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Development of placement test instruments for assessing BIPA reading ability

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a b s t r a c t

The development of a valid and reliable placement test instrument is very much needed in line with the increasing interest in BIPA (Indonesian for Speakers of Other Languages). This research aims to produce a placement test instrument for BIPA students' reading skills. This study uses the Research and Development (R&D) method with a 3D model (define, design, and develop). The products produced are test instruments, competence indicators, scoring, and placement guides. The test instrument consists of three packages of questions, and each package consists of 30 multiple-choice questions. The development of test questions is based on competency standards in the book "*Sahabatku Indonesia untuk Umum*" by PPSDK 2019. Product validation was carried out by two experts (assessment and BIPA), while the trial was conducted on ten BIPA students. The results of the validation and testing showed that the test was able to place students according to their reading ability level.

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Introduction

Indonesian is currently increasingly in demand by foreigners. From 2015 to 2020, there were 79,791 BIPA students in 206 programs worldwide (kemdikbud.go.id, 2021). The Language Development and Cultivation Agency will target 100,000 new BIPA students in 2024 (kemdikbud.go.id, 2021). That proves that BIPA enthusiasts will continue to increase in the future.

With the increasing interest in BIPA, the BIPA program must continue developing its systems, facilities, and infrastructure. Developing a valid and reliable BIPA placement test instrument is one of the steps to improving the BIPA program.

The placement test instrument has a significant position in BIPA. That is because BIPA students have different abilities, so they need to be grouped into levels ranging from beginner to advanced (Alfayanti, Suwandi, & Winarni, 2017). In addition, students with the same ability level are grouped into one class (Belfield & Crosta, 2012). By grouping them in one group, BIPA students can receive material according to their ability level (Rohmah, 2017).

The placement test is beneficial for BIPA teachers. Placement tests in second language learning can be helpful for teachers as a source of information and a basis for compiling teaching materials (Pratiwi, 2019). Thus, the teaching materials provided in the learning process follow BIPA students' needs.

Besides being beneficial for BIPA teachers and students, the placement test also benefits BIPA program organizers. Placement tests can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of BIPA learning (Pratiwi, 2019). The assessment results from the placement test matter for the BIPA program. That is because there is no assessment of student abilities before the program starts, and students must be grouped into appropriate levels (Green, 2018).

The availability of standardized tests for BIPA placement tests in the field is still very lacking. So that statement is based on a needs analysis conducted at the State University of Malang (UM) that each institution makes its placement test independently.

Different placement test results are undoubtedly invalid and unreliable. As a result, there is a gap in the interpretation of test results related to the abilities of BIPA students. In addition, the test results are highly dependent on the internal assessment of the BIPA institution that administers the placement test. Thus, the results of the placement test obtained by BIPA students may be different if the student takes the placement test in a different place.

This research focuses on developing a BIPA placement test instrument for reading ability. This reading ability test question can be integrated with other skills (writing, listening, and speaking). The ability to read is essential for second-language learners. In addition, the ability to read is learned by BIPA students for further study, getting a job, communicating with the community, getting new information, and so on (Grabe, 2009).

The ability to read is essential in the acquisition (input) of a second language. Reading is a source of language input (Ghazali, 2013). Reading can affect the development and skills of other languages; for example, with good reading skills, someone can write better (Ghazali, 2013). Reading tests can provide information about the extent of linguistic input (language acquisition) possessed by second-language learners (Pamungkas, 2019).

Reading can be a means to present information about a second language through text. In addition, reading can be a means to teach grammatical structures and vocabulary moreover to present cultural contexts through authentic social messages in texts (Ghazali, 2013).

Based on a needs analysis interview conducted with one of the BIPA students at UM, it was stated that before the student joined the Darmasiswa program in Indonesia, the student participated in an interview selection at the Indonesian Embassy in Egypt. The interview was conducted for selection, not

to place the level of speakers of other languages. The questions given are also simple, and they do not have to be able to speak Indonesian to join the program.

After passing the selection and becoming the selected student to participate in the Darmasiswa program at UM, the student takes a written placement test to divide BIPA students into two levels, A1 and A2. Generally, students who have never studied Indonesian will enter level A1, while students who have studied Indonesian will enter level A2.

Language consists of two types: spoken (oral) and written. Spoken language is the ability to speak and listen. Meanwhile, written language is the ability to read and write. The following paragraphs explain why developing a placement test focusing on reading ability is essential.

Based on the needs analysis described earlier, oral tests (interviews) are less efficient. Interview tests take a long time because students have to take turns taking the test with the interviewer. That is inefficient if the number of BIPA students being tested is in the tens or hundreds. In addition, interview tests are ineffective because they allow test results to be subjective to each interviewer. The implementation of the written test in the Darmasiswa program was also ineffective. The test can only divide students into two levels at the beginner.

Developing placement tests that focus on reading skills provides time and resource efficiency. The developed test is also practical because it can objectively place students into seven levels of BIPA. In addition, the developed placement test can be accessed anywhere using the internet.

The following paragraphs state some relevant research regarding developing a placement test instrument for BIPA students' reading skills. *First,* the thesis research entitled *Development of Level Placement Test Evaluation Tool in Picture ICT-Based BIPA Learning for Foreign Students* (Habibi, 2019). The research resulted in a *picture ICT*-based BIPA placement test instrument that could be used in Semarang. This research can be used as a reference because of the similarity of research subjects and products developed. The difference between the research conducted by Ahmad Fajar Habibi is that the test only focuses on Semarang because it is packaged as a local host, not a web host.

In comparison, this research will use google forms which can be accessed from anywhere. Furthermore, that research focuses on the ICT and picture aspects of the test, while this research focuses more on items equipped with a test stimulus. The picture is given as a stimulus according to the needs of each item.

Second, the article entitled *Development of Information Technology-Based UKBIPA-Reading Test Tool to Measure Reading Competence of BIPA Learners* (Annisa, 2013). The research resulted in a test tool called UKBIPA to test Indonesian reading proficiency for foreign speakers. The difference between the research conducted by Robita Ika Annisa and this research lies in the type of test developed. That research developed a proficiency test, while this research developed a placement test instrument. However, the similarities are that both produce test instruments specific to BIPA reading skills.

Third, the article entitled *Placement Test Based on the Reading Comprehension of BIPA Students: The Problems of Preparing a Standard Placement Test Containing Diversity* (Pratiwi, 2019). The difference between that article and this research is that it describes the problems during the placement test preparation. Meanwhile, this research develops and produces a placement test. However, the similarities between the two relate to the BIPA reading ability placement test.

Fourth, a research article entitled *Development of a Web-Based Indonesian Reading Test for Thai Students at Yogyakarta State University* (Masae, 2019). The difference between both studies lies in the subject. That article is aimed explicitly at Thai students, while this research is aimed at the BIPA program in general, especially those using teaching materials from PPSDK.

Fifth, a research article entitled *Reading Comprehension Test Instrument for Middle-Level BIPA Students Containing East Java Local Culture* (Madyarini, 2019). The difference between that article and

this research is that it developed a particular reading comprehension test for the intermediate level. In contrast, this research developed a reading ability placement test for seven BIPA levels. In addition, the article focuses on the local culture of East Java, while this research focuses on the topic from the PPSDK book.

Another difference between this study and previous research is the reference for making the test questions. This study uses the essential competencies (KD) in the book *"Sahabatku Indonesia untuk Umum"* published in 2019, as a reference. The book is the latest BIPA teaching material published by PPSDK. In addition, books published by PPSDK are commonly used as teaching materials in many BIPA programs. For example, the Sahabatku Indonesia book is currently used as teaching material and the leading learning resource for BIPA learning (Latupapua, 2020). Therefore, the development of this placement test instrument has a good level of novelty and relevance to the current BIPA learning held.

Based on the description in the previous paragraphs, this research and development are essential to be carried out. Thus, the needs of BIPA institutions for standard, valid, and reliable placement test instruments for BIPA students can be fulfilled.

This research has a general objective, namely, to produce a placement test instrument for BIPA students' reading skills. The specific objectives of this study include three, namely (1) determining the test product to be developed, (2) designing a placement test for BIPA students' reading skills, and (3) making a BIPA student reading ability placement test.

This research and development are expected to benefit various parties, including the following. (1) BIPA institutions can use the test result to prepare programs and curricula for each level. In addition, from the test results, BIPA institutions would more easily determine classes or levels that follow the abilities of BIPA students. (2) Teachers can use the test to identify the reading ability level of BIPA students. Thus, teachers can better prepare appropriate learning materials and strategies according to students' reading ability levels. (3) BIPA students can have an overview of their Indonesian reading ability level. (4) This research can be an input for developments and innovations in BIPA learning. In addition, other researchers can use this research as a reference, especially in developing test instruments for BIPA.

Method

This study used the Research and Development (R&D) method and adopted the 4D model (Thiagarajan et al., 1974). 4D stands for Define, Design, Develop, and Disseminate. However, this study modified the model into 3D, which stands for Define, Design, and Develop. Thus, this research is only carried out until the third stage, namely the developing (making) stage. The product dissemination was not carried out, but the results of this study were published in the journal. The three stages are then described in more detail as follows.

Determining Stage

The determining stage is carried out to define the product and its specifications. This product is determined based on three main activities: literature study, needs analysis, and material and problem analysis.

First, literature study. A literature study is carried out by looking for relevant theoretical references from many books, articles, and results of previous research. The purposes of this literature study are (1) to find the theoretical basis used to make the product and (2) to find and study similar previous research so there is no duplication.

Second, needs analysis. A needs analysis is carried out by conducting online interviews. Interviews were conducted with teachers and BIPA students. The goal is that the product developed follows the field's needs.

Third, material and questions analysis. The method used in this activity analyzes the book *"Sahabatku Indonesia untuk Umum"* and examples of existing placement questions. The research was done, so the material and questions were developed based on the BIPA reading competence used in the book.

Designing Stage

The designing stage contains activities to create a product design. The results of the designing stage will be a benchmark in making the product. The activities carried out at the designing stage include the competence indicator and material design.

First, competence indicator design. In this activity, the researcher determines the question indicators and active verbs according to Marzano's taxonomy, the number of questions, and the number of choices used. The researcher arranged the questions benchmark in a table with six columns consisting of question numbers, topics, stimuli, reading skills, indicators, and time to complete the test. The benchmark also lists the intended BIPA level, test objectives, question forms, and areas of reading competence.

Second, the material design. In this activity, the researcher determines the topic and then creates and searches for reading texts from internet sources. Reading text was determined using LIX readability to define the text's difficulty for each BIPA level.

Third, media design. The reading ability placement test instrument developed in this study uses *google forms. Google forms* is software used to create questions, tasks, teaching materials, and other internet-based learning tools. Media design is done for the test's appearance, the name of the test, and the question link.

Fourth, a data collection instrument design. The researcher created a feasibility test questionnaire or observation sheet at this stage. The purpose of the feasibility test sheet is to know the validity and practicality of the product. Sheet the feasibility test contains an assessment of the systematics and content of the reading ability placement test instrument. In addition, it also includes comments and suggestions that are used as a reference for revising or improving the product.

Making Stage

The making stage contains a series of activities to make test questions products. *First*, test questions making. At this stage, the researcher makes the questions according to the benchmark designed in the previous stage. The product from this stage is referred to as *prototype 1*. This stage includes three activities described as follows.

1) Making scoring rules and placing BIPA levels.
2) Making reading ability placement test kits. The test set, in this case, is the test items and stimulus. In making the questions, the researcher used a reading text stimulus that had been determined based on the readability of LIX. Stimuli: pictures, tables, and maps are adjusted to the needs of the questions and the reading text. In addition, the researcher made the items along with the answer choices based on previously designed benchmarks and indicators.
3) Making test packaging media in the form of *google forms*. In this case, the researcher inputs the reading text, items, and answer choices into *the Google form* so that students can access them using the internet.

Second, validity testing. This stage is essential in making the products because it obtains information on the feasibility of the product. The testing involved two test subjects: BIPA experts and

assessment experts from Malang State University (UM). This activity aims to determine the validity of construct, material, and language aspects.

Third, testing tests on BIPA students. Tests are carried out on BIPA students who are currently or have studied BIPA. Testing tests on BIPA students aim to get more detailed feedback and determine the product's success, which is helpful for product revisions.

Fourth, product revision. After receiving suggestions and criticisms from the validity testing by experts and limited test testing to the student, product revisions were carried out according to the input received. Product revision is done by correcting its weaknesses and deficiencies. Product revision is done once, and the revised product is called the final *prototype*.

Product Testing

Product testing has two stages: product testing for experts and BIPA students. Product testing aims to get constructive criticism and suggestions for product revision. In addition, validity testing is carried out to test the correctness of the theoretical construct and the suitability of the product being developed. This paragraph will be described sequentially, including product test design, product test subjects, data types, data collection instruments, and data analysis techniques.

Product Test Design

Product development test design is carried out in two steps, namely (1) validity testing by experts and (2) testing tests on BIPA students. Both are explained in more detail as follows.

First, the validity test involves a BIPA expert and an assessment expert. The implementation of the validity test by experts starts with submitting the draft of the reading ability placement test instrument. Then, the experts and practitioners filled out the product draft evaluation questionnaire provided.

Second, testing tests on BIPA students. The test subjects used were 10 BIPA students from the 2022 *In-Country* program. BIPA students will carry out a validity test using the products developed. The test results are then used to determine the ability of the test to place BIPA students according to their level of reading ability. The results of these tests will be used as material for product revision. This stage is the final product revision to produce a reading ability placement test instrument for BIPA students.

Product Testing Subjects

Product testing subjects consisted of assessment experts and BIPA experts. Product testing subjects have the following criteria.

a) Assessment experts who have the criteria of (1) lecturers who have developed evaluation or assessment courses; (2) have at least a master's degree; and (3) have teaching experience in the field of assessment and evaluation for at least three years.
b) BIPA experts who have criteria (1) BIPA experts are lecturers who have coached BIPA courses such as Indonesian as a foreign language, cross-cultural understanding, Indonesian as a foreign language program, development of BIPA learning resources, or BIPA learning strategies; (2) have at least a master's degree; and (3) have at least three years of BIPA teaching experience.
c) BIPA students who have criteria (1) speakers of other languages who are not native speakers of Indonesian, (2) speakers of other languages who are currently or have participated in specific BIPA programs at Malang State University.

Data Types

In all stages of this research, two data are used: qualitative and quantitative. In addition, this research and development use two types of research instruments, namely interview guidelines and questionnaires. Therefore, qualitative analysis techniques will analyze verbal data from interviews and written data from questionnaires (comments, suggestions, and input).

Quantitative data analysis techniques were used to measure the feasibility of the test. The measurement technique uses an ordinal scale of 1 to 4 to indicate rank. Number 4 means very good / very decent / very appropriate. Number 3 means good / decent / appropriate. Number 2 means less good / less decent / less appropriate. Number 1 means bad / not decent / not appropriate.

Data Collection

This research and development use two types of research instruments. The first instrument was an interview guide used during pre-development for needs analysis and material analysis. The interview guide was used to dig up information about the gap between needs and product availability in the field, get information about the placement tests that have been carried out so far, and get an overview of the product specifications to be developed.

The second instrument is a questionnaire that is used for post-development. This questionnaire was distributed after the developed product was completed and used for expert feasibility testing and field tests. Questionnaires can be distributed directly in paper form or by sending documents online. The choice is adjusted to the request of the feasibility testing expert.

The questionnaire used in this study consisted of seven parts. *First,* instructions for filling out the questionnaire and the identity of the BIPA expert and the assessment filling out the questionnaire. *Second,* the product being assessed, namely a benchmark equipped with competency indicators from the PPSDK book, 3 question packages, and answer keys. *Third,* the assessment criteria are in the form of material, language, and assessment. *Fourth,* place a check mark (√) on one of the scores (1, 2, 3, or 4). *Fifth,* notes and suggestions aimed at guiding the revision or improvement of the product being developed. *Sixth,* the product implementation approval section provides choices, namely feasible, not feasible, or feasible but with revision. *Seventh,* part of the date of filling out the questionnaire, signature, and full name of the expert who filled out the questionnaire.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis techniques used in research and development are qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques. The following is an explanation of each data analysis technique used.

First, qualitative. Verbal data obtained from interviews and written data in the form of comments, suggestions, and input in the questionnaire will be analyzed using qualitative analysis techniques. The steps taken to carry out a qualitative analysis include (1) collecting written verbal data from test questionnaires, (2) transcribing the results of interviews from experts and practitioners obtained during product feasibility testing, (3) grouping the results of written, verbal data and the results of verbal transcripts orally into the appropriate criteria group, and (4) analyze and formulate conclusions based on the data group to conclude the follow-up of the product being developed.

Second, quantitative. Quantitative data analysis techniques are used to measure the feasibility of the test. Feasibility testing data construct, material, and language obtained by two stages of calculation.

a) Calculate the percentage using the overall data processing formula. The formula used is as follows:

Overall data processing formula:

$$\text{Persentase} = \frac{\sum X}{\sum Xi} \times 100\%$$

∑X: the total score given by the expert on all items
∑Xi: total maximum score on all items

b) After obtaining the percentage results, these results are analyzed using the table of feasibility guidelines for placement test instruments. The eligibility guidelines table used is as follows:

Table 1 Distribution of Text Readability Level

Product Test Results			The next step
Category	**Percentage**	**Qualification**	
4	85% - 100%	Very worth it	Implementation
3	75% - 84%	Worthy	Implementation
2	56% - 74%	Pretty decent	Revision
1	≥ 55%	Not worth it	Revision

Table description:

a) If the product obtains an 85% - 100% percentage, the developed instrument is feasible to implement.
b) If the product tested obtains a 75% - 84% percentage, the developed instrument is feasible to implement.
c) If the product obtains a 56% - 74% percentage, the developed instrument is considered feasible to be implemented but needs to be revised.
d) If the product obtains a percentage of ≥ 55%, the instrument being developed is considered less feasible to implement and must be revised.

Results and Discussion

This subsection includes four sections of discussion, namely (1) determining the test product, (2) designing a placement test for BIPA students' reading ability, and (3) making a BIPA student reading ability placement test. These three topics are described in more detail as follows.

Product determining

The determining stage is carried out to define the product and its specifications. This stage aims that the product developed follows the needs in the field. Therefore, the determination of this product is based on three main activities, which include (a) literature study, (b) needs analysis, and (c) material and problem analysis. These three are then described in more detail as follows.

Study of literature

The objectives of this literature study are (1) to find various theories to have a clear and directed footing and (2) to find and study similar previous studies to avoid duplication of research. A literature study is done by looking for relevant theoretical references from several books, articles, or the results of previous research. Similar research has been described more clearly in the introduction.

The development of the BIPA placement test is still not widely carried out in the field, while the placement test is essential to be held. In this paragraph, the function of the placement test will be explained according to the literature study conducted. First, placement tests can make students participate in a

learning program effectively (Ratnawulan & Rusdiana, 2014). Second, placement tests can create effective classroom learning (Daryanto, 2012). That is because the material given in each class is different. The student's potential is maximized according to their ability level, so learning is more targeted to their needs (Daryanto, 2012). Third, placement test serves to place students into learning situations that are appropriate to the student's ability level (Arifin, 2016).

Based on the opinion of the experts in the previous paragraph, it can be concluded that the placement test creates an effective learning process according to the level of student ability. That is because all the students with the same ability level are grouped in the same class, so the material in class is adjusted to each student's ability level.

Needs Analysis

Needs analysis is carried out to ensure that the developed products comply with the field's needs. The needs analysis was conducted through online interviews with two teachers and a BIPA student at UM in December 2021.

The interviews stated that each BIPA institution used its placement test instrument, including the BIPA institution at UM. Thus, the placement test instrument used is not a standard test but a test developed by BIPA institutions and teachers.

The placement test in BIPA is still in the process of finding a form that fits the needs and objectives of BIPA implementation (Sukmayadi, 2014). Applying the placement test in BIPA is currently not optimal because there is no general standard (Habibi, 2019). Based on this theory, it can be concluded that the standard BIPA placement test is currently needed in the field.

Material Analysis and Questions

This activity aims to get references to develop materials and questions based on the standards and needs of BIPA students. This activity is carried out by analyzing examples of existing placement questions and analyzing the book *"Sahabatku Indonesia untuk Umum."* So that the materials and questions developed are based on the BIPA reading competence used in the book. The analysis results in this section are then used to design the product. Therefore, the material and questions analyzed will not be explained further in this subsection.

Product design

Product design is carried out to ensure the resulting product does not fall out of the objectives, indicators, competencies, and product development guidelines. The design results at this stage will be a benchmark in making the product. Activities are carried out at this stage, namely the design of materials and the competence indicators. These activities are described in more detail as follows.

Material Design

This stage is carried out with the aim that the material used in the questions and reading texts follows the difficulty level of each BIPA level. Activities carried out at this stage, namely determining the level of reading difficulty, determining topics, making texts, and looking for reading texts that will be used in questions.

The text (test stimulus) in each BIPA level has a different level of readability. Therefore, the reading text was measured using the LIX readability formula to determine the level of text difficulty. For example, the easy-to-read text has a high readability level and fewer LIX calculations, and vice versa. The text's readability distribution is described more clearly in table 2 below.

Table 2 Distribution of Text Readability Level

Level	Text Readability Calculation Results
BIPA 1	< 25
BIPA 2	25 – 30
BIPA 3	30 – 40
BIPA 4	40 – 50
BIPA 5	50 – 60
BIPA 6	> 60
BIPA 7	> 60

The difficulty level of the text is determined according to the LIX readability formula and adjusted to the text's topic. For example, an easy-to-read text consists of vocabulary close to oneself and is often used in everyday life. On the other hand, difficult-to-read texts consist of vocabulary related to academic, professional, and social.

Each BIPA level has a different topic standard. The reading topics used in this test were taken from the book *"Sahabatku Indonesia untuk Umum"* published by PPSDK in 2019. Of the ten reading topics for each BIPA level contained in the book, this placement test only took two to five topics.

The choice of topics is based on its usefulness to BIPA students and avoids overlapping topics. For example, the topics presented in the book *"Sahabatku Indonesia untuk Umum"* BIPA 3 unit 5 are *daily activities*. This topic was not included in the BIPA 3 questions because it was already presented in the BIPA 1 and 2 questions. In addition, the topic was too general to be used. Other topics, such as *holidays*, can represent topics of *daily activities* but more specific. The reading topics that have been sorted are explained more clearly in Table 3.

Table 3 Distribution of Reading Topics

Level	Question Number	Reading Topic
BIPA 1	1	Greeting
	2	Family
	3	Time, day, date, month, and year
	4	Daily activity _
BIPA 2	5	Job
	6	Announcement on campus
	7	Make favourite food
	8	Surrounding environment
BIPA 3	9	Congratulation, wish, and prayer
	10	
	11	Favourite movie
	12	Natural disasters
BIPA 4	13	Folklore
	14	
	15	Youth health
	16	
BIPA 5	17	Humanity
	18	Education issues
	19	
	20	
BIPA 6	21	Campus activities
	22	Social gap
	23	
	24	National figure
BIPA 7	25	Job application letter
	26	Favourite song
	27	Novel
	28	Social problems

	29
	30

The reading ability placement test developed in this study used a stimulus in the form of reading text, dialogue, pictures, floor plans, or tables. The test stimulus is described more clearly in table 4 below.

Table 4 Distribution of Test Stimulus

Level	**Question Number**	**Test Stimulus**
BIPA 1	1	WA short message dialogue
	2	Family tree pictures
	3	Event Invitation
	4	Schedule table
BIPA 2	5	Description text
	6	Announcement text
	7	Procedure text
	8	Floor plan
BIPA 3	9	Personal letter
	10	
	11	Movie Synopsis
	12	Explanatory text
BIPA 4	13	Folklore
	14	
	15	Exposition text
	16	
BIPA 5	17	Poetry
	18	Discussion text
	19	
	20	
BIPA 6	21	Proposal
	22	News articles
	23	
	24	Biographical text
BIPA 7	25	Formal letter
	26	Song lyrics
	27	Review text
	28	Research text
	29	
	30	

Based on tables 3 and 4, one topic and one stimulus can be used for one to three questions. That is done if several topics and competency standards have similarities so that they can be used for more than one question. For example, BIPA 4 has topics about *folklore* and *short stories,* so both can be represented by one topic.

In the next stage, the competence indicator is arranged based on the pattern described in the previous paragraph. The competence indicator is arranged in a table with six columns consisting of the question number, the topic, the test stimulus, the readability score, the questions indicator, and the time to work on the questions. The competence indicator also includes the intended BIPA level, test objectives, form of questions, and the realm of reading competence.

The text can be understood by the reader or not, depending on two things, namely the language used and the content of the text (Shofiah, 2017). The LIX readability formula to determine the difficulty level of the text counts (a) the number of long words (more than five letters); (b) the total number of words in one text; and (c) the number of sentences in one text (Anderson, 1983).

The Competence Indicator Design

The competence indicator design aims to ensure that the questions follow the guidelines and indicators set. In this activity, the researcher determined the number of questions and the number of multiple choices, and the indicators of questions and active verbs according to Marzano's taxonomy. The reading ability placement test developed consists of three packages of questions. One test package consists of 30 questions with four choices (A, B, C, and D). BIPA 1 to BIPA 6 consists of four questions, while BIPA 7 consists of six questions. The difference in BIPA 7 is because the difficulty level of BIPA 6 and 7 is almost the same. The similarities are found in the reading competence level (see table 6) and the text readability (see table 2). The question number distribution is stated in the following table 5.

Table 5 Distribution of Question Numbers

Level	Question Number	Number of Questions
BIPA 1	1 – 4	Four
BIPA 2	5 – 8	Four
BIPA 3	9 – 12	Four
BIPA 4	13 – 16	Four
BIPA 5	17 – 20	Four
BIPA 6	21 – 24	Four
BIPA 7	25 – 30	Six

The development of the reading ability placement test in this study used Marzano's reading competence level. That was done to distinguish the difficulty level of reading skills at each level of BIPA.

Table 6 Distribution of Marzano's Reading Competence Levels

Level	Question Number	Reading Competence Level (Marzano)
BIPA 1	1 – 4	*The first level*, information retrieval
BIPA 2	5 – 8	*The second level*, understanding
BIPA 3	9 – 12	*The third level*, analysis
BIPA 4	13 – 16	*The fourth level*, the use of knowledge
BIPA 5	17 – 20	*The fifth level*, metacognitive
BIPA 6	21 – 24	*The sixth level*, self-evaluation
BIPA 7	25 – 30	*The sixth level*, self-evaluation

Based on table 6 above, BIPA 6 and BIPA 7 use the same reading competence level. Furthermore, both use the highest (sixth) level, self-evaluation. In addition, the readability of the text used in BIPA 6 and 7 is also the same (see table 2). However, the difference in the difficulty level of BIPA 6 and 7 lies in their total number of questions (see table 5), topics (see table 3), and the text stimulus (see table 4) used.

The competence indicator design is vital to do before making the test questions. Test makers should use a tool to design and make test questions so that objective tests can reveal more profound aspects of thinking and memory (Sudijono, 2013). In this case, the tool is the competence indicator.

Product Making

The product-making stage aims to produce a suitable BIPA reading placement test instrument. This making stage has four main activities, namely (a) making test questions, (b) feasibility testing by experts, (c) testing tests on BIPA students, and (d) product revision. The explanation of the four main activities is described as follows.

Making Test Questions

Making test questions aims to produce questions along with the scoring and placement rules. At this stage, the researcher makes the product according to the competence indicator designed in the

previous stage. The product results from this making activity are referred to as Prototype 1. This stage includes two activities, namely, as follows.

First, create the test scoring rules. The scoring model used in this study is to give a score of 1 for a correct answer and 0 for a wrong answer. If the test taker answers thirty questions correctly, the total score is 30. Conversely, if the test taker answers thirty questions incorrectly, the total score is 0. Thus, the score is the same as the total number of questions correctly answered. Scoring is done automatically with a computerized system. Test takers can find the score obtained immediately after working on the question.

Score Total = Total Number of Correct Answers

Second, the making of BIPA-level placement rules. Test takers can immediately find the score obtained right after completing the test. However, test takers cannot immediately know the placement of the BIPA level obtained. That is because the BIPA placement process is done manually by BIPA teachers, so it takes time to announce the results. The teacher must check the number of correct and incorrect answers at each BIPA level to determine the placement of the test takers. For example, if the test taker cannot answer all the questions or has zero correct answers, then the test taker goes to BIPA 1.

Table 7 Placement of BIPA 1 and BIPA 7

Correct answer	Placement
0	BIPA 1
30	BIPA 7

Table 7 only applies if all answers are correct or incorrect. The following are the three main rules for placing BIPA in this test. Rule 1, test takers are placed at a certain BIPA level if they can correctly answer 50% of the questions at that specific level. For example, 50% of the four questions in BIPA 1 to BIPA 6 are two. 50% of the six questions in BIPA 7 are three. Therefore, if a test taker can answer two questions in BIPA 3, he is placed at the BIPA 3 level.

Rule 2, the teacher will check the test takers' answers in the next level questions only if the test takers can answer "more than" 50% at a certain level correctly. For example, test takers can answer three questions in BIPA 3 so that the teacher can check the answers in BIPA 4.

Rule 3, test takers who answer "less than" 50% at a certain BIPA level will then be placed at the previous level. For example, if a test taker can answer only one question in BIPA 3, then the teacher can place the test taker in BIPA 2. For more details, see table 8 below.

Table 8 BIPA Placement Rules

Rules	Keywords	Placement
= 50% correct answer	Stay	Placed at that level
> 50% correct answer	Carry on	Next-level answers checked/ Placed on next level
< 50% correct answer	Return	Placed in the previous level

Based on the explanation of the BIPA level scoring and placement specifications in the previous paragraph, it can be concluded that scoring and placement are carried out in different ways and for different purposes. Scores are given automatically by computerization, while placement is done manually by BIPA teachers. Scores indicate the number of correct answers, while placement is done to place test takers into certain BIPA levels.

The test questions developed in this study used multiple-choice-objective questions and conventional score calculations. One of the advantages of using multiple-choice tests is that the assessment is given objectively so that the rater's opinion does not affect the test (Khaerudin, 2016). On the other hand, the conventional score calculation adds all responses to one test (Khaerudin, 2016).

Test Device Making

The test device, in this case, is the questions and the test stimulus. In making the questions, the researcher used a reading text stimulus determined based on the LIX readability. Stimulus in the form of pictures, tables, and floor plans adapted to the needs of the questions and texts. In addition, the researcher made questions and answer choices based on previously designed competence indicators.

The images used in the test were taken from the internet, while the reading text was taken from two sources. The two sources are reading texts developed by the researcher and texts taken from the internet with changes. That is done to adjust the difficulty level in each BIPA. The reading text developed by the researcher aims to adjust students' reading ability at the beginner level (BIPA 1 to BIPA 2) and low intermediate level (BIPA 3). Reading texts at this level have low readability, and sentences are so simple that they must be developed independently.

The text taken from the internet with changes aims to adjust the language skills of high-intermediate level students (BIPA 4 to BIPA 5) and advanced (BIPA 6 to BIPA 7). Reading texts at this level already has a variety of topics that can be taken from the internet. However, the text must still be changed according to competency standards by simplifying the text and adjusting the text's readability level. That is because the readings provided on the internet are done for native Indonesian speakers, not speakers of other languages students.

The text is taken from the internet to be authentic to the readings that native Indonesians usually read. Authentic reading material is real-life-based reading that encourages students to understand the use and content of language compared to the form of language being studied (Maharani et al., 2015). In addition, the reading text developed is adjusted to competency standards at each BIPA level and integrated with grammar and language functions (Puspita, Susanto, & Andajani, 2021).

The difference between pedagogical and authentic material is in the involvement of the material maker. Authentic teaching materials come from original sources or references without any intervention from the material maker (Yudono, 2022). On the other hand, pedagogical material has undergone a process of editing, changing, simplifying, and even preparation carried out by the material maker (Yudono, 2022). Therefore, based on the description of the theory, it can be concluded that the text taken from the internet cannot be called an authentic reading text because there are changes in the text, either a little or a lot.

Making the Test Packaging Media

The purpose of this stage is that students can access the test and use the internet network. The activities are inputting reading text, questions, and answer choices into the *google form.* For example, this test question can be accessed via the following link.

Table 9 Links to Access Test Questions

Question Package	Link
A	https://s.id/TPBIPAmembacaA
B	https://s.id/TPBIPAmembacaB
C	https://s.id/TPBIPAmembacaC

This paragraph describes the display settings and general settings on the *google form*. *First,* at the top of the *google form,* write the test's title and the package's name. *Second, the* questions for each BIPA level are divided into different sections; to answer the questions at the next level, the test takers must press the 'next' button. *Third,* the operation instructions are written in two languages (Indonesian and English). The operation instructions will be explained further in the next paragraph. *Fourth,* turn on the setting 'collect email addresses by default.' That is important so that test takers can only take the test once using

the registered email address. *Sixth*, before entering the questions, there is a section for writing identities, such as the name and the BIPA program. *Seventh*, the identity filling section is set as 'mandatory,' while the answer to questions is regulated as 'not mandatory.' *Eighth*, turn on the 'turn this into a quiz,' 'release grades after each submission,' and 'siders can see the total points and points received for each answer in the google form settings. Next, set the *default question value* as '1 point'.

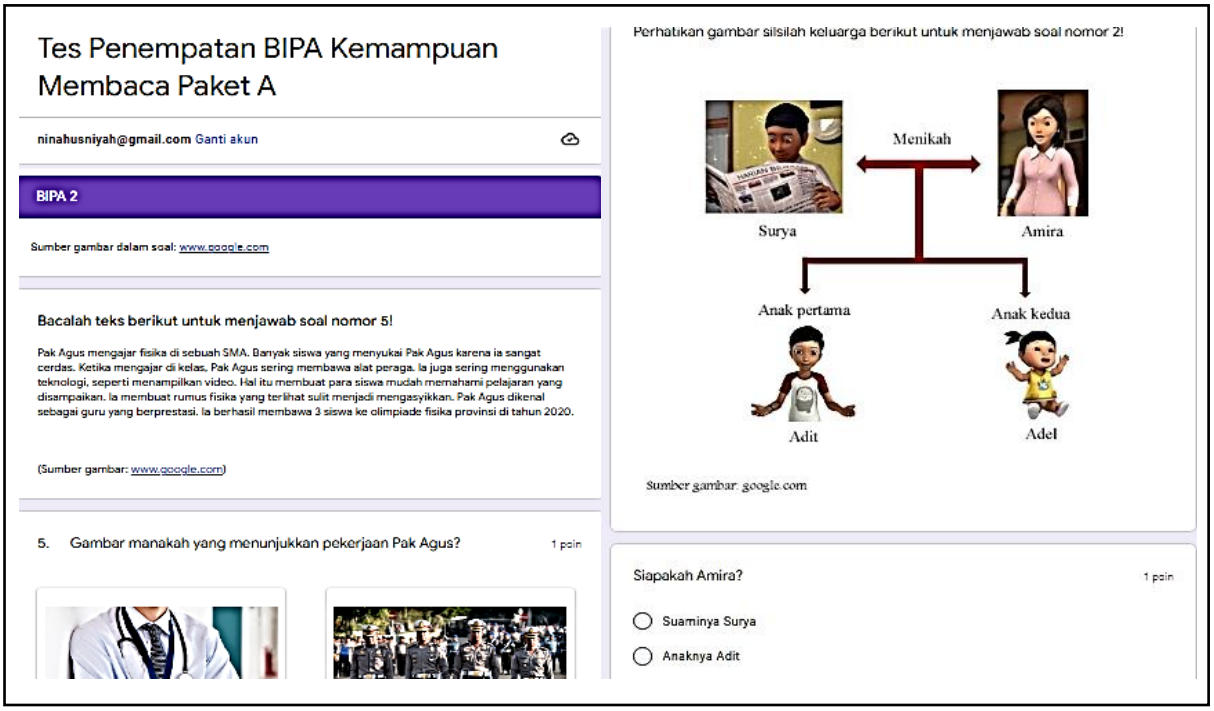

Figure 1 Example of the question displayed in the google form

The developed test needs to include unequivocal guidelines or instructions to do the test. That is done so the test takers can work on the questions by following the general or specific instructions listed on the test question sheet (Sudjono, 2013). The instructions need to include how to fill in the identity, guidelines for taking the test, time to take the test, the number of questions and answer choices, commands, and prohibitions when taking the test (Pratiwi, 2019).

The use of technology, especially the internet, is very much needed for BIPA. For example, BIPA uses *google forms* as a medium for conducting tests. The use of internet technology in today's global era is very much needed (Samhudi, 2021). For example, the pandemic that has hit the world since the end of 2019 has changed learning programs from offline to online (Sobara, 2020). The BIPA program during pandemics is carried out online (Septianasari & Triyanto, 2021). Implementing the test using *google forms* allows students to take the test at a different place or time.

Feasibility Test

This stage aims to determine the feasibility of testing the constructs, materials, language, and the products' practicality. The product feasibility testing phase involves two test subjects, namely BIPA experts and assessment experts from the State University of Malang (UM). The feasibility test was carried out using two methods: quantitative using scores and qualitative using open questions. Products that are tested for feasibility include competence indicators and test questions. The following describes the percentage of scores obtained from the validator.

Table 10 Percentage of Quantitative Feasibility Test Results

No.	The domain of Feasibility Test	Score	Criteria
1.	Construct	100%	Very worth implementing
2.	Theory	90%	Very worth implementing
3.	Language	90%	Very worth implementing

Based on the results of the feasibility test with the quantitative method presented in table 10, it is stated that the placement test questions are feasible to implement. In addition to feasibility testing by giving a score, the experts also provide feedback about the product by answering the questions presented. Table 11 presents the feasibility test results using the qualitative method. The discussion of the results of the feasibility test will be presented in the product revision subsection.

Table 11 Results of Qualitative Feasibility Test

Feedback aspect	Expert	Response
Product eligibility	BIPA	The product can be used but needs to be integrated with other language skills.
	Assessment	The product can be used according to the revision notes.
Product advantages	BIPA	The instrument has a BIPA SKL reference.
	Assessment	The product has clear indicators and varied text selection.
Product shortage	BIPA	Some questions do not match what is desired in the competence indicator.
		The problem is separated from the context of Indonesian culture.
		The questions do not reflect the use of grammar.
	Assessment	Many questions are literal.
		The answer choices imitate directly from the text so that test takers can directly answer questions by matching on the test.
		Several answer keys are not appropriate.
		The placement test only focuses on reading skills, so it cannot represent the test takers' ability.
Suggestion	BIPA	It is necessary to harmonize the competence indicator with the developed questions.
	Assessment	It is necessary to check the suitability of the question and question indicators.
		It is necessary to test the readability of the text used as a stimulus. There should be an explanation of the stimulus complexity used (level of readability).
		Placement tests need to measure other language skills, not only reading.
		There should be a level for questions (not just literal). For example, the competence indicator needs to be clear about what percentage level 1 is, what percentage is level 2, and what percentage is level 3.
		It is necessary to paraphrase the answer choices so as not to take the exact text immediately.

Test Questions

This stage aims to determine the feasibility of the test product seen from its ability to place BIPA students according to their reading level. Test questions were tested on *In-Country program BIPA students* from Thailand at the State University of Malang. Ten students were the test subjects. Based on the results of the tests, the test questions developed were able to place BIPA students at the appropriate BIPA reading level. The following describes the scores and placements obtained by students after testing the BIPA reading placement test questions. The discussion of the test results will be presented in the product revision subsection.

Table 12 Examples of Scores and Placements Earned by BIPA Students

Student Name	Score	BIPA Placement
Panit	18	BIPA 5
Yasam	13	BIPA 4
Saratta	12	BIPA 3
Tarawa	10	BIPA 3
Jetsa	8	BIPA 2

Product Revision

After getting suggestions and criticisms from the feasibility testing stage by experts and doing the questions testing, the product is revised according to the input received. Product revision aims to improve or provide changes to the product to make it better and more effective when implemented. Product revision is done by correcting product weaknesses and deficiencies. Product revision is done once. The product that has been revised is called the Final Prototype.

The following paragraphs describe the revision of the competence indicator that was carried out. *First*, there are some changes to the question indicators and active verbs, for example, by changing BIPA 2 number 7 regarding the text of the procedure for making food. At first, the written question indicator was 'students can understand how to make food…'. Then, it changed to 'students match pictures that show the stages of making food…'. That was done because the indicators of the questions before the revision included literal questions with answers that could be taken from the text, so they were not following the competence objectives.

Second, the text readability is included in the competence indicator to clarify the questions' difficulty level. That was because the competence indicator did not include the text readability when the feasibility test was done, even though the text readability calculation had been carried out.

Third, suggestions regarding the necessity of having other language proficiency tests were not revised because they were outside the focus of the research conducted. However, the development of placement tests for listening, writing, and speaking skills can be carried out by other researchers to overcome that problem.

Fourth, the question level rankings were not revised because they were already listed on the competence indicator. For example, at the top of the BIPA 1, the competence indicator and the domain of competence used are listed, namely the first level of Marzano taxonomy (information retrieval). In addition, the percentage distribution of the difficulty level is not included because the difficulty of the questions has been divided based on the BIPA level. For example, BIPA 1 uses the first level of taxonomy, BIPA 2 uses the second level, and so on, until BIPA 7 uses the sixth level of the taxonomy.

The competence indicator format was revised by adding some sections. *First*, the revision added the total number of questions. Therefore, the reader understands that the questions developed to consist of three packages. For example, BIPA 1 has a total of 12 questions. *Second*, the time for working on the questions is removed because each question is not time-limited. The total time limit is calculated for the whole question, which is 90 minutes. *Third*, the addition of the question packages distribution (A, B, and C) and the difference in the test stimulus used. For example, BIPA 3, numbers 9 and 10 regarding personal letters. Although the topic is the same, the difference lies in the theme of the personal letter. For example, package A is about *graduation*, package B is about *a new job*, and package C is about *marriage*.

Tingkat	BIPA 1	**Bentuk soal**	Pilihan ganda
Tujuan tes	Menempatkan kemampuan membaca pelajar BIPA 1	**Ranah kompetensi**	Tingkat *pertama*, pengambilan informasi

No. soal	Topik teks	Stimulus teks	Keterampilan membaca	Indikator soal	Waktu pengerjaan soal

Before

Tingkat	BIPA 1	**Bentuk soal**	Pilihan ganda
Tujuan tes	Menempatkan kemampuan membaca pelajar BIPA 1	**Ranah kompetensi**	Tingkat *pertama*, pengambilan informasi
Jumlah total soal	12	**Keterbacaan teks**	< 25

Nomor soal	Topik teks	Paket soal	Stimulus teks	Indikator soal	Keterbacaan Teks	Jumlah soal

After

Figure 2 Example of how the competence indicator changes before and after revision

Both experts stated that the reading placement test questions could be implemented with revisions. Five aspects focus on revising the BIPA reading placement test instrument, namely, as follows. *First*, revising the use of images in the text. Figure 3 below shows an example of the revision carried out on BIPA 1 package A questions regarding the text of *a birthday invitation*. For example, in the picture below, the images in the text are reduced, and the text becomes simple.

Figure 3 Example of revision by minimizing the image

BIPA experts stated that the pictures in the reading ability test should not interfere with students' focus on reading. Pictures, graphs, tables, and diagrams in the questions must be clear and functional (Ariningrum & Sufanti, 2016; Tarigan, 2014).

Second, the content of the Indonesian cultural context in the text. BIPA experts stated that BIPA materials are needed to introduce Indonesian culture. Figure 4 below shows an example of the revisions made to the BIPA 2 package A questions regarding the schedule of daily activities. In the picture before the revision, it can be seen that "at 18.00, person A goes for a walk". That is not following the context of Indonesian culture, which has the largest Muslim population in the world. So at 18.00, person A should perform the Maghrib prayer. In addition, the activities of Indonesians are unlikely to start at 07.00 am. Many Indonesian Muslim communities will wake up before dawn, shower, and pray. Therefore, the revision shows that the activity starts at 04.30 in the morning and is equipped with worship activities.

Kegiatan	Pukul
Sarapan	07.00 – 07.30
Mandi	08.00 – 08.30
Ke pasar	09.00 – 10.00
Masak	10.30 – 11.30
Makan siang	12.00 – 12.30
Membaca buku	13.00 – 14.00
Tidur siang	14.30 – 15.30
Jalan-jalan	16.00 – 19.00

Before

Kegiatan	Pukul
Mandi	04.30 – 05.00
Salat subuh	05.00 – 05.30
Pergi ke pasar	06.00 – 07.00
Sarapan	07.00 – 07.30
Menyapu rumah	08.00 – 08.30
Memasak	09.00 – 10.00
Menonton TV	10.30 – 11.30
Salat Zuhur	12.00 – 12.30
Makan siang	12.30 – 13.00
Tidur siang	13.30 – 14.30

After

Figure 4 Examples of revisions with the addition of cultural context

Cultural context is crucial in BIPA. BIPA students can understand reading better if students understand the cultural context presented. Language is a cultural representation that describes the community's views, values, beliefs, and experiences (Ulumuddin & Wismanto, 2014). Understanding the language's culture help BIPA students minimize the risk of cultural clashes (Ulumuddin & Wismanto, 2014).

Third, questions should not be all literal. Figure 4. 5 below presents examples of questions in BIPA 3, number 7. Before revising, test takers only need to match the answer choices with the content of the text presented. After revision, the answer choices are changed to pictures so that students need to analyze the text and images when answering questions. Literal questions are questions that focus on answers that are directly written in the text (Fauziah, 2013).

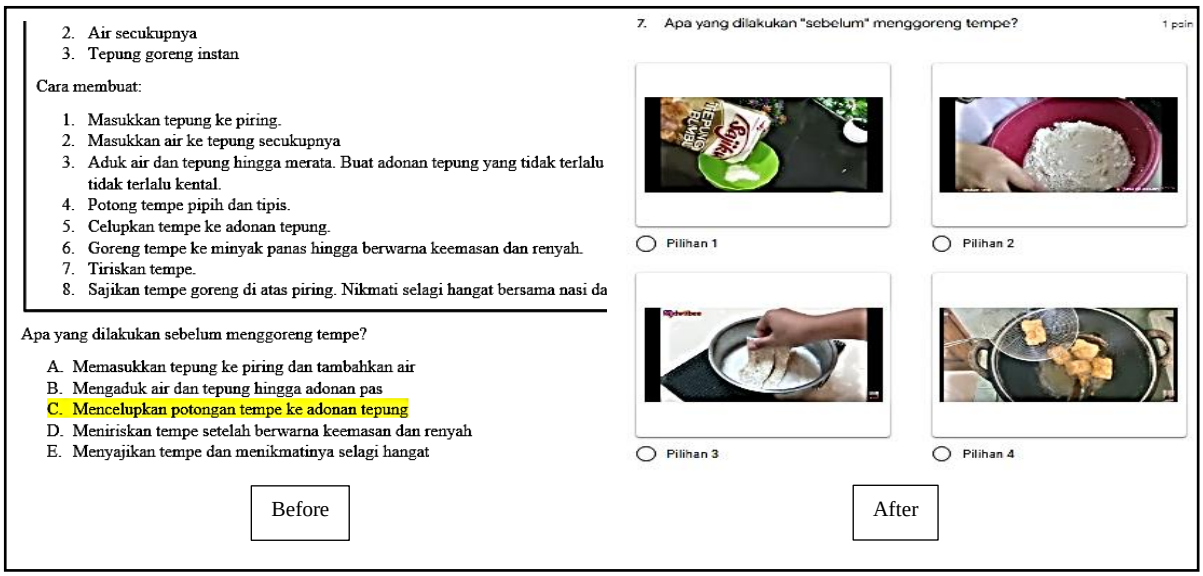

Figure 5 Example of revision with literal question changes

Fourth, grammatical errors can be found in the text, questions, and answer choices. Grammatical errors do not appear to be significant but are essential. The grammar in question includes affixes, SPOK sentence structures, question forms, and others. Grammatical errors can cause misunderstandings between writers and readers regarding the message (Based et al., 2021).

Fifth, answer key errors were found in several questions during the feasibility test. The answer key can be directly changed according to the answer on the *google form.* Changing answer keys will not change the test taker's answer but will only change the score obtained.

Conclusions and Suggestions

This study resulted in a placement test instrument for BIPA students' reading skills equipped with the competence indicator, scoring guide, and BIPA placement guide.

1) Determining the test product to be developed.
   Placement test creates an effective learning process according to student ability level. The placement test instrument used in the field is not a standard test, so it is needed to be developed.
2) Designing BIPA reading ability placement test.
   The reading placement test instrument consisted of three packages of questions with a total of 90. Each package consists of 30 numbered questions representing seven levels of BIPA (BIPA 1 to 7). BIPA 1 to 6 consists of four question numbers, while BIPA 7 consists of six. The difficulty of

the questions at each BIPA level is distinguished by the readability level of LIX, Marzano's taxonomy, and BIPA material topics. The list of topics used was taken from the book "*Sahabatku Indonesia untuk Umum*" published by PPSDK in 2019. All questions developed in the form of multiple choice consist of four (A, B, C, and D). The total time to complete the test is 90 minutes.

3) Making BIPA reading ability placement test.
   Prototype 1 making resulted in scoring and level placement rules, questions and test stimulus, and google form as the media. The prototype final has gone through the feasibility testing stage, testing questions on BIPA students, and revising from prototype 1. Based on the validity test, the test instrument is feasible to use. In addition, based on the results of testing the test questions on BIPA students, the test instrument can place BIPA students at a level that follows their reading ability.

This research has some weaknesses to be developed by other researchers. *First,* the research subject was limited to Malang State University (UM), while the BIPA program spread worldwide. *Second,* this research only focuses on developing reading ability tests and does not have speaking, listening, and writing skill tests.

The following suggestions can be given to other researchers. *First,* the reading ability placement test instrument developed in this study needs to be integrated with other language skills, namely listening, speaking, and writing. *Second,* product testing for a broader range of BIPA students and product improvement is needed. *Third,* the test instrument developed in this study can be used as a reference or guide for making other reading placement test instruments. *Third,* the test and the results of this research can be disseminated by sharing the *google* test form link and research journal link.

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