



The Students' Perception Toward TOEFL Test At SMA Negeri 2 Pematangsiantar

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Abstract

This study aims to assess the efficacy of an introductory TOEFL training program designed for high school students, focusing on improving linguistic competence and revealing the nuances of the TOEFL exam. The primary objective is to evaluate the impact of TOEFL introductory training on secondary school students' readiness for advanced studies. A quantitative descriptive approach was employed to evaluate the effectiveness of TOEFL introduction outreach activities. The study focused on female students in class XII Mia-4 at SMA N 2 PEMATANGSIANTAR. Data was collected through TOEFL introduction outreach activities, including reading test sheets, and analyzed quantitatively by counting correct and incorrect answers. The research instrument used was a reading test sheet prepared by the research team. The study involved three stages: preparation, implementation, and evaluation. The population for this study comprised all female students in class XII Mia-4 at SMA N 2 PEMATANGSIANTAR. The sample included 34 students who participated in TOEFL socialization activities on January 11, 2024. The TOEFL socialization activities conducted on January 11, 2024, at SMA N 2 Pematangsiantar resulted in positive outcomes. The self-introduction, TOEFL material presentation, and question-and-answer session were conducted smoothly, creating a friendly and interactive atmosphere. The findings from the reading test question sheets revealed that most students understood the TOEFL test, with 28 out of 34 successfully filling in the questionnaire with different answers. However, challenges included students' initial confusion about the material and a lack of understanding of the benefits of the TOEFL test. The presenter addressed these challenges by providing explanations and encouraging students to be more active in their studies to enhance their knowledge of the TOEFL test.

Keywords : Perception, Efficacy, TOEFL.

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INTRODUCTION

In the era of increasing globalization, competition to continue studying at a higher level is increasingly fierce. Universities, both domestic and international, are increasingly demanding competitive qualifications from prospective students, including strong English language skills. English language proficiency is a skill that is very necessary in various academic and occupational fields. Therefore, standardized assessments play an important role in evaluating English language skills and TOEFL has emerged as a major benchmark in the Test of English as a Foreign Language.

TOEFL is an abbreviation for "Test of English as a Foreign Language" and is an English language test that measures knowledge of English at university level. TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) is an important part and must be paid attention to when people want to travel abroad or continue their university studies (Fitria, 2020). TOEFL is accepted by more than 10,000 colleges and universities worldwide. and is a requirement for entry into many postgraduate programs and scholarship opportunities (Herman et al., 2023). In increasingly tight job competition, several companies are opening job vacancies with the condition of a TOEFL test. Some companies are even looking for workers with high TOEFL skills (Iswati, 2021). TOEFL is a job requirement used to determine the English language skills of job applicants.

This is because English is one of the basic skills that workers must master. TOEFL is divided into four parts, namely reading, writing, speaking and listening. The reading component is designed to test participants' ability to understand and analyze written English texts. Participants will be given a series of academic readings such as journal articles, essays and other scientific writing. They will be faced with questions that require them to identify key information, infer the meaning of certain words or phrases, recognize text structure, and understand the relationships between ideas presented in the reading.

The Listening component evaluates participants' ability to understand spoken English used in academic situations. Participants will listen to recordings containing conversations between two people, short lectures, or group discussions. They must be able to identify detailed information, recognize the purpose of speaking, understand comparisons and contrasts, and infer implicit information from recordings. The ability to follow directions and derive meaning from intonation, tone, and use of nonverbal language will also be evaluated. The Speaking component assesses the participant's ability to communicate orally in English. Participants will be given tasks such as answering questions based on readings or recordings, providing opinions on certain topics, explaining diagrams or graphs, and participating in simulated conversations.

Must also be able to express ideas clearly, use appropriate vocabulary, organize thoughts in a structured manner, and master aspects of intonation and emphasis in English. Lastly, the Writing Component tests participants' ability to write academic English texts. Participants will be asked to write an argumentative essay based on a given topic or respond to a piece of writing or recording by writing a structured response. They must be able to construct coherent and cohesive arguments, use appropriate and varied language, and produce well-organized writing. Assessment is also carried out on the correct use of grammar and punctuation. Reading comprehension is an important skill tested in the TOEFL exam (Test of English as a Foreign Language).

Reading proficiency is not only important for success in exams but also reflects the importance of reading in academic and professional contexts. In the world of education, TOEFL is currently being introduced to many students to help them learn more about English and also find out their ability level. Having the TOEFL test can make it easier for students to find out the extent of their English language skills. This article seeks to explore and evaluate the efficacy of

an introductory TOEFL training program designed specifically for high school students. This training aims not only to improve linguistic competence but also to reveal the ins and outs of the TOEFL exam. By providing targeted guidance and practice, these programs aim to bridge the gap between the standard high school English curriculum and the specific requirements of TOEFL, thereby encouraging a smoother transition to higher education. The main aim of this study was to assess the impact of TOEFL introductory training on secondary school students' readiness for advanced studies. Through a comprehensive examination of training methodology, participant feedback, and performance outcomes, this study aims to shed light on the effectiveness of these programs in instilling the skills and confidence necessary to excel on the TOEFL exam.

METHODS

This research uses a quantitative descriptive approach to evaluate the effectiveness of outreach activities regarding the introduction of TOEFL as a further study for SMA N 2 Pematangsiantar students. The population in this study were all female students in class XII Mia-4 at SMA N 2 Pematangsiantar. The sample was taken from class XII Mia-4 SMA N 2 Pematangsiantar, totaling 34 students who took part in TOEFL socialization activities on January 11 2024.

Data was collected through TOEFL introduction outreach activities which were carried out offline. Data collection tools include reading test sheets given to students. The research instrument used was a reading test sheet prepared by the research team. Apart from that, observations of the activity implementation process were also carried out to obtain additional information. There are 3 stages in this research such as:

1. Preparation

There are several stages in stage 1, namely:

- a) discussing with the research team to determine the location of the activity
- b) coordinating with the course lecturer to obtain approval and appropriate topics
- c) requesting permission from the school (second party) has been obtained
- d) providing teaching materials, such as PPT, laptop, and questions, that have been prepared
- e) Determining roles and tasks for each research member.

2. Implementation

At this stage the researcher explained introductory TOEFL material, including the meaning, function, benefits, types and tips for answering TOEFL questions and provided a question and answer session to ensure students' understanding of the material.

3. Evaluation

At this stage the researcher gave reading test question sheets to students. Data analysis in this research was carried out quantitatively by counting the number of correct and incorrect answers on the reading test question sheet. The results of this analysis are used to evaluate students' understanding of TOEFL material.

With various stages of preparation, implementation and evaluation that have been carried out carefully, this research has succeeded in holding TOEFL socialization activities at SMA N 2 Pematangsiantar. These steps open the door to exploring the positive impact and student understanding of the TOEFL exam and provide a strong foundation for in-depth discussions regarding the effectiveness of the program.

1. Preparation

Determination of Classes and Activity Locations

Researchers determined class XII Mia-4 of SMA N 2 Pematangsiantar as participants in the TOEFL introduction. The location of the activity was selected after internal discussions of the research team, ensuring the availability of suitable space. Coordination with Lecturers and School Permits. Coordination is carried out with the course lecturer to obtain approval and determine topics that are in accordance with the curriculum. Permission from the school (second party) is obtained as an important step before carrying out activities.

a) Provision of Teaching Materials

The research team provides teaching materials, including PPT, laptop, projector, and question sheets. The success of this stage ensures the smooth delivery of the material at the implementation stage.

b) Role and Task Determination

Determination of roles and duties for each research member is carried out to ensure orderliness in the implementation of activities. This involves the division of responsibilities for effective implementation.

c) Preparation of Media and Other Materials

Apart from teaching materials, other media preparations, such as PowerPoint are also prepared to support presentations and explain material more interactively.

d) Findings in the Preparation Stage

Class XII of SMA N 2 Pematangsiantar is the right class for TOEFL introduction activities. This class consists of 34 students who already have basic knowledge about TOEFL.

The chosen activity location, namely the classroom at SMA N 2 Pematangsiantar, is sufficient for TOEFL introduction activities. The classroom has sufficient capacity to accommodate 34 students and is equipped with adequate facilities, such as projectors and screens.

Coordination with lecturers who teach courses and the school runs smoothly. Lecturers who teach courses provide approval and determine topics that are in accordance with the curriculum. Permission from the school can also be obtained easily. The teaching materials prepared, including PPT, laptop, and question sheets, are complete enough to support TOEFL introduction activities. The roles and tasks for each research member have been determined clearly and precisely. This will help the smooth implementation of activities. Preparation of media and other materials, such as power points and infocus, has been carried out well. This media will support presentations and explanations of material in a more interactive manner.

2. Implementation

At the implementation stage, the activity was divided into three main aspects: introduction, TOEFL material presentation and question and answer session. The following is a detailed explanation of these three aspects:

a) Introduction

The purpose of self-introduction is to build good relationships with students and create a friendly and interactive atmosphere. Each research member introduced themselves by providing brief information about their educational background, interests and motivation for being involved in TOEFL socialization activities. Self-introductions were carried out casually to create student involvement from the start

of the activity. Ensure students feel comfortable and open to interacting with research members.

b) TOEFL Material Presentation

The activity of presenting TOEFL material is carried out systematically and clearly to students using interesting presentation methods. The opening of the activity was carried out by the presenter (Leta), who gave a brief overview of the activities that would be carried out. Each research member conveyed the meaning, objectives and types of TOEFL briefly and interestingly. Next, the research members provided students with tips and strategies for answering TOEFL questions effectively.

c) Question and answer session

The presenter gave students the opportunity to ask questions and provide opinions about TOEFL. Students can ask questions about things they don't understand regarding TOEFL and participants can also provide suggestions regarding TOEFL material.

d) Findings at the Implementation Stage

The self-introduction carried out by the research members went smoothly and succeeded in creating a friendly and interactive atmosphere. Students feel comfortable and open to interacting with research members. The presentation of TOEFL material carried out by research members also went smoothly and systematically. The material is presented clearly and interestingly using varied presentation methods. The question and answer session with students also ran smoothly and was interactive. Students actively ask and give opinions about TOEFL.



Figure 1 Presentation about TOEFL by Leta



Figure 2 Presentation about TOEFL by Rossa, Oktavianti, and Novita

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Results

The presenter conducted a socialization on January 11 2024 at SMA N 2 Pematangsiantar school. After preparations, ask for permission and discuss with the SMA N 2 Pematangsiantar school. And the presenter introduced material about TOEFL to students at SMA N 2 Pematangsiantar, the presenter explained what material I had related to TOEFL to female students, especially class 12 MIA 4. After conducting the discussion, the presenter asked several questions to the class 12 MIA 4 students.

B. Discussion

This study discusses the effectiveness of the TOEFL introduction program for high school students, specifically focusing on the impact of TOEFL socialization activities on students in class XII MIPA 4 at SMA N 2 Pematangsiantar. This study aims to assess students' readiness for further studies and their perceptions of the TOEFL test.

The results showed that TOEFL socialization activities had a positive impact on students. The majority of students showed an understanding of the TOEFL test after the socialization, as shown by their success in completing the questionnaire with different answers. This shows that the program effectively improved their understanding of the TOEFL test.

In addition, this study also highlights the importance of the TOEFL test for students' future endeavors. The TOEFL test can be a tool for students to assess their English proficiency and determine their level of ability. By taking the TOEFL test, students can gain a better understanding of their abilities in English, which can be beneficial for their future academic and professional activities.

This TOEFL socialization activity also addresses the challenges faced by the students, such as initial confusion about the material and lack of understanding of the benefits of the TOEFL test. The presenters provided explanations and encouraged the students to study harder to improve their knowledge of the TOEFL test. This additional support and guidance helped the students overcome their confusion and improve their perception of the TOEFL test.

Overall, the TOEFL socialization activities had a positive impact on students of class XII MIPA 4 SMA N 2 Pematangsiantar. The program improved their understanding of the TOEFL test and prepared them for further studies. The program also highlighted the importance of the TOEFL test for their future academic and professional endeavors.

C. Impact on High School Students

In the study, TOEFL socialization had a significant impact on students of class XII MIPA 4 at SMA N 2 Pematangsiantar. Some of the impacts of TOEFL socialization that can be identified are:

1. **Increased Understanding:** TOEFL socialization helps improve students' understanding of the TOEFL exam. After the socialization, the majority of students successfully filled out the questionnaire with different answers, showing their understanding of the TOEFL exam.
2. **Benefit Awareness:** The TOEFL socialization also helped increase students' awareness of the benefits of the TOEFL exam. Initially, students experienced confusion about the material and lacked understanding of the benefits of the TOEFL exam. However, through explanations and encouragement from the presenters, students became more active in learning and increased their knowledge about the TOEFL exam.

3. Relationship Building: TOEFL socialization created a friendly and interactive learning atmosphere between students and researchers. Students feel comfortable and open to interact with researchers during socialization. This helps build a good relationship between students and researchers, which can have a positive impact on the learning process.

D. Challenges in Socialization Activities

However, during the TOEFL socialization, researchers also faced several challenges, including:

1. Initial Confusion: Students initially experienced confusion about the material to be delivered by the researcher. This required additional effort from the researcher to provide more detailed explanations and ensure students' understanding.
2. Lack of Awareness: Some students were less aware of the benefits of the TOEFL exam. Researchers need to provide additional explanations and encourage students to be more active in learning so that they can understand the benefits of the TOEFL exam.

E. Steps to Overcome the Challenges

After seeing the challenges that exist during socialization, the speaker provides an explanation of the TOEFL test which aims to overcome students' confusion about the TOEFL test which is the material to be delivered by the speaker and the speaker also invites students to study harder with the aim of increasing knowledge about the TOEFL test.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, this research evaluated the effectiveness of an introductory TOEFL training program for high school students at SMA N 2 Pematangsiantar. The program aimed to improve students' English language skills and their understanding of the TOEFL exam. Through careful preparation, implementation, and evaluation stages, the program successfully held TOEFL socialization activities, creating a friendly and interactive learning atmosphere. The findings revealed that the program had a positive impact on students, as they demonstrated an improved understanding of the TOEFL test and increased awareness of its benefits.

Despite initial challenges such as confusion about the material and a lack of awareness about the TOEFL exam, the presenters effectively addressed these issues through detailed explanations and encouragement. The program not only bridged the gap between the standard high school English curriculum and the specific requirements of the TOEFL test but also prepared students for future academic and professional endeavors.

Overall, the TOEFL training program proved to be beneficial in enhancing students' linguistic competence and readiness for further studies. It highlighted the importance of the TOEFL test in assessing English proficiency and determining students' ability levels. By providing targeted guidance and practice, the program facilitated a smoother transition to higher education and equipped students with the necessary skills and confidence to excel on the TOEFL exam.

Further research can explore the long-term impact of the TOEFL training program on students' academic and professional success. Additionally, future studies can investigate the effectiveness of similar programs in different educational contexts to provide a comprehensive understanding of the benefits of TOEFL socialization activities.

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