeting and business trip plans or schedules, requests for information at airports or train stations, <i>etc.</i>
PART 4 – Listening comprehension, short talks	For each item, the examinee listens to a short talk; printed in the exam booklet are 2 or more questions related to the talk. Each question has 4 possible answers. Talks include public announcements, news reports, meeting discussions, public service bulletins, and commercials.
PART 5 – Reading comprehension, incomplete sentences	Each question is an incomplete sentence. Four options to complete the sentence are listed beneath it. The examinee must choose the correct word or phrase that completes the sentence. Missing items are either based in word meaning or form, collocations or grammatical structure.
PART 6 – Reading comprehension, error recognition	Each item has four words or phrases underlined. The examinee must identify which of the four is incorrect. The examinee need not correct the sentence, only identify which item needs to be corrected. Types of errors

	are similar to the missing items in Part 5.
PART 7 – Reading comprehension	This part of the test is comprised of a variety of reading material taken from a business context or everyday affairs, such as notices, letters, forms, advertisements, newspapers, schedules, forms and applications. For the questions related to each text, the examinee must choose the correct responses from a choice of 4. The correct answer is based on what is stated or implied in the text.

1.8.3 Research Procedure

The data obtained are coded and analyzed using simple Spearman Rank Correlation calculated by Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) version 17.0. These statistical techniques are used since they function to determine the relationship between two variables.

The statistical procedures are:

1. Visit the class room and take the TOEIC score.
2. Divide the score into reading score (independent variable/X) and listening score (dependent variable/Y).
3. The data are examined for normality over the reading and listening score.
4. Use Spearman Rank Correlation to find whether there is a correlation between reading and listening comprehension or not.

1.8.4 Searching for Correlation

In this research the two variables are not normally distributed. Moreover, it use Spearman rank coefficient correlation to find the correlation between reading and listening comprehension. It formulated as follows:

$$r_s = 1 - \frac{6\sum D^2}{n(n^2 - 1)}$$

1.8.5 Data Analysis

Several statistical measures were taken in analyzing the data. We will use a computer software called SPSS 17.0 which stands for Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. The steps are covering test of normality and searching correlation between the two variables by using Spearman rank coefficient correlation (r_s).

1.9 Clarification of Terms

There are some terms which are used in this study:

- “Correlative study” meaning that the research is conducted to find out the correlation between variables being observed, namely reading comprehension and listening comprehension.
- “Reading Comprehension” refers to students’ reading comprehension as measured by the TOEIC International Test.
- “Listening Comprehension” refers to students’ listening comprehension as measured by the TOEIC International Test.

1.10 Organization of the Paper

This paper is divided into three chapters:

- Chapter I consist of the general idea of this study. It covers background of the research, theoretical framework, hypothesis, research question, aims of the research, significance of the research, scope of the research, research methodology, clarification of terms, and organization of the paper.
- Chapter II discuss about the description and the research findings.
- Chapter III give the conclusions of the research and suggestions.

