

The Efforts to Increase the TOEIC Scores of Semester V Students Based On Information Technology at Polytechnic LP3I Bekasi

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Article history

Received : 2022-10-13

Accepted : 2022-11-22

Published : 2023-01-14

Keywords:

Efforts, Increase,
TOEIC, Polytechnic

Abstract: TOEIC is a test to measure English proficiency needed in the workplace. Many workplaces use this test to find a good candidate to hire. Hence, someone needs to prepare themselves to pass the test. The study aims to discover whether preparation by giving TOEIC training using technology can improve the TOEIC scores of the students at the LP3I Polytechnic Bekasi. This research is a quantitative study. The result shows that the TOEIC scores of the students improve after the training. It means training preparation using technology before the test improves students' TOEIC scores.

Abstrak: TOEIC adalah tes untuk mengukur kecakapan bahasa Inggris yang dibutuhkan di tempat kerja. Banyak tempat kerja menggunakan tes ini untuk menemukan kandidat yang baik untuk dipekerjakan. Oleh karena itu, seseorang perlu mempersiapkan diri untuk lulus ujian. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui apakah persiapan dengan memberikan pelatihan TOEIC menggunakan teknologi dapat meningkatkan nilai TOEIC mahasiswa di Politeknik LP3I Bekasi. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kuantitatif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa nilai TOEIC siswa meningkat setelah pelatihan. Ini berarti persiapan pelatihan menggunakan teknologi sebelum tes meningkatkan skor TOEIC siswa.

INTRODUCTION

The ability to speak English is one of the skills that are important for many people in various countries where the status of English is a second language and a foreign language. Having English proficiency can also help someone to be able to communicate with the international world. It can be a supporting career development in companies, as well. Therefore, people need to make various efforts to improve their English skills. Nowadays, many people use technology to help their work. They need it to make their work easy and more practical. Technology is a basic need for everyone (Ortega, 2017).

In education, many lecturers use technology to help their learning process. Well-developed technology can become a powerful learning tool (Golonka et al., 2014). Technology can change the way in learning, teaching, and communicating using a language, especially



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now that many students are computer savvy (Salehudin et al., 2021). Technology gives the students access to a language inside and outside the classroom (Kessler, 2018). Contemporary, technologies and mobile devices are increasingly accessible to encourage language learning (Loewen et al., 2020). In addition, other technologies, such as *platforms*, virtual reality (VR), and mobile applications are still emerging (Bonk & Wiley, 2020). The best approach to teaching and learning languages is to combine technology with human instruction, namely learning pedagogical techniques combined with technology (DeMillo, 2019).

TOEIC is a multiple-choice test of English for adults and non-native speakers of the language (Lougheed, 2007). There are various strategies that teachers can choose to increase students' TOEIC Scores, conventional textbooks or online. According to Shimada (2017), in the TOEIC preparation program, most students prefer online learning to conventional textbooks.

Online TOEIC learning programs can be an effective learning resource that is CALL or *Computer Assisted Language Learning* (Stewart, 2019). *Mobile*, the TOEIC program can also be integrated with MALL (*Mobile Assisted Language Learning*) and is able to show a positive effect in the form of an increase in TOEIC Scores (Kim, 2022). The TOEIC application is able to help increase student interest in learning with a more interesting teaching method that keeps students from getting bored in class (Karmiati & Kurniawati, 2018). Since many students have low scores in their TOEIC, giving training before the test can help students to improve their TOEIC scores. They can prepare themselves using the various TOEIC applications to

practice their language skills before taking the test.

METHOD

The study was qualitative research. Thirty persons of LP3I Bekasi took part as the participants in this research. Students took a pre-test before TOEIC training. Scores of the pre-test were as fundamental to setting the TOEIC training. Before the training, the tutor explained tips, tricks, and strategies for answering the TOEIC test. The training was conducted in seven sessions, the listening parts in four sessions, and the other two for the reading parts. Students took another TOEIC test after the training.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The training was conducted in seven sessions. The first session discussed listening questions about photography. The instructor discussed the questions one by one by analyzing each statement that describes the photo or image displayed. The instructor explained a trick to answer the test. The first thing to pay attention to is the main idea of an image which will show that objects or people will be the main idea. The correct answer is the one that fits the main idea. In addition, the instructors explained to the participants to recognize similar sounds for different words; as the picture shows a fountain; however, in the audio, they will hear a mountain. Participants should apply this strategy to work on other questions. At the end of the meeting, the participants had to practice the test by working on five listening questions of part 1. They worked on the exercises independently using the TOEIC application from the Play Store. It made the activity more practical because the trainees could work independently in class and could correct their answers immediately.

The second session of the TOEIC training focused on listening to Part 2 question responses. The instructor explained that there were two types of questions, yes/no and wh-questions. He emphasized the importance of understanding the two types of questions. The instructor explained how to recognize the correct answer by analyzing the distractor's answer choices; as in the statement and question sections, some words sound similar. The teacher explained to the trainees how to answer correctly from the distractor's word answers.

The instructor continued the third session by focusing on discussing the TOEIC part 3 by listening to short conversations. The teacher explained tips and tricks for answering questions in this section. The description of this question is to listen to a short dialogue between two persons. The test takers had to answer the questions based on the information they heard from the conversation. The questions start from the first part of the conversation to the last one. The tutor assigned participants to implement these tips and strategies by working on questions in the application and reporting the results.

The fourth session is about the technique of answering a short-talk question. The way to answer the question for a short talk is similar to answering the short conversation questions. Test takers had to do the exercises by answering three questions in each short talk. Before doing the task, the instructor explained that each talk had keywords that helped participants to choose the correct answers. The instructor shows examples of keywords in the talk content to search for in the questions. The participants had to practice the tips by completing a package of questions, and they could correct it automatically.

Unlike the previous discussion on listening questions, the learning activities in this section are without using a sound system support device because the format of the questions is not in the form of listening. The Toeic part 5 is that participants had to fill in the blanks with the correct words from the answer options. The blank parts are for grammar and vocabulary. Before the participants did the assignment, the instructor explained which questions contained grammar and which questions had to fill with a word. The grammar questions tested on the Toeic test generally include parts of speech, tenses, gerund versus infinitive, personal pronouns, subject, and verb agreements, clauses, and connecting words. The instructor explained the questions by analyzing whether the questions had to fill with words or grammar.

At the sixth meeting, the instructor discussed the Toeic part 6. It is text completion questions. Participants had to complete a space in a text with a correct answer from the options to make the text becomes meaningful. Text completion requires test takers to have the ability to master vocabulary and grammar and apply them contextually. At first, the tutor explained the tips and tricks for doing this part. In the end, the instructor instructed the participants to work on five packages of questions to do and report the result using the Google form.

The material discussed at the 7th meeting was reading. Answering questions of this type require participants' ability to understand reading content and reading content topics related to the business world, for example, business correspondence, information pamphlets, e-mails, and official announcements. The question form of this part is multiplechoice. This part of the test

focuses on vocabulary mastery. The instructor explained the tips to work on this part of the test. The tutor gave some assignments after the explanation to the participants to do independently and reported them via the Google form.

TOEIC Pre-Training and Post-Training RESULTS

Before the training was conducted, the results of the pre-training TOEIC test showed that the results had not reached the specified target, 40%. The following is data on pre-training TOEIC test results:

THE SCORESS REPORT OF TOEIC OF LP3I BEKASI BEFORE GIVEN TRAINING

No	Campus	Program	Number of Examinees Tested	Average Scores	Greater than or Equal to 405	(%)
1	Bekasi	AB	47	372	18	38%
2		KA	26	300	3	12%
3		TI	10	429	4	40%
			83	367	25	30%

There were three program participants of the TOEIC, Business Administration (AB), Accounting Computerization (KA), and Information Technology (IT). IT program got the highest score, and the lowest was the Accounting Computerization program. The total average pre-training TOEIC SCORES was 367 from 83 participants. The target minimum TOEIC Score is 405, and IT programs had the highest achievement. TOEIC score of 40 % of IT students got higher than 405. KA programs had the lowest achievement. TOEIC score of 12 % of KA students got higher than 405. The target for achieving a minimum TOEIC score of 405 was 25 people out of 83 TOEIC, 30 % of the total participants. Based on the result, TOEIC training needed to be set to improve the students' TOEIC scores.

Since the score on pre test of TOEIC was lower than the target score, the instruction set the TOEIC training to increase the TOEIC scores. The result of the TOEIC training showed that TOEIC score of the participants increasing. The following is a recap of the post-training TOEIC test results:

TOEIC SCORES OF STUDENTS OF LP3I BEKASI AFTER GIVEN TRAINING

No	Campus	Program	Number of Examinees Tested	Average Scores	Greater than or Equal to 405	(%)
1	Bekasi	AB	47	339	16	34%
3		KA	26	381	10	39%
5		TI	10	465	6	60%
			83	395	32	38%

There was an increasing TOEIC score after the given training. IT program students who got greater than or equal to 405 increased to 60 %, KA students 39 %, but AB students decreased to 34 %. The overall achievement was 38%. It showed that there was an increase of 4% after being given training.

DISCUSSION

The results of the TOEIC test pre-training tests and post-training tests indicated that several facts that there had been an increase in test results with the following data: (a) The overall average-Scores of all programs had increased by 28 points from the results TOEIC test before training 367 to 395 the average- scores of the TOEIC test results after training, (b) The number of participants who got at least ≥ 405 points increased from 25 people to 32 people after the training, and when it converted into percentages, there was an 8% increase. The pre-training result was 30% compared to the post-training test result of 38%, (c) Students of the Computerized Accounting (KA) and Information Tech-nology (IT) programs

got an increased score. The average score of KA students' increased from 300 to 381 (12% to 39%), and IT students' increased from 429 to 465 (40% to 60%), (d) An anomaly phenomenon was found in the TOEIC Scores obtained by AB students. The average TOEIC score before the training was 472 (38%), but after the training the scores decreased to 339 (32%).

There were some causes of increasing the participants' TOEIC scores. They were differences in the use of test platforms/media, differences in the test atmosphere, motivation, integrity of the test takers, and the level of discipline of the test takers.

Before the TOEIC test training, it used the Edmodo application. The implementation technique was to upload the TOEIC application questions, then give the TOEIC test to the participants to work on online using the Computer Lab with one supervisor. Technically, the TOEIC test after training was the same as the pre-training test. The difference was in the use of the application. The Edmodo allowed participants to cheat by opening Google Translate, while the application used after the training was an application designed by the ITC that did not allow participants to cheat on Google Translate.

On the pre-test, the instructor did not use the standard operating procedure of ITC for the distance among the participants. Hence, there was still an opportunity for the participants to cheat. It used the standard operating procedure of ITC after the TOEIC training.

It resulted that there were decreased TOEIC scores of the students of the AB program after the given training. It indicated that they did a lot of cheating on pre-test. In terms of motivation, it can be seen from the assignment results that

students from KA and IT programs tend to be more motivated to do daily tasks to answer TOEIC questions.

CONCLUSION

There were seven sessions of TOEIC training, and they were conducted in seven meetings. The instructor explained tips, tricks, and strategies for answering questions and demonstrated them to the trainees. They got a daily assignment, as well.

The study found that there were increasing TOEIC scores of the KA and IT students' program after the TOEIC training. The finding indicated an anomaly that there was a decreased score of the students of the AB program. This finding was caused by several factors, differences in media platforms, motivation, test atmosphere, and the integrity of participants, especially in business administration study programs.

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