Students Language Performance and TOEFL Preparation Program, Are they connected?

Ermansyah Malik[1], Yen Ai-Chun[1], Chang Te-Sheng[1]

[1]National Dong Hwa University, Taiwan
*Correspondence: 810988111@gms.ndhu.edu.tw

ABSTRACT

This study examines and describes the relationship between TOEFL preparation Program and Students; language performance. The study also examines the program's effect on students' TOEFL scores improvement. Using spss v.22 in analyzing the data, the researcher employed three groups of students consisting of 15 students, namely the control group, treatment 1 group, and the treatment two groups. Thus, descriptive statistics present verifiable data in numerical form, which uses statistical procedures to tabulate, describe, reflect, and summarize data properties. The two variables data examined, TOEFL paper-based testing score and FCE Cambridge speaking test score, are the focus of the research, free from context generalization of the phenomenon. The result is presented statistically using quantitative methodology. The control group was not exposed to any treatment, while 1 group was given basic general English lessons, and the treatment 2 group was trained using the specially designed TOEFL preparation course. The study result shows significant effects on the improvement of TOEFL score on the treatment 1 group's pre-test mean, the standard of deviation, and the standard error mean were 350.07, 22.745, and 5.873, respectively. The treatment 2 group's mean, the standard of deviation, and the standard error mean were 355.40, 20.117, and 5.194, respectively, and the treatment 1 group' post-test mean, the standard of deviation, and the standard error mean were 387.27, 35.204, and 9.090, respectively. The treatment 2 group's mean, standard of deviation, and standard error mean were 436.87, 44.912, and 6.925, respectively. However, the study result shows that the correlation p-value = .083 indicates no significant correlation between TOEFL Preparation students' language performance.

1. Introduction

This study examines and describes the relationship between TOEFL preparation Program and Students; language performance. The study also examines the program's effect on students' TOEFL scores improvement. Using spss v.22 in analyzing the data, the researcher employed three groups of students consisting of 15 students, namely the control group, treatment 1 group, and the treatment two groups. Thus, descriptive statistics present verifiable data in numerical form, which uses statistical procedures to tabulate, describe, reflect, and summarize data properties. The two variables data examined, TOEFL paper-based testing score and FCE Cambridge speaking test score, are the focus of the research, free from context generalization of the phenomenon. The result is presented statistically using quantitative methodology. The control group was not exposed to any treatment, while 1 group was given basic general English lessons, and the treatment 2 group was trained using the specially designed TOEFL preparation course. The study result shows significant effects on the improvement of TOEFL score on the treatment 1 group's pre-test mean, the standard of deviation, and the standard error mean were 350.07, 22.745, and 5.873, respectively. The treatment 2 group's mean, the standard of deviation, and the standard error mean were 355.40, 20.117, and 5.194, respectively, and the treatment 1 group' post-test mean, the standard of deviation, and the standard error mean were 387.27, 35.204, and 9.090, respectively. The treatment 2 group's mean, standard of deviation, and standard error mean were 436.87, 44.912, and 6.925, respectively. However, the study result shows that the correlation p-value = .083 indicates no significant correlation between TOEFL Preparation students' language performance.

The increasing number of educational institutions that offer preparation training programs for English language exams such as TOEFL, IELTS, and others are the background for this research (Prihandoko et al., 2021; Nahdhiyah et al., 2022). Large or small private educational institutions implement this training program, but public and private higher education institutions compete to offer similar programs (Weda et al., 2021; Hasnia et al., 2022).

This element of commercialization of education and training is the source of the proliferation of these training models of English language programs (Hamuddin et al., 2023.) . Students in this program are willing to pay almost any price to achieve the score prerequisite for passing their English test or any other purpose, academically, in business, or in government employment (Junaidi et al., 2020). The training model has become very popular as a shortcut to achieving students' wishes to get a graduate scholarship abroad or continue their education (Rahman, 2018).

Indonesian education system of English pedagogic has put the linguistic knowledge components as the base of all curricula at almost all levels of teaching. The four skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking competence are designed for learners to recognize and operate the language communicatively among themselves (Malik, 2019). One of the triggers for the growth of this model training program is the expectation of learners to achieve the desired goal as simply and as fast as possible (Malik, 2019). The prerequisites for graduation, both in continuing education to a higher level or to obtain educational financing facilities or foreign scholarships, and the growing number of scholarship competitors put more significant pressure on the students. Furthermore, the limitation of scholarship provided forces the higher scores needed to be included in every recruitment process.

The TOEFL test is a standardized test to measure the ability of speakers of English as a foreign language. Usually, this test is used as one of the requirements to get into universities in America and other English-speaking countries (Phillips, 2001). However, at this time, this test is also a requirement for further education at universities in the country. Even in many universities, such as Syiah Kuala University (Unsyiah) and Mataram University, TOEFL is a requirement to take the thesis exam and pass the program he takes (Susanti, 2016). TOEFL, as a standardized and trusted test (Gear, 1996), makes more than 9000 educational institutions worldwide trust this test's validity.

The TOEFL test is introduced by at least two types of models with different levels of the process, administration requirements, recognition, and, most of all, price. The first type, the International TOEFL

iBT (Internet-Based Testing), this type of TOEFL test is recognized by all educational institutions worldwide, used, and intended to measure students' academic English. The primary purpose of this test is to understand students' ability to perform academic tasks in an English environment (Komari, 2008). The Second type is ITP (Paper-based) Institutional TOEFL; this test is a type of TOEFL widely used in Indonesia with a multi-purpose function for university entrance requirements, English competence test, and filing requirements for study abroad. The ITP TOEFL consists of three parts; listening, structure & written expression, and reading comprehension (Phillips, 2001).

The method means a systematic way of working to facilitate the implementation of an activity in order to achieve the specified goals (Depdikbud, 1990). The method plays a huge yet significant role in the educational process. The output of the educational process mainly depends on the use of the proper method in performing the teaching and learning; it will be difficult to expect or measure the success of the teaching and learning process at maximum results without a straightforward method in the form of curriculum and syllabus (Qanwal, S., & Karim, S., 2014)

There are several methods that educators can use. Among them are: a) Informative Method, which is a method for conveying information, the form can be in the form of teaching, lectures, or panel discussions; b) Participatory methods are used to involve material processing. The forms are question and answer, group discussion, brainstorming, and c) experiential method is a method that allows participants to be involved in learning experiences. The form can be in sensitivity training methods, demonstrations, and exercises (Creswell, J. W., 2015).

Educational institutions, private or public, are required to have an explicit curriculum in order to achieve their learning goals. Facilities and teaching forces are provided with various training to fulfill the optimum result of the educational training. All public institutions are required to follow and translate the national educational vision; government plays the central role in distributing the curriculum. Private institutions, on the other hand, creatively design and perform almost all processes of creating the curriculum. The use of technology and information, together with the study of global needs, has become one of the private institutions' primary purposes to win market preferences.

Educators In the Republic of Indonesia Law number 20 of 2003 article 1, it is stated that educators are educational staff who are qualified as teachers, lecturers, counselors, tutors, instructors, facilitators, and other designations according to their specificity, and participate in organizing education. The function of educators is as a

guide and influence to grow the activities of students and, at the same time, responsible for the implementation of education.

A good educator requires a. Teaching Skills; educators must have the skills to educate or teach, give instructions, and transfer knowledge to students. They must be able to provide enthusiasm, foster and develop so that students. b. Social skills educators must have skills in the social field to ensure the trust and loyalty of students, namely helping, being objective, appraise if their student's progress, and being able to respect the opinions of others. (3). Technical Competent, in the sense that educators should be well-trained in pedagogical tactics and strategies, tactile, theoretically knowledgeable, and agile in making decisions. Of the various factors influencing learning, especially the TOEFL, every teaching and learning activity wants measurable success.

Educators/teachers must pay attention to the factors that influence success in learning; neglecting those factors leads to unexpected learning results. Success in teaching and learning activities may not come by itself but requires careful teaching planning, varied implementation of methods, media, and a supportive atmosphere in evaluation, a measuring tool for learning success.

This research aims to examine and analyze the effect of the TOEFL preparation program on students' TOEFL scores and the correlation between the preparation program to the student's language performance (speaking).

2. Methodology

This research uses quantitative research methods. Statistical in the form of numerical data using one-way ANOVA is presented to explain and show the TOEFL scores before and after the preparation for TOEFL training. Additionally, statistical in the form of numerical data using Pearson r-correlation is used and presented to explain and show the correlation of the increasing scores of the students in TOEFL sores with students' English language performance. The one-way ANOVA is expected to show the effect of the preparation for the TOEFL test on students' TOEFL scores before and after taking the TOEFL preparation training. The Pearson r-correlation is expected to describe how this TOEFL preparation program helps students' English language performance, and the high significant positive correlation is considered a success in English language development.

In this study, the researcher assigned 45 students to 3 different groups consisting of 15 students; the students' gender was not equal in each group. The first group is assigned as a control group; there is no English training given whatsoever. The second group is given English training in the form of general English at the primary level (treatment 1). The third group is assigned to the TOEFL preparation program, which covers listening skills, structure and written expression, and reading skills (treatment 2). All groups are not explicitly trained in English speaking skills.

The study data is in the form of students' TOEFL itp pre-test scores, students' TOEFL itp post-test scores, and FCE Cambridge speaking section scores. There are three sets of pre and post-test TOEFL itp scores and three sets of FCE Cambridge speaking tests from three groups of students. The f-test in one-way ANOVA measures the pre and post-test of the students, and the Pearson r-correlation measures group three. (Treatment 2) TOEFL itp scores to FCE Cambridge speaking test scores.

Researchers will use two instruments in collecting data, two sets presumably equal in the difficulty of ITP TOEFL past paper 2019 for pre-test and post-test, and Cambridge FCE tests speaking section mock test 2018. The pre-test ITP TOEFL test was used to collect the initial TOEFL itp scores from three groups of students, and the post-test ITP TOEFL was used to collect the end-of-training scores from the three groups. A set Cambridge FCE speaking test was used to collect data on the end-of-training students' language skills, and the FCE Cambridge test is designed to assess students speaking skills; therefore is considered a students' language performance test. The higher the score, the better the students are in language performance.

In this study, the three groups are given a 20-meeting with 90 minutes of each meeting in one month period, May – June 2022, in Universitas Fajar Makassar. The first group, which consists of 15 students, are students from the digital entrepreneurship course. The course is not held in English, and there is no English lesson given. The second group, which also consist of 15 students, are students from the introductory English course, and the third group, with 15 students, are from the TOEFL itp preparation program; all lesson is performed face-to-face.

3. Result and Discussion

This section focuses on the descriptive analysis of the obtained data in this study. Such analysis was done by using SPSS. Table 1 and 2 sho the descriptive analysis for the pretest and posttest scores of the TOEFL itp in the experimental (treatment 1 and treatment 2) groups and control group of the study.

Table 1. Descriptive statistic result of the pretest TOEFL itp for the three groups

Variable	N	M	SD	SEM
Control	15	374.27	33.251	8.585
Treatment 1	15	350.07	22.745	5.873
Treatment 2	15	355.40	20.117	5.194

The table 1 shows the descriptive statistic result of the pretest of the three variables in the study. The number of students in the control group was 15 and the mean, the standard of deviation and the standard error mean were 374.27, 33.251 and 8.585 respectively. The number of students in the treatment 1 group was 15 and the mean, the standard of deviation and the standard error mean were 350.07, 22.745 and 5.873 respectively. The number of students in the treatment 2 group was 15 and the mean, the standard of deviation and the standard error mean were 355.40, 20.117 and 5.194 respectively.

Table 2. Descriptive statistic result of the posttest TOEFL itp for the three groups

Variable	N	M	SD	SEM
Control	15	390.93	43.457	11.221
Treatment 1	15	387.27	35.204	9.090
Treatment 2	15	436.87	44.912	6.925

The research question targeted the impact of TOEFL preparation on the TOEFL score improvement. In this regards, the mean scores of the students' scores on each of two tests as well as the standard deviations were calculated in order to observe the probable change in students' TOEFL scores before and afer the treatment. Table 2 shows the descriptive statistic of the posttest of the groups in the study. The number of students in the control group was 15 and the mean, the standard of deviation and the standard error mean were 390.93, 43.457 and 11.221 respectively. However, The number of students in the treatment 1 group was 15 and the mean, the standard of deviation and the standard error mean were 387.27, 35.204 and 9.090 respectively. The number of students in the treatment 2 group was 15 and the mean, the standard of deviation and the standard error mean were 436.87, 44.912 and 6.925 respectively.

The study was conducted to examine a hypothesis about the impact of teaching and learning, methodology. In order to identify whether the treatment given to the experimental group had made any significant change within this group and to see if the students in this group had perform significantly differently on the post-test compared with the pretest, the TOEFL itp scores were then compared. The result obtained are summarized in table 3.

Table 3. summarize the one-way ANOVA

	Test of Homogeneity of Variance				ANOVA	
Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	Levene's statistic	Sig.	F	Sig.
Control	16.67	16.299				
Treat 1	37.20	21.598	6.633	.003	19.241	.000
Treat 2	81.47	42.812				

	Group Differences			
Variable	Mean Differences	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval of the difference	
control – Treat 1	20.533*	.020	2.76	38.31

Control – Treat 2	64.800*	.000	33.82	95.78	

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The hypothesis test that if TOEFL scores differ across variables. The ANOVA results indicates that the TOEFL scores of groups differ significantly (F2, 42= 19.241, p < .001)

Since the lavene's statistic is significant, the equal variance was not assumed. To check the individual differences between groups post-hoc comparison were assessed using Dunnet's T3. The test indicates that the mean score for control group (M=16.67, SD=16.299) was significantly different from treatment 1 (M=37.20, SD=21.598) and treatment 2 (M=81.47, SD=42.812). The result indicates that the control group differently significantly from treatment 1 with mean difference at 20.533, the mean different were significant at the .05 level. The result also shows the control group differently significantly from treatment 2 with mean difference at 64.800, the mean different were significant at the .05 level.

The study was also conducted to examine the correlation between the TOEFL Score improvement to students' English performance. Therefore pearson's r-correlation is employed to anlaysed whether the two factors correlated significantly. The results are summarized in table 4.

Table 4. summarize the pearson correlation

		FCE Test
TOEFL diff Score	Pearson correlation	.462
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.083
	N	15

Based on the observation of these correlation coefficients, the statistically significant can be calculated. The Pearson r, the degree of freedom (df), or the number of paired observations (N) minus 2 should be of consideration. A statistically significant Pearson r is equal to or larger than the N – 2 degree of freedom (df), which is 30 – 2 = 28. The degree of freedom, therefore, is 28. of a 2-tailed.

Based on the T distribution of a 2 tail performed with df = 28, an observed Pearson r more than +0.20484 or less than -0.20484 is required to reject the null hypothesis at the 0.05 level. Thus, with the same df = 28, an observed Pearson r more than +0.27633 or less than -0.27633 is required to reject the null hypothesis at the 0.01 level.

The correlation coefficient or Pearson r = 0.653285149 fulfills the value of both +0.20484 and +0.27633, therefore statistically significant at both 0.05 and 0.01 levels. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the TOEFL scores are significantly related to the FCE Cambridge Speaking test. The obtained coefficient (r = 0.653285149) is between +0.30 (weak positive correlation) and +0.80 (strong positive correlation); conclusion can be drawn that high scores on TOEFL moderately mean high scores in the FCE Cambridge Speaking test of the 30 participants examined. The scatterplot of the Z-score shows that the dots do not ideally form a narrow strand near the linear line, but the linear line shows a positive correlation between TOEFL Scores and FCE Cambridge Speaking test scores, the dots form a moderately linear relationship between both observed variables.

The decision rule for assessing if the test is significant (α = .05). If p ≤ .05, the test is significant (there is a significant correlation between TOEFL Preparation Program to Students' Language Performance. If p > .05, the test is not significant (there is no significant correlation between TOEFL Preparation Program to Students' Language Performance. However, the result shows that the p-value = .083; therefore, there is no significant correlation between TOEFL Preparation students' English development.

4. Conclusion

The study concludes that there is significant impact of the TOEFL preparation program to students' scores improvement on at least one of the two treatments of the study. However, there is no significant correlation between the TOEFL preparation program to the improvement of the students' language development.

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