

# **THE MOST FREQUENT VOCABULARY APPEAR OF ENGLISH NATIONAL EXAM IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL FROM 2012 UNTIL 2016**

Ahmad Syafriandi<sup>1</sup>, Iwan Perdana, M.Pd<sup>2</sup>, Dr. Hengki, M.Pd<sup>3</sup>

Islamic University Kalimantan Muhammad Arsyad Al Banjari<sup>1</sup>

Islamic University Kalimantan Muhammad Arsyad Al Banjari<sup>2</sup>

Islamic University Kalimantan Muhammad Arsyad Al Banjari<sup>3</sup>

Email: [syafriandiuyee@gmail.com](mailto:syafriandiuyee@gmail.com)

## ***ABSTRACT***

National Exam is an assessment system of primary and secondary education in Indonesia. It assesses the competence of students nationally in some particular subjects of science and technology. In 2019, national exam in junior high school are consist of four subjects: Indonesian Language; Math; English; and Science. English national exam in junior high school consist of 50 multiple choice questions. Generally, the questions are reading comprehension by essay text and short functional text. For students of junior high school, English national exam is not easy for them. They still have some difficulties to do English national exam, especially the limitless of mastering useful vocabularies to answer the questions. Mastering a lot of vocabulary, especially the most frequent vocabularies appear in English national exam will make students easier to answer the questions. The objective of this research is to know the most frequent vocabulary appear in English national exam from 2012 until 2016 in Indonesia. Subject of this study is all the students of ninth grade in junior high school of year academic 2019/2020, while the object of this study is all the vocabularies of English national exam in junior high school from 2012 until 2016. To collect the data, the researcher identifies and registers all the vocabulary of English national exam based on Zipf's law about limitation of word in Microsoft Excel. Then, the researcher ranks them based on their frequency. The result showed that the most frequent vocabulary appear is *the* with frequency 1885 times. The result also showed that based on its frequency, the vocabulary with frequency 10 and above has 384 types of word which can coverage 69.94% of texts.

***Keywords:*** *Vocabulary, English national exam*

## INTRODUCTION

National Exam is an assessment system of primary and secondary education in Indonesia. It assesses the competence of students nationally in some particular subjects of science and technology. The National Exam held at least one time in a year of academic education. It held objectively, fairly, and responsibly. These are in line with the law of government number 13 of 2015, section 66 states that: (1) Assessing the study result as mentioned in section 63 verse (1) letter 'c' to measuring the students' competency nationally in particular subject of science and technology in form of National Exam. (2) National exam held objectively, fairly, and responsibly. (3) National exam held at least one time in a year of academic education.

The government uses the result of national exam to know the quality education of Indonesian's students nationally and in every area. It also becomes the basis consideration of selection to their next studies. The result of national exam is using by government as a consideration to developing and giving help to the school for improving the quality of education. Furthermore, on the section 68 states that the result of national exam uses by government as a basis for: a. Mapping the quality and or/in unit of education. b. Considering of selection to the next study. c. Deleted, and d. Developing and giving help to the unit of education in order to improving the quality of education.

In 2019, national exam in junior high school are consist of four subjects: Indonesian Language; Math; English; and Science (unbk.kemendiknud.go.id). English national exam in junior high school consist of 50 multiple choice questions. Generally, the questions are reading comprehension by essay text and short functional text. In 2018 and 2019, English national exam of junior high school covering cognitive level of knowledge and comprehension, application and logical thinking. It is

covering about essay text such as announcement, notice, and label. It is also covering about essay text such as descriptive text, recount text, narrative text, procedure text, and report text which is tested by reading comprehension (Department of Education).

For students of junior high school, English national exam is not easy for them. They still have some difficulties to do English national exam. Ariel Henuk (15) class IX B, student of SMP Katolik Sint Vianney Soe said that English national exam is the hardest subject of national exam, a long text with strange vocabularies became difficulty for her to do English national exam (pos-kupang.com). In line with Annabella Tampani (15) another student of SMP Sint Vianney Soe said, "There are a lot of vocabularies that I don't know the meaning which makes me hard to do English national exam." (pos-kupang.com). Furthermore, the headmaster of SMP Katolik Sint Vianney Soe, Johannes Antonius Tnomel, Pr. said that he got many complains from his students about the difficulties of English national exam. In addition, there are two students of SLBN 1 Karangasem get difficulties in doing English national exam as their headmaster Mudi Dwikora Hesti said that his students get difficulties in understanding the questions in English national exam because of the limitless of mastering vocabulary (balitribune.co.id). Even worse, there is a student in Lombok was unconscious while doing English national exam. Supriadi, the students of SMPN 3 Labuapi was unconscious after 30 minutes did English national exam. After getting well, he said that he get dizzy to think about the questions, it is hard (news.okezone.com).

The question in English national exam of junior high school mostly was reading comprehension. The importance of mastering a lot of vocabulary is to make students easier answering the questions of English national exam. This depends on the

previous researches about relationship between mastering vocabulary and reading comprehension performance. Zhang and Annual (2008) studied the role of vocabulary in reading comprehension with 37 secondary students learning English in Singapore. The Vocabulary Level Test was used to measure students' vocabulary knowledge. Result showed that students' vocabulary knowledge at the 2000-word and the 3000-word levels were better in reading comprehension performance. Rashidi and Khosravi (2010) studied about the role of depth and breadth of vocabulary knowledge in reading comprehension to 38 senior university students. The result showed that students with stronger depth and breadth of vocabulary performed better in reading comprehension test. Pringprom (2011) studied about the relationship between English vocabulary size and reading comprehension performance of 30 undergraduate students at Bangkok University. The finding showed that the students' English vocabulary size and reading comprehension were positively correlated

Based on the mentioned above, it is important for students to mastering a lot vocabulary in order to face the English national exam. So, in this study the researcher intends to make a vocabulary list that most frequent appear in English national exam of junior high school from 2012 until 2016 as a reference for them to learn vocabulary. The vocabulary list will ranking based on its frequency.

## **METHOD**

### *Research Design*

The researcher uses the descriptive quantitative method in this research because it will explain the phenomena by collecting numerical data that analysis using mathematically based methods (in particular statistics).

### *Subject and Object of Research*

The subject of this study is English national exam of junior high school. While the object of this study is

all the vocabularies of English national exam in junior high school from 2012 until 2016.

### *Participants*

There are population and sample in this study. The population of this study is English national exam texts of junior high school from 2012 until 2016. While the sample is all the vocabularies in English national exam texts of junior high school from 2012 until 2016.

### *Technique of Collecting Data*

In this study, the researcher used identifying, registering and displaying to collect the data. The researcher is identifying the vocabulary or word in English National Exam based on Epita (2019) about limitation of word to registering. Then, the researcher is registering the vocabulary of English National Exam texts that have identified into the table of vocabulary list in Microsoft Excel. The table of vocabulary list contains of vocabulary with its frequency. Finally, it will display in table in Microsoft Excel.

### *Data Analysis*

The researcher ranked the vocabulary based on its frequency to know the most frequent vocabulary appear in English national exam text from 2012 until 2016. Then, the researcher calculated the total number of words in a text or corpus which called tokens and the number of different words which called types (Nation and Meara, 2010). The researcher also calculated the total number of types and coverage for frequency 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and up. Next, the researcher lemmatized and classified the vocabulary list based on word classes, and compared it with the most important words to learn of Oxford Basic English Dictionary. The last, reported it as a vocabulary list.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In 2012, the most frequent vocabulary appear is 'the' with frequency 502 times. 2013, the most frequent vocabulary appear is 'the' with frequency 407 times. 2014, the most frequent vocabulary appear is 'the' with frequency 322 times. 2015, the most frequent vocabulary appear is 'the' with frequency 285 times. 2016, the most frequent vocabulary appear is 'the' with frequency 369 times. In 2012 until 2016, the most frequent vocabulary appear is 'the' with frequency 1885 times.

Tokens refer to the total number of words in a text or corpus, while types refer to the number of different words (Nation and Meara, 2010). In 2012, there are 5583 tokens and 1372 types of vocabularies. 2013, there are 4550 tokens and 1335 types of vocabularies. 2014, there are 3428 tokens and 1129 types of vocabularies. 2015, there are 4213 tokens and 1196 types of vocabularies. 2016, there are 3596 tokens and 1074 types of vocabularies. In 2012 until 2016, there are 24491 tokens and 3400 types of vocabularies.

Based on its frequency, for frequency 1 has 1386 types of word which coverage 5.65% of English national exam texts from 2012 until 2016. Frequency 2 has 626 types of word which coverage 5.11% of texts. Frequency 3 has 342 types of word which coverage 4.19% of texts. Frequency 4 has 248 types of word which coverage 4.05% of texts. Frequency 5 has 124 types of word which coverage 2.53% of texts. Frequency 6 has 104 types of word which coverage 2.55% of texts. Frequency 7 has 77 types of word which coverage 2.2% of texts. Frequency 8 has 59 types of word which coverage 1.93% of texts. Frequency 9 has 50 types of word which coverage 1.84% of texts. Frequency 10 and above has 384 types of word which coverage 69.94% of texts.

Based on Zipf's law about limitation of word frequency distribution, there are 24491 tokens and 3400 types of vocabularies of English national exam texts from 2012 until 2016. Then, the researcher is lemmatizing the vocabulary list in order to get the accurate result in classifying into word classes and comparing with the 2000 most important words of Oxford Basic English Dictionary. The finding showed that there were 2532 types of vocabulary in English national exam texts from 2012 until 2016.

In word classes, the researcher found that there was possibility in a word included more than one type of word class. For example, the word *about*, it included in word classes of adjective, adverb, and preposition.

In Oxford Basic English Dictionary (2008), there are the most import words to learn. The researcher comparing it with the vocabulary list of the most frequent vocabularies appear from 2012 until 2016 and found that there were 1376 vocabularies important to learn based Oxford Basic English Dictionary.

It is important for students to mastering a lot vocabulary in order to face the English national exam. So, in this study the researcher starts with the research question, "What is the most frequent vocabulary appears of English national exam in junior high school from 2012 until 2016?" To get answer, the researcher registered certain vocabularies based on Zipf's law into a table of vocabulary list in Microsoft Excel. The result showed that the most frequent vocabulary appears of English national exam in junior high school from 2012 until 2016 was *the* with frequency 1885 times. In fact, this result was also same with another research by Paulina (2018) who conducted a research about the word frequency list of students' mini theses collection. She found that most frequent word appear was 'the' with frequency 13387 times. In word classes, *the* is part of articles. It is a

functional word. Nation and Waring (1997: 8-9) said that the word *the* has important value in English since it is useful and commonly used. At daily used, the word *the* occurs so frequently about seven percent of the words on a page in written English and the same proportion of the words in a conversation are repetitions of the word *the*. It showed that the word *the* in the English national exam text is important and useful as it the frequently occurs in the text (Paulina, 2018).

In specific, the result showed that the number of different words was 3400 types and the total number of words was 24491 tokens. There were 1386 types of vocabulary with 1 frequency and 384 types of vocabulary with 10 frequencies and up. For the cumulative coverage of text, the 10 frequencies and up can coverage the text until 69.94%. It was a useful result for students. It means that if the students were able to master all the vocabularies with 10 frequencies and up which can coverage 69.94% of text, they will have a bigger chance to get the best result in English national exam. They will easier to understand the question and choose the best answer.

In Oxford Basic English Dictionary (2008), there were the most important words to learn for learners. There were 2000 of the most important words on it. The researcher compared the result of this study with the most important words to learn based on Oxford Dictionary. The researcher found that there were 1376 words in vocabulary list were important to learn as in Oxford Dictionary. It means that if the students mastering the 1376 words in vocabulary list which the result of this study, they will also master the most important words in both oral and written in daily life based on Oxford Dictionary.

In conclusion, mastering vocabulary is an important thing for students to get the best result in English national exam, especially in junior high school. The information

from frequency studies suggests a cost-benefit approach to dealing with vocabulary. The use of frequency counts to distinguish high-frequency from low-frequency words, then it seems clear that the high-frequency words need to be the first and main vocabulary goal of students. These words are so frequent, so widespread and make up such a manageable group that both teachers and students can usefully spend considerable time ensuring that they are well learned. The low-frequency words are so infrequent, have such a narrow range of occurrence and make up such a large group that they do not deserve teaching time. Of course, students need to keep on learning low frequency words after they have learned the high frequency words, but they should do this incidentally or deliberately in their own time.

## **CLOSING**

### *Conclusion*

The research question of this research is "What is the most frequent vocabulary appears of English national exam in junior high school from 2012 until 2016?" To get the answer, the researcher registering the vocabularies based on Zipf's law about limitation of word to registering and ranking the vocabulary list based on its frequency. The result showed that word *the* was the most frequent appear of English national exam texts from 2012 until 2016 with frequency 1885 times. The result also showed that based on its frequency, the vocabulary with frequency 10 and above has 384 types of word which can coverage 69.94% of texts. It means that by mastering those 384 types of vocabularies will increase the opportunity for students to get the better score because can coverage 69.94% of texts.

So, the conclusion of this research is word *the* and with other 383 words was important vocabularies to learn to face the English national exam in junior high school because those words high frequency can coverage 69.94% of English national exam texts.

### *Suggestion*

Considering the results obtained in this study and discussions in the previous chapter, there are several suggestions that the researcher would like to present.

For students, it is important for students to mastering a lot vocabulary to face the English national exam. The result of this research could help the students to know the most frequent vocabularies appear in English national exam and make it as important words to learn for them

For teachers, hopefully the result of this research could help them to choose the vocabularies which are priority to teach to their students because of importance and high frequency appear in English national exam.

For the next researchers, the result of the research can be used as a contribution of opinion that can be taken as references for another investigation in the same area in different contexts.

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