

## The Role of TOEFL Preparation Courses in Improving Test Score

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### ABSTRACT

The study analyses the implementation of TOEFL Preparation and provides conclusions and suggestions to improve participants' ability to face the TOEFL test. In the study, 40 participants participated in the implementation of TOEFL preparation courses which consisted of three parts, namely listening, structure, and reading. The analysis results showed that the average TOEFL score of the participants was 448, with the highest score reaching 540 and the lowest score of 376. Although the average score met the minimum requirements at IBIK 57 Campus, there were participants who did not reach the standard. Suggestions included individual coaching, increased listening practice, strengthened knowledge of grammar and structure, reading comprehension strategies, as well as encouragement for self-study and use of additional resources.

**Keywords:** TOEFL, test, preparation, proficiency, course

### INTRODUCTION

Mastering all skills in English, such as reading, listening, speaking and writing, is essential for effective communication, success in education and careers, access to resources and information, international opportunities, and personal development. Comprehensive proficiency in English provides a competitive advantage and wider opportunities in a tightly connected globalized world (Rifiyanti, 2020). Changes in global dynamics have created a greater need for English language skills in the business world. Therefore, universities have had to adapt their approach to teaching English to students in order for their graduates to have effective communication skills in English when engaging in an international work

environment. This reflects the importance of improving the quality of education and professional readiness to face global challenges in the world of work (Bobi & Bambang, 2023). English language skills can be learnt through training or courses. English courses are specifically designed to help course participants develop and improve their abilities in reading, listening, speaking and writing in English (Rifiyanti & Dewi, 2022b). To measure one's ability to use and understand English at an academic level, one can take tests that provide intensive hands-on learning programs, such as the TOEFL.

It is very important to measure your level of English proficiency. This provides a clearer understanding of the extent to which one has mastered the

language and also helps determine the areas where one needs to focus to improve (Rifiyanti, 2022).

TOEFL stands for "Test of English as a Foreign Language" or in Indonesian, "Test of English as a Foreign Language". TOEFL is an international standardized test designed to measure a person's ability to use and understand English at an academic level. It is often used as a requirement for admission to colleges or universities in countries where English is the medium of instruction. (Khurana, 2017) TOEFL consists of four main sections, namely: Reading: This section tests the ability to read and understand academic texts in English. Test takers must answer questions based on the content of the reading. Listening: This section tests the ability to listen to and understand conversations and lectures in English. Test takers must answer questions based on the information heard. Speaking: This section tests the ability to speak in English. Test takers will be required to answer oral questions and express opinions within a set time, and Writing: This section tests writing skills in English. Test takers will be asked to write an essay or respond to a topic with organized arguments and opinions (Kusuma, 2015). TOEFL scores can be used to evaluate a person's English language skills and as a reference in academic or professional purposes. There are two common types of TOEFL tests, namely TOEFL iBT (Internet-based Test) which is conducted online and TOEFL PBT (Paper-based Test) which is conducted in writing (Situmorang, 2020).

The main problems in the TOEFL test include adequate readiness and preparation, time constraints, difficulties in understanding spoken language, the complexity of the

written text, and the pressure and anxiety felt by test takers. Adequate preparation, familiarization with the test format, use of effective strategies, good time management, and calmness during the test can help overcome these problems and improve TOEFL score results. However, these problems can be overcome through good preparation, familiarity with the test format, practice questions, understanding strategies, and effective time management. With patience, consistent practice, and calmness during the test, participants can better deal with these problems and improve their TOEFL scores.

In Insitut Bisnis dan Informatika Kosgoro 1957 (IBIK 57) through LPBP (Language and Professional Development Institute) provides periodic courses for TOEFL test preparation. TOEFL Preparation is divided into 4 batches with material in the form of tricks and strategies for working on TOEFL questions (<https://www.ibi-k57.ac.id/Lembaga-Pengembangan-Bahasa-Dan-Profesi/>, n.d.). Taking TOEFL preparation is important because it helps students with question formats and types, develops English language skills, identifies weaknesses and improves performance, provides a simulated test experience, and provides valuable feedback and correction. With good preparation, participants can improve their TOEFL scores, improve their overall English language skills, and increase their chances of success in education or careers involving English (Fitria & Prastiwi, 2020). TOEFL preparation often involves feedback and corrections from an experienced teacher or instructor. Participants will gain insight into their strengths and weaknesses, as well as

recommendations for improvement. This feedback is invaluable in helping participants identify and correct mistakes and strengthen their English language skills (Óy, 2019). It is important of getting a TOEFL certificate from an authorized institution. All course participants have the same goal: to succeed in the official TOEFL exam. They know that a TOEFL certificate issued by a certified institution will open up a wide range of opportunities, both in terms of career and further study abroad. With passion and dedication, they utilize every lesson and exercise to hone their skills (Masyarakat et al., 2023).

The Preparation Course designed by LPBP is in the form of TOEFL preparation to help improve general English language skills. IBIK 57 students will hone their reading, listening, speaking, and writing skills through various exercises, practice questions, and activities related to the TOEFL test. This will help IBIK 57 students expand their vocabulary, understand complex sentence structures, and improve their overall understanding of the English language. Based on the background and problems above, the research was conducted with the aim of exploring and understanding more deeply the impact of attending TOEFL preparation courses on improving student test scores. Therefore, this study has practical implications that can help improve understanding, awareness, and action regarding TOEFL preparation courses and improve student test results in the context of the TOEFL test.

## **METHOD**

The study was designed as descriptive qualitative research with an experimental approach to explore the role of TOEFL preparation courses in improving students' test scores. The research sample consisted of 40 of IBIK57 students from Management Program Study who had enrolled in the TOEFL preparation courses and had attended the TOEFL Preparation course. Data were collected through TOEFL test results and analyzed through interpretation of TOEFL test results.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

TOEFL Preparation course is designed into 4 batches, with material consisting of skills for structure, listening and reading. Each batch will end with a progress test with a series of questions per batch. After completing this 4-batch course, participants will immediately take the real TOEFL test organized by a TOEFL certified institution that has permission to organize tests and issue official TOEFL certificates. On this occasion, the number of participants who took the TOEFL test was 40 students from Management Program Study.

The table shows the implementation of the TOEFL test that has taken place produces the following data. The TOEFL score was obtained from 40 participants. The average TOEFL score obtained is 448, with the highest score reaching 540 and the lowest score of 376. The TOEFL test consists of three parts, namely listening, structure, and reading. The average score for listening is 45, for structure is 41, and for reading is 49. Although the average TOEFL score has met the minimum requirement at campus IBIK 57 (450), there are some participants who have not reached this

standard. The variation in the highest and lowest scores between the TOEFL sections shows that there are differences in ability in each area.

Table 1. TOEFL Score

No	TOEFL score	Lis-tenin-g	Struc-ture	Reading
1	406	39	36	47
2	420	43	35	48
3	496	62	43	44
4	396	33	36	50
5	440	41	43	48
6	396	33	37	49
7	420	38	37	51
8	486	49	41	56
9	433	45	40	45
10	456	47	38	52
11	540	65	45	52
12	453	41	44	51
13	460	44	43	51
14	376	33	41	39
15	536	63	44	54
16	400	35	36	49
17	440	41	45	46
18	446	48	43	43
19	420	37	40	49
20	450	41	43	51
21	456	39	45	53
22	453	39	45	52
23	463	39	45	52
24	473	44	45	43
25	446	44	43	47
26	473	45	44	53
27	423	42	40	45
28	420	47	36	43
29	437	47	36	48
30	450	48	41	46
31	490	57	40	50
32	430	50	33	46
33	463	54	37	48
34	463	43	42	54
35	430	46	40	43
36	443	41	40	52
37	447	46	41	47
38	463	47	40	52
39	453	53	40	43
40	483	55	38	52

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the level of English language skills of the participants and can be a reference to provide improvement and development in the future.

The implementation of TOEFL Preparation provides an overview of the level of English language skills of the participants and can be a reference to provide improvement and development in the future (Fitria & Prastiwi, 2020). by taking TOEFL preparation, participants can gain a better understanding of how well they can communicate in English and the extent to which their English skills meet the requirements needed to continue their studies or work in an environment that requires good English skills, such as in universities or international companies. The implementation of TOEFL Preparation provides a deeper insight into communication skills in English. The TOEFL exam not only measures aspects of grammar, but also listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. Thus, the preparation program helps to identify areas for improvement in their English skills.

By preparing through a preparation program, students can better understand the extent of their English language skills. This is a great step, especially for individuals who plan to continue their studies or work in an international environment (Rifiyanti & Dewi, 2022a).

## CONCLUSION

Some points concluded from the subject discussed in the article. Based on the implementation of TOEFL Preparation that has taken place, there are conclusions that can be drawn. First, there are variations in the acquisition of TOEFL scores between participants, with an average score of 448. Although the average score meets

the minimum requirements at IBIK 57 Campus, there are still some participants who have not reached this standard. Therefore, additional efforts need to be made in improving participants' abilities, especially in the listening and structure sections which have lower average scores than the reading section. Additionally, it is recommended to provide individualized coaching to participants by identifying their areas of weakness and providing appropriate resources. Listening skills practice and mastery of grammar and sentence structure need to be improved so that participants can achieve better proficiency in the TOEFL components. It is also important to teach effective reading comprehension strategies to improve scores in the reading section. In addition, it is important to involve participants in timed practice tests and exercises to familiarize them with real test conditions. Encouragement for self-study and providing additional resources such as study guides and language learning apps can also help participants in improving their TOEFL skills. With the implementation of these suggestions, it is expected that participants can experience improved performance in the TOEFL test.

It can be said that the implementation of TOEFL Preparation has contributed to improving participants' ability to face the TOEFL

test. Although the average TOEFL score of the participants still meets the minimum requirements at IBIK 57 Campus, there are some participants who have not reached this standard. However, the implementation of TOEFL Preparation provides an overview of the level of English language proficiency of participants and provides direction and suggestions for improving it. In its implementation, TOEFL Preparation has provided special coaching and training in listening, structure, and reading. In addition, the test questions and timed exercises also help participants to get used to the test format and manage time better. The suggestions, such as individual coaching, reinforcement of grammar and structure, reading comprehension strategies, and encouragement of self-study, also provided useful direction for participants to improve their skills.

However, it should be noted that the final results and the extent to which TOEFL Preparation helps individual participants may vary. There are other factors that can affect participants' performance, such as the level of dedication, self-study time, and learning ability of each participant. Therefore, it is important to continue to provide support and motivation to participants and encourage them to activate self-study and use additional resources provided.

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