

## **“Saintist Women”: The Empowerment of Students’ Ability in Manggarai Regency Through Toefl Test Training**

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### **Abstract**

The aim of community service is to improve the community’s ability to master English by participating in TOEFL training in Manggarai Regency. This activity was carried out at UNIKA Santu Paulus Ruteng. The participants who attended were the people of the Manggarai district with the involvement of 30 participants. The techniques used in this activity are lectures, discussions, modeling, and exercises. This activity last for 1 week (7 days) consisting of pre-test, training/treatment, then post-test using Paired sample T-Test. Furthermore, this activity is carried out by distributing questionnaires to the public. The results obtained from this service activity are that this training activity is able to increase the participants’ TOEFL scores and increase their competence in listening, reading, and doing TOEFL grammar exercises. Likewise, the result of the questionnaire obtained was the same where 80% of the participants responded positively to this training activity. By joining this TOEFL training, participants find it helpful to master and comprehend how to do TOEFL questions easily.

**Keywords:** TOEFL Training, Community Service, Manggarai Regency

### **INTRODUCTION**

Indonesian National Education has made various efforts to improve human resources so that they are able to compete globally in various fields of science. One of the efforts to increase human resources in the world of education is to master the English language. Mastering English is very important because English is an international language that helps anyone to communicate globally. On the other hand, although the role of English is vital, not all people master English well, especially students and local communities. Various schools have committed to improve the mastery of English for their students in order to realize the commitment to compete globally at the next level of education. This commitment can be seen from learning English which has become a compulsory subject from the elementary level to the university level. As the young generation must embrace global citizenship principles and develop their command of other languages, especially English, in the 21st century (Kopish, 2017; Yemini et al., 2018) and collaboration (Menggo et al., 2019). Furthermore, English is also used as the language of instruction in various courses at universities. Besides, in the world of tourism; English is the key for local people in attracting foreign tourists because with good service foreign tourists can be comfortable and interested in visiting tourist objects in the local area. However, to achieve a good mastery of English, an English test is required as a measure of someone's ability. The TOEFL test is an English test that is widely used by countries whose main language is not English. The TOEFL test stands for Test of English as a Foreign Language. The TOEFL test has become very popular due to it is widely used by academic and non-academic institutions in measuring participants' English mastery. In academic institutions, for example, almost all universities utilize English in the teaching and learning process. In addition, when someone wants to continue their education to a higher level such as a master's or doctoral degree, that person is required to be able to achieve the standard score determined by each university where the participant applies. While in non-academic institutions, for example in the employee recruitment process, the TOEFL test is utilized as one of the requirements to be

accepted to work in state-owned companies and private companies (Arnani, 2019). This process also occurs when a promotion, class, or rank for an employee is required to meet the TOEFL score standard set by the company (Putrawan, 2018). This is also reinforced by the statement given by Utami and Pirmansyah (2018) that a TOEFL score that reaches the standard is not only a requirement for applying for jobs or positions but also an important requirement to be able to pass the desired scholarships and universities.

Regarding how important the TOEFL test is, therefore there are still many community service activities that carry the theme of TOEFL training. This TOEFL training activity was also carried out by Wijayanti and Miqawati (2016) where community service activities were carried out by them at one of the Jember universities with student subjects. The result of the activities carried out is that students are not only able to work on TOEFL practice questions but also assist students to improve their English. An activity with the same theme was also carried out by Putrawan (2018) where he also did community service activities at one of the universities with the target subject as well as students. The result of these activities is that in addition to increasing students' English skills, they are also skilled in doing TOEFL practice questions. However, something different is written in the Sudirman article (2020) where the target of the TOEFL training is not students but lecturers at one of the universities. Through the training provided, it was found that the lecturers were skilled and able to work on the TOEFL practice questions given. In addition, the ability of the lecturers in mastering a foreign language, namely English, has increased. Another thing that was also found in the activity was that by carrying out these service activities, the confidence of the lecturers in working on the TOEFL test questions also increased (Sudirman, 2020).

Having known community service activities that mostly carry the theme of TOEFL training outside Manggarai, this activity is the first activity that has been carried out among the people of Manggarai-Flores Regency. There are several things that make this the first TOEFL test held for the people of the Manggarai district. 1) due to lack of socialization from the local government about the importance of this TOEFL test being carried out, 2) the high-cost factor is also one of the factors why people still get less knowledge about the TOEFL test. Meanwhile, the public's interest in learning English is very high. With the above problems, the authors are interested in carrying out community service activities by involving the participation of the people of Manggarai Regency to provide insight into the TOEFL test. In addition, to improve the English mastery of the Manggarai community and also provide training in the form of strategies or tips in answering TOEFL test questions. The TOEFL training activity was carried out in Manggarai Regency. Manggarai Regency itself is one of the regencies in NTT. The capital city of the Manggarai district is Ruteng. Most of the Manggarai district consists of rice fields where the majority of the population make a living as farmers, ranchers, traders, and employees. According to 2017 data, Manggarai Regency consists of 12 sub-districts, 26 urban villages, and 145 villages. Moreover, in this district, there are three universities and one of them is UNIKA Santu Paulus Ruteng. At this University, community service activities are done by asking first permission from the highest leader of UNIKA to carry out activities for seven days. The author here works as a lecturer along with students carries out TOEFL training activities in this place. The target of this TOEFL training activity is the Manggarai district community which consists of various levels, namely junior high, high school, students, employees, and non-employees.

This TOEFL training activity is carried out with the main objective, namely that it is expected that this TOEFL training can make it easier for the Manggarai community to gain insight about what the TOEFL test is and provide convenience in learning English by doing TOEFL practice questions so that they are able to prepare themselves as early as possible before taking official TOEFL test. In addition, to the main objectives mentioned above, the benefits of this community service activity particularly are to measure the ability to master the English language of the Manggarai community. Furthermore, it is expected that the Manggarai community will also be able to find quick and

appropriate strategies in doing TOEFL practice questions. Meanwhile, by the implementation of this community service activity, it is expected that it will be able to motivate the Manggarai community in utilizing a foreign language, namely English at the international level so that they are able to compete globally. Another benefit is to build a good cooperative relationship between the university and the Manggarai community.

## **METHODS**

The participants of this community service activity are the people of Manggarai Regency which consist of various levels, namely SMP, SMA, students, employees, and non-employees. This TOEFL training activity was held from Thursday 3 February to 26 February for a total of 7 days at 16.00 WIB at UNIKA Santu Paulus Ruteng GUB 310. The number of participants involved in this activity was 30 people. However, there were 29 participants who attended, starting from the pretest, and treatment to the post-test. The details are that 2 days are used for the pretest and post-test activities while the remaining 5 days are carried out with treatment for participants. The evaluation activities are carried out after the post-test takes place. This activity is divided into three stages, namely:

- Pretest: TOEFL training participants are given ITP questions to determine the participants' initial English competence and provide a description of the TOEFL test. The time used is 120 minutes.
- Treatment: provide material about what the TOEFL test is. Each meeting was given 90 minutes and in each meeting discussed different skills, for example, one meeting discussed listening skills, two meetings discussed reading, and the remaining two meetings discussed structure.
- Posttest: TOEFL training participants are given TOEFL questions equivalent to ITP to determine the participants' initial English competence and provide a description of the TOEFL test. The time used is 120 minutes.
- Evaluation: Participants were given a questionnaire by the team to fill in their opinion about this TOEFL training activity.

The methods used in the TOEFL test training are education, training, and mentoring. According to Gunarhadi (2010) this method is similar to the lecture, discussion, modeling, exercise, and simulation methods so that it is not only focused on one type of activity.

In the lecture and discussion method, the speaker explained and described various skills tests and English components. Furthermore, the material given to the test takers is the same as the TOEFL ITP questions so that they have a clear picture of what the TOEFL ITP test is like. During the TOEFL training activities, discussion sessions were also conducted with the test takers. This is done to find out what difficulties they are still facing and there the presenters provide appropriate strategies in answering the test takers' concerns. As for modeling, the presenters have prepared a module containing practice questions for the TOEFL test which consists of listening, reading, and structure exercises. Of course, these questions are similar to the TOEFL ITP practice questions so they are used to doing the TOEFL ITP test later. During this TOEFL training activity, simulations are also carried out so that the presenters get a clear description of the participants' initial and final abilities according to the actual duration of the TOEFL ITP test. It means that the speaker provides a TOEFL test atmosphere in the training so that participants are familiar with the atmosphere.

The evaluation stage is carried out by comparing the pre-test and post-test along with the results of the questionnaire from the evaluation that took place after the post-test. The comparison between the pre-test and post-test was conducted to determine whether there was an increase in the scores of the participants before the activity (pre-test) and after the training activity (post-test). Data analysis using quantitative data testing pre-test and post-test using the Paired Sample-t Test technique (Cresswell, 2002). Then for the evaluation of this training activity, the presenters gave 12 statements asking for their agreement with a choice of a scale from strongly agree to disagree. While the remaining two questions were asked participants to answer in the form of a description.

Therefore, this questionnaire becomes the main source or basis for the results of activities that have been carried out in addition to comparing the results from before and after activities or pre-test and post-test.

## RESULT

These are results of the service value of teaching English through TOEFL training to the people of Manggarai Regency obtained before and after the TOEFL test training. This score is obtained from the TOEFL pre-test questions at the beginning and the post-test questions at the end. After that, the scores of both pre-test and post-test were compared to find out the extent of the results of this training. The following is a table of the results of the pre-test and post-test scores:

**Table 1.** Results of Pre-test dan Post-test

<b>Participant Name</b>	<b>Pre-Test</b>	<b>Post-test</b>
Participant 1	382	400
Participant 2	393	420
Participant3	400	426
Participant 4	330	370
Participant 5	396	390
Participant 6	325	400
Participant 7	388	436
Participant 8	300	402
Participant 9	333	401
Participant 10	330	440
Participant 11	303	390
Participant 12	326	385
Participant 13	450	465
Participant 14	410	430
Participant 15	211	280
Participant 16	469	480
Participant 17	403	435
Participant 18	329	365
Participant 19	300	333
Participant 20	411	430
Participant 21	396	406
Participant 22	398	440
Participant 23	295	350
Participant 24	298	380
Participant 25	300	340
Participant 26	365	390
<b>Participant Name</b>	<b>Pre-Test</b>	<b>Post-test</b>
Participant 27	303	340
Participant 28	437	457
Participant 29	306	400
Participant 30	333	397

Table I only shows the participants who took the pre-test and post-test only. After carrying out the pretest and posttest, the results obtained were that the participants' scores increased after participating in the TOEFL training. In addition, the test results through the Paired Sample-Test for pre-test and post-test were also carried out to find out the results of this TOEFL training activity. Therefore, the results of the measurements can be seen in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Result paired samples test Pre-test and Post-test

Paired Differences 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Upper	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)
Pair 1 Pair 1 Pre-Test – Post-Test - 3306935	-7,79558	40	,000

The results obtained from testing quantitative data pretest and posttest using the Paired Sample T Test technique, it is obtained information that the value of  $t = -7.795$  with  $p \text{ value} = 0.000 < 0.05$ . This states that the mean TOEFL score of TOEFL trainees increases which can be seen from their progress when participating in TOEFL training activities or pre-test and after they take TOEFL post-test training. From the value presented, the value of  $t = -7.795$  states that the TOEFL participant's post-test score increased compared to before they attended the training. The mean scores obtained during the pre-test and post-test TOEFL were pre-test 354 with  $SD = 56.82$  and the mean post-test was 401 with  $SD = 40.43$ . Therefore, the conclusion is that there is a positive effect of TOEFL training on increasing the TOEFL score of TOEFL trainees. Here are pictures during the TOEFL training activities:



**Figure 1.** The presenter presents material to the TOEFL training participants



**Figure 2.** Participants work on TOEFL practice questions





**Figure 3.** The speaker opens a question and answer session/discussion to the participants

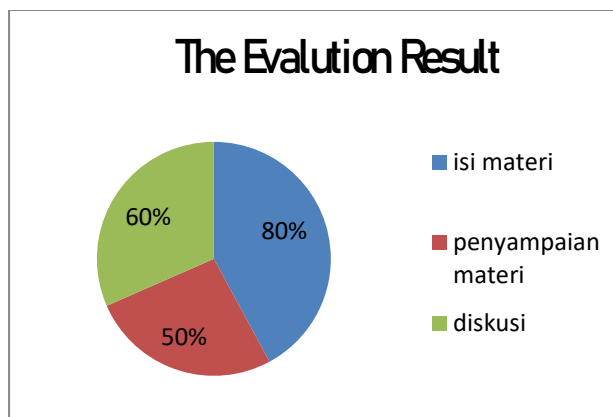


**Figure 4.** The speaker re-explains the material that is not understood

In addition, based on the results of the evaluation, there was a significant level of satisfaction were during the TOEFL training activity, and the participant's responses were very positive about the activities that had been carried out. The response was taken from the results of the evaluation by giving 8 statements to the participants and asking for their opinion on whether they agreed or not with the implementation of the TOEFL training activities to the public which were carried out for seven days. The conclusions are shown from the results of the percentage of participants' satisfaction levels with the material presented by the presenters as well as the discussion or question and answer process that took place during the activity. The results shown from respondents' satisfaction with the contents of the TOEFL material that has been presented are 80% agree and 10% strongly agree while 10% of other respondents choose neutral. Then for the variable presentation of the material presented, the level of satisfaction of respondents was 50% of respondents chose to agree, 40% chose to strongly agree and 10% of other respondents chose neutral. While in the final variable, namely the question and answer activities and discussions, the satisfaction level of respondents showed as much as 60% agree, 20% strongly agree and 20% of other respondents chose to be neutral.

For the variable presentation of material content, respondents were satisfied and positive with community service activities through this TOEFL training. The results obtained from this questionnaire stated that the material presented to the respondents was easy to understand, relevant to their needs, and helped them in doing the TOEFL practice well. Then for the presentation of the material presented by the resource person or presenter it is easy to understand because it is conveyed in a cool way so that they are helped to do the practice questions well. In addition to the question and answer variable, participants also gave a positive response where the question and answer session and discussion helped improve participants' understanding of the TOEFL material and the presenters were able to answer questions asked by participants very well. However, in terms of the duration of time given to participants, they think it is still very lacking. It can be seen from 40% of participants who expressed their opinion on the duration of

time. These results can be shown in Figure 1 below:



**Figure 5.** The evaluation result

The level of satisfaction of respondents was not only measured through a questionnaire distributed to them, but the trainees were asked to answer two questions in writing or qualitatively in the evaluation questionnaire. From the results of their answers stated that they were satisfied with this TOEFL training activity. On the evaluation sheet, respondent 8 informs that *"This TOEFL training provides great benefits in improving the understanding of learning English through TOEFL test training. In addition to getting the module for free, I can also find out the strategy in answering the TOEFL questions quickly and accurately."* (Respondent 8)

Furthermore, the participants also responded that this activity really had a big impact on their lives, especially for junior high school, high school students and specifically for students who were about to graduate from college and want to continue their education to a higher level. Therefore, the respondent informed his friends and the following is a comment from one of the respondents *"This TOEFL training helps them to be able to prepare themselves for a higher school level. In addition, this activity also helps me to prepare myself for the needs of my school and work in the future. Therefore, I am very excited to recommend this activity to my friends. I hope this activity can be carried out again in the future."* (Respondent 19)

The participants also expected that this activity could be carried out again with a longer duration and for free again and with more varied materials. This comment was also conveyed by one of the respondents who stated that "The duration of the TOEFL training activity should be extended from the time given previously so that the presentation of material and discussions can be maximized". (Respondent 29)

The results obtained from community service through this TOEFL training are 90% of TOEFL training participants get many benefits that are useful for improving their English skills. They explained that with this activity it would be easier for them to explore TOEFL practice questions and help them prepare before entering the world of work or college later.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

English teaching activities through the TOEFL test training have left a significant impact on increasing the participants' TOEFL scores. In addition, this TOEFL training activity also facilitates the people of Manggarai Regency, especially students of SMP, SMA, UNIVERSITY, employees and non-employees. Therefore, through this community service, it is expected that the Manggarai community will always be ready at any time to carry out the TOEFL test held by an official institution. In addition, TOEFL training participants are also more encouraged to use English both orally and in writing well. Seeing how important English is for the Manggarai community and the need for education about English language proficiency tests, it is therefore necessary to increase

the quantity of community service with relevant topics. In addition, it is also necessary to hold training for teachers or English language teachers at non-official institutions so that they can become teachers in the TOEFL field at their respective institutions.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The author expresses many thanks to UNIKA SANTU PAULUS RUTENG and the Santu Paulus Ruteng Foundation for providing motivation and providing funds for this community service activity so that the author and team can carry out this research smoothly in 2022.

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