



## Toefl Basic Skills Training For Students At State Islamic University Of Bandung

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### Abstrak

Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat (PKM) ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan keterampilan dasar TOEFL bagi mahasiswa Universitas Islam Negeri Bandung melalui pelatihan yang terstruktur. Program ini dilaksanakan melalui beberapa tahap, yaitu persiapan, pelaksanaan, latihan mandiri, dan evaluasi. Pada tahap persiapan, dilakukan analisis kebutuhan untuk menyusun materi pelatihan yang relevan, diikuti dengan pembentukan tim pelaksana dan rekrutmen peserta. Pelaksanaan pelatihan meliputi penyampaian materi tentang format TOEFL, strategi pengerjaan soal, serta praktik melalui latihan intensif. Peserta juga diberikan modul untuk mendukung latihan mandiri guna memperkuat pemahaman dan kemampuan mereka secara individual. Pada tahap evaluasi, simulasi tes TOEFL digunakan untuk menilai peningkatan kemampuan peserta, yang kemudian dianalisis dan dibahas dalam sesi diskusi untuk memberikan umpan balik dan saran perbaikan. Hasil program menunjukkan bahwa pelatihan ini berhasil meningkatkan pemahaman, keterampilan, dan kepercayaan diri mahasiswa dalam menghadapi tes TOEFL. Program ini juga menciptakan kesadaran akan pentingnya penguasaan bahasa Inggris untuk kebutuhan akademik dan profesional, serta memberikan kontribusi positif dalam pengembangan kompetensi mahasiswa.

**Kata Kunci:** TOEFL, pelatihan keterampilan dasar, mahasiswa, Universitas Islam Negeri Bandung, Pelatihan TOEFL

### Abstract

*This community service aims to improve basic TOEFL skills for State Islamic University of Bandung through structured training. This program is carried out through several stages, preparation, implementation, independent training, and evaluation. At the preparation stage, a need analysis is carried out to prepare relevant training materials, followed by the formation of an implementation team and recruitment of participants. The implementation of the training includes the delivery of material on the TOEFL format, question strategies, and practice through intensive training. Participants were also given modules to support independent training to strengthen their understanding and abilities individually. In the evaluation stage, a TOEFL test simulation is used to assess the improvement of participants' abilities, which are then analyzed and discussed in discussion sessions to provide feedback and suggestions for improvement. The results of the program show that this training has succeeded in increasing students' understanding, skills, and confidence in facing the TOEFL test. This program also creates awareness of the importance of English mastery for academic and professional needs, as well as making a positive contribution to the development of student competencies.*

**Keywords:** TOEFL, basic skills training, students, Bandung State Islamic University, TOEFL basic training

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## INTRODUCTION

Alongside the continuous globalization process, there has been a steady increase in the demand for English proficiency. Many people consider English to be an international language that is used as the main communication tool in international relations. Additionally, it is thought that a person's success and well-being are significantly influenced by their proficiency in English. It is crucial for people to acquire strong communication skills in English because of the vast amount of information and technological developments that are conveyed in the language (Buasim, 2008). As a result, proficiency in English has become essential in a variety of settings and professions (Noviaty et al., 2022).

Particularly in the current globalized era, language proficiency is essential to an individual's personal and professional development (Magdalena et al., 2021). These abilities are crucial for character development and cognitive growth, as well as for improving one's capacity to deal with different facets of life. Better communication abilities have a big impact on social interactions and professional success, giving people the means to succeed in both areas (Ningsih, 2020). Standardized testing is one of the most well-known ways to evaluate English proficiency, and the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) is a well-known example.

The TOEFL was created especially to assess a person's English language proficiency in all its facets, including reading, listening, and structure (Silfia et al., 2021). A test-taker's understanding of basic grammar rules, which are essential for

efficient language use, is evaluated in the structure section. The reading component allows students to interact with academic materials by assessing their comprehension of English texts of various levels of difficulty. The listening portion, on the other hand, concentrates on comprehending spoken English in a variety of settings, such as casual conversations and scholarly debates. Together, these elements seek to assess a test-taker's preparedness for using English in academic and real-world contexts (Silfia et al., 2021).

Being proficient in the TOEFL is essential for students who want to succeed academically and get ready for challenges around the world. Since the TOEFL is intended to evaluate English communication abilities in an academic context, it is a crucial instrument for postsecondary education and global opportunities. According to Phillips (2001) TOEFL is a standardized international test used to assess non-native speakers' English language skills, especially in the areas of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Its function as a requirement for pursuing higher education and obtaining international scholarships serves to emphasize its importance even more.

Furthermore, a strategic approach to test-taking is just as important for TOEFL success as linguistic proficiency. Sharpe (2016) emphasizes how crucial it is to comprehend the format of the test and practice a lot in order to improve performance. Improved scores are largely the result of targeted preparation and familiarity with test structures, which enable test-takers to approach the exam with efficacy and confidence.

Meanwhile, many students at the State Islamic University of Sunan Gunung Djati

Bandung struggle because they don't have the necessary foundational TOEFL skills. This restriction makes it difficult to take advantage of worthwhile educational and career opportunities. Therefore, creating a methodical and organized training program to improve students' English proficiency especially in preparation for the TOEFL is essential.

The program's goal is to help students grasp the structure, reading, and listening components of the TOEFL exam while offering them interactive, structured instruction to help them get good marks. In order to succeed academically and professionally, it also aims to increase students' motivation to learn English. Additionally, by improving students' English proficiency, the curriculum helps them attain higher education performance indicators (IKU). This program, which is in line with the MBKM (*Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka*) strategy, gives students skills that are applicable to both their academic and professional lives. It also encourages community involvement by enhancing students' abilities as exceptional human resources that can compete on a worldwide scale. It is anticipated that students at *Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung* would gain enough TOEFL proficiency, raise their test results, and develop the self-assurance necessary to take on difficulties around the world.

## **METHOD**

This foundational TOEFL skills training used the Service Learning method, a teaching strategy that blends real-world experience with

volunteer work. Participants actively participated in activities intended to directly support their academic and professional development in addition to gaining theoretical knowledge through this approach.

Ali et al. (2012) define service learning as an educational program in which students apply their acquired skills to help members of the community. Programs for service learning can be anything from specialized semester or year-long classes to volunteer hours that are added as a prerequisite to a regular course. Students acquire real-world experience, and individuals receiving services receive beneficial support. More precisely, research service-learning (RSL) is a method that combines the idea of a specific theory with a pertinent community service setting in a classroom setting.

Numerous social, psychological, and cognitive advantages are linked to service-learning. According to Clevenger and Ozbek (2013), students who take part in service-learning experiences improve their strategic planning, metacognitive abilities, and capacity to distinguish between important and irrelevant information. In addition to learning specific skills to take the TOEFL, participants in this training environment developed the drive and self-assurance to use these talents in their academic and professional endeavors.

To guarantee its effectiveness, the Service Learning approach places a strong emphasis on three essential components. First, active involvement encourages group learning and the real-world application of knowledge by involving participants in interactive activities and

conversations. Second, practice tests and simulations that mimic real-world test situations give participants real-world experience by letting them practice answering TOEFL-related tasks. Last but not least, reflection is essential for assisting participants in evaluating their development critically and realizing how significant English proficiency is to reaching their academic and professional objectives. A thorough and effective training experience is ensured by this blend of active participation, real-world experience, and reflective learning.

During the first preparation phase of the training program, participants were chosen based on their initial levels of English proficiency, which were determined by diagnostic tests or interviews. Schedules and training materials were sent out ahead of time so that participants could become acquainted with the goals and structure of the program. Computers, audio equipment, and printed materials were among the facilities and equipment set up to provide a favorable learning environment. The foundation for an engaging and successful training experience was laid by the establishment of study groups, which promoted peer conversations and cooperative learning.

The training's implementation phase had multiple scheduled sessions, each of which was intended to cover a different TOEFL exam component. The first session covered the test's three main components structure, reading, and listening and introduced participants to its format and organization. In-depth training and practice in each of these areas were given in later sessions. Participants were led through a variety of question types by facilitators, who also provided tips and

methods for taking tests successfully. In order to replicate actual test settings, role-playing exercises, group discussions, and mock exams were included. Additionally, frequent Q&A sessions made sure that all of the participants' questions were answered.

Subsequent to the supervised training sessions, participants went into an individual practice phase that lasted four weeks. During this time, participants received both online and offline resources, including as grammar exercises, question banks, and audio recordings. As they worked through projects and mock exams at their own speed, facilitators provided them with frequent feedback and individualized direction. Periodically, mock exams were given to evaluate participants' ability to handle the TOEFL examination on their own, pinpoint areas for development, and gauge their progress.

The evaluation and discussion stage provided a forum for gauging participants' development and resolving any outstanding issues. Quiz and mock TOEFL test results were examined by facilitators, who offered helpful criticism and tailored suggestions for development. In order to promote a sense of community and mutual learning, an open discussion was conducted during which participants were able to share their experiences, difficulties, and strategies. The consolidation of the information and abilities acquired during the training was greatly aided by this phase.

The program culminated with a thorough analysis of the main lessons learned and the training materials. To acknowledge the participants' efforts and accomplishments,

facilitators awarded certificates of participation and shared evaluation results. Feedback was gathered in order to determine possible enhancements for upcoming training courses. Motivational statements that urged participants to keep honing and using their TOEFL-related skills in academic and professional settings were also included in the concluding session. Participants were guaranteed to be well-prepared for the TOEFL exam as well as to have the self-assurance and abilities required to thrive in a globalized academic setting thanks to this methodical and introspective approach.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

To accomplish its goals, the "Basic TOEFL Skills Training for Students at Universitas Islam Negeri Bandung" PKM (Community Service Program) was carefully organized and carried out. Initial planning, implementation, independent practice, and evaluation with discussion were the program's main phases. The success of the program in improving the participants' TOEFL skills was ensured by customizing each level to fit their individual needs.

**Initial Preparation:** The program's basis was thoughtfully created to guarantee a worthwhile one-day training session that gave college-aged individuals the necessary tools to prepare for the TOEFL. This project was created as a community service project that offered learners who were not sufficiently exposed to the TOEFL format, efficient test-taking methods, and test-anxiety management approaches free and organized tutoring. A thorough requirements

analysis was carried out to determine common issues and knowledge gaps in order to customize the training to the individual needs of the participants.

A targeted training program was created based on the results, encompassing important topics like a summary of the TOEFL framework, tactical methods for handling various question kinds, and practical experience with example questions. To increase participation, the program was divided into interactive sections that combined academic justifications with hands-on activities. To guarantee seamless program implementation, a committed group of facilitators was put together, including language instructors, evaluation professionals, and tech specialists. Each facilitator was given distinct responsibilities, such as presenting educational materials, assisting participants with activities, and giving immediate feedback.

In order to get venue access and institutional support, cooperation with university stakeholders, including academic deans and the language centre, was created. In order to give priority to learners who would most benefit from the program, open registration was opened with explicit selection criteria. Classrooms, projectors, printed materials, and internet platforms were among the necessary resources set up to serve both in-person and remote participants. The timetable was carefully designed to minimize conflicts with educational obligations while fitting within a single day.

An introductory socializing session was conducted to spark interest and make sure participants understood the goals, including the advantages of the program and its anticipated

results. This planning stage made sure that the program would be a powerful, well-structured, and interesting community service project, giving participants the abilities and self-assurance they need to succeed on the TOEFL.



**Picture 1. Initial Preparation**

**Implementation:** A one-day intensive community training program was used to carry out the implementation phase, giving college-aged individuals the necessary abilities to prepare for the TOEFL. During the program's initial session, the organizing team greeted attendees and gave a summary of the training's goals, highlighting how it will help participants succeed academically and prepare for the workforce.

The three primary TOEFL sections reading, structure and written expression, and listening—were covered in the training sessions. Through engaging training courses that combined academic explanations with practical exercises, facilitators presented important ideas. In order to replicate actual TOEFL exam settings, participants completed guided reading activities, grammar drills, and simulated listening tasks.

The curriculum placed a lot of emphasis on giving participants useful test-taking techniques, such time management, seeing important concepts in reading passages, and spotting patterns in grammar questions. The facilitators also offered helpful advice on how to control exam anxiety and stay focused. A Q&A period at the end of each session gave participants the chance to ask questions and talk about tactics with knowledgeable trainers.

At the conclusion of the session, a small TOEFL simulation was used to assess the participants' level of learning. Following that, facilitators gave prompt comments, emphasizing both areas of strength and need for development. During a reflection session at the end of the program, participants discussed their experiences and made personal plans for future TOEFL preparation. To assist further program improvements, extensive documentation was created, including participant comments, training materials, and session recordings. By the conclusion of the day, participants had gained practical skills, more self-assurance, and a clear plan for their TOEFL preparation.



**Picture 2. Implementation**

**Independent Practice:** Through organized practice and supervised self-learning, the workshop sought to provide participants with fundamental TOEFL preparation skills as part of a one-day community service training program for college-aged learners. Interactive training courses covering the reading, speaking, listening, and writing components of the TOEFL kicked off the training. Professional facilitators provide detailed instructions on time management methods, typical problems, and efficient test-taking procedures.

Participants received extensive learning resources, such as printed modules, TOEFL question banks, grammar guides, sample exams, and audio recordings for listening practice, to help reinforce what they had learned. Attendees participated in timed activities intended to imitate actual exam settings during the training session practice period. These objectives included detecting difficult grammatical rules, responding to a predetermined number of questions in a timed manner, and honing listening comprehension skills through repeated exposure to real TOEFL recordings.

It was recommended that participants continue their preparation on their own after the training day. A follow-up support structure was established to help with this, including social media groups, online forums, and planned check-ins with facilitators. Additional practice exams and quizzes were also made accessible in order to monitor development and maintain motivation. By the end of the program, participants had not only become more used to the TOEFL format, but they also had the tools and self-assurance necessary to continue improving their English language skills.



**Picture 3 Independent Practic**

**Evaluation and Discussion:** An assessment and discussion phase were included to evaluate the performance of the one-day community service training program and improve the educational experiences for participants in order to optimize its impact. With an emphasis on thorough TOEFL preparation, the program gave college-aged individuals vital test-taking techniques through engaging seminars and hands-on activities. A thorough TOEFL simulation exam that resembled actual test settings was included in the training's last section. This evaluation gave participants quick insights into their areas of strength and growth, providing a baseline for their development over the brief but rigorous program.

After the evaluation, participants, facilitators, and the organizing team convened for a structured discussion session that provided an opportunity for participants to reflect on their experiences, talk about the difficulties they encountered during the training, and share strategies that worked best for them. Facilitators gave individualized feedback, highlighting each participant's strengths and providing specific recommendations for improvement. The session

also included practical advice on how to continue preparing for the TOEFL after the training, including using online resources, joining study groups, and establishing structured self-study routines.

To guarantee the program's long-term impact, participants got follow-up materials, including study schedules, practice activities, and recommended learning platforms. A final report summarized the program's significant successes, participant input, and ideas for future projects. In addition to increasing the training's efficacy, this methodical approach made sure participants departed with a clear plan for future TOEFL preparation, supporting the larger objective of empowering communities through easily available educational support services.



**Picture 4. Evaluation and Discussion**

The findings and discussion in this chapter demonstrate the methodical and effective methodology of the "Basic TOEFL Skills Training Program," a one-day community service project targeted at *Universitas Islam Negeri Bandung's* higher education participants. This program, which was designed as an intensive workshop, focused on practical techniques to improve participants' reading, listening, and structural competence while

offering specific training on key TOEFL skills. Through interactive exercises, practical applications, and instant feedback, the training successfully gave participants the skills and confidence they needed to succeed on the TOEFL.

In addition to helping individual participants, this program is a template for other institutions' future community-based training programs. The training session illustrated the importance of brief, targeted interventions in filling skill gaps by integrating participant feedback and recording quantifiable gains. In order to ensure that students are better equipped for academic and professional difficulties in a worldwide world, the program's success highlights the significance of easily available, organized, and community-driven educational assistance. The initiative's outcomes reinforce the necessity for ongoing, community-centered training activities and offer a solid basis for future expansions.

## CONCLUSION

The one-day "Basic TOEFL Skills Training for Students at Universitas Islam Negeri Bandung" was created as a community service project to give college-aged individuals the tools they need to ace the TOEFL exam. An overview session on the importance of the TOEFL in academic and professional contexts kicked off the program's organized approach. Targeted instruction on exam parts, question-solving techniques, and time management measures followed. Participants had practical experience answering TOEFL problems successfully through interactive seminars, supervised practice, and real-time simulations. An

assessment and open conversation marked the end of the program, giving participants the chance to consider their development and get tailored feedback. This program improved participants' comprehension and test-taking abilities while also encouraging increased confidence in their English language skills by fusing professional instruction with hands-on practice. The program's success emphasizes how crucial brief, intense training sessions are for closing language skill gaps and better prepare individuals for international academic and career prospects.

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