

EXISTENCE ANALYSIS TEST OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND ACADEMIC SETTINGS

(Case Study in the Context of Character Education)

SUHARYANTO H. SORO

Email: suharyantosoro@uninus.ac.id

DIANA MARLIN

Email: dianamarlin_s2adm_19@uninus.ac.id

RD. JENY SUCIPERMATA

Email: rdjennysucipermata_s2adm_19@uninus.ac.id

Abstract

This study aims to identify and find the attitudes and perceptions of students towards the existence of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (hereinafter referred to as TOEFL) and the Academic Achievement Index of students in the perspective of character education. The existence of the TOEFL as a barometer of one's ability to understand English as a universal language. The inability of students to get a value of 500 is one of the failure factors deals with the ability to master English. In Indonesia, the position of English as a foreign language and is a mandatory subject for junior high school, high school and college students (optional for university). This research is a qualitative research with a case study approach. The data in this study are written data and oral data sourced from academic settings. The sample or object of study under study was selected based on purposive sampling. From the sample, the researcher describes things that can be interpreted according to the research objectives. The results of the research showed that the TOEFL test was conducted to determine a person's level of mastery of English as an intercontinental language or a universal language. The organizers apply an administration charge as one of the requirements to be able to take the TOEFL test. In this context, participants perceive that the TOEFL Program has its commercial content, because participants are required to pay for the TOEFL test in accordance with the policies of each institution. Like students or participants, if they take the TOEFL test, they will be charged with different amounts. Similarly, the language center imposes the number of participants. In addition, the TOEFL score has a positive correlation with the student's cumulative achievement index (GPA). In the perspective of character education, based on the analysis of data sourced from observations, it shows that students who study English as an international language have positive characters, namely strong attitudes and principles to study and actualize them in the form of communication interactions both with speakers of the same country and different countries.

Keywords: TOEFL, Education, character, Academic

A. INTRODUCTION

The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). Thus students, and the public people recognize it as a cognitive and performance domain. The existence of the TOEFL as a barometer of one's ability to comprehend it as an English native speaker or a non-English native speaker (in understanding and mastering) English as a universal language.

The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) program has been implemented since 1963. The purpose of this program at that time was only oriented to the interests of the United States government in the context of selecting candidates or candidates for

scholarships to study, such as the Fulbright scholarship program, the Agency for International Development, AMIDEAST, and the Latin American Scholarship Program.

The committee for new student admissions with a number of higher education reaching 2400 in the United States and Canada requires prospective new students to attach a list of TOEFL scores, transcripts of grades, and recommendations as a factor for consideration to be accepted as a student at a college or university.

The TOEFL test program is one of the academic settings aimed at improving students' cognitive competence so that it becomes a barometer of ability to communicate using English as an international language. In general, if a person is fluent in spoken English, he is considered capable of communicating using the correct structure of English.

Communication using English in the perspective of character education is a positive performance to form habits and increase confidence in the ability to communicate or speak English as a universal language. The ability to speak English both spoken and written is considered important as a means of communication with people who have different national languages.

Building the mental courage to practice English with others is a positive thing, because learning a language means learning to practice. Language is a habit, to build a habit you must practice it. This is different from the regional language due to the way it is acquired. English for Indonesians is acquired through learning, while local languages are acquired through a process of assimilation.

The function of language is to convey and express thoughts. Language helps us in analyzing complex facts into simple parts, helps us in forming general concepts or ideas, and shortens the thought process. This is where the value of language universality applies, whether it is a regional language, a national language, or an international language.

Language always occurs in cultural, social, and cognitive contexts. Cultural context relates to the common meaning and view of the world. Social context is concerned with one's self-identification associated with other people who create rules and ways of understanding situations and behavior. Cognitive context is a place to relate statements to past experiences. Understanding how language is used and how it is structured is to some extent influenced by views on how language is related to these various contexts.

Learning English also requires a strong mentality. Mental in this context is a principle or a strong desire to undergo the learning process. Someone who has character will carry out or carry out English learning activities with full responsibility. Thus, any problems related to improving English competence are faced with a mature attitude, namely prioritizing the cognitive domain as a means of solving problems.

Research Question

Based on the description above, the research questions are formulated as follows:

- 1) What is the student's perception of the existence of the TOEFL system?
- 2) Is there a correlation between the TOEFL score and the student's Grade Point Average (GPA)?
- 3) Is there an element of character in getting a high TOEFL score?

Research Objectives

This research aims to:

- 1) Identify students' perceptions of the existence of the TOEFL system.
- 2) Finding the correlation between TOEFL scores and students' cumulative grade point averages.
- 3) Finding elements of character in getting a TOEFL score.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

TOEFL Existence

The TOEFL program is increasingly trending among the academic world, because there is a positive correlation between the TOEFL score (TOEFL score) and one's ability to complete studies at a university. The results of other studies such as that conducted by Anderson (1989) show that there is a positive influence on the application of the TOEFL system with student learning, someone who has the ability to speak English has good achievements in the academic world.

The results of this study strengthen the belief of academics and education practitioners around the world to do the same. This action is not surprising because the facts/data available show that nearly one million prospective students from 180 countries each year enroll in TOEFL testing centers (test centers of TOEFL) spread throughout the world (Sharpe, 2002). Some of them did not pass the TOEFL because they did not have enough ability to understand English and did not understand the system and procedure of the TOEFL test itself.

There are three types of TOEFL tests offered by the Educational Testing Service. Two of them have international standards, namely the Supplemental Paper-Based TOEFL and The Computer-Based TOEFL. While The Institutional TOEFL is used or applies only to the policies of each educational institution or similar agencies (The Institutional TOEFL is used for admission, placement, eligibility, or employment only at the school, university or agency that offers the test).

The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) has a difference in determining the score. The Computer-Based TOEFL has a score range from 0 to 300. While the Supplemental Paper-Based TOEFL and The Institutional TOEFL score ranges from 310 to 677. In the context of education in Indonesia, the TOEFL score can be translated in the form of categorization, for example, someone with a high score TOEFL below 300 is categorized for junior high school level, score 400 for high school level, and score 500 for undergraduate level.

Taking the TOEFL exam or test is also different, such as The Computer-Based TOEFL only allows to take the TOEFL test once a month. For example, if someone takes The Computer-Based TOEFL test in March, they are allowed to take the test in April. While the Supplemental Paper-Based TOEFL and The Institutional TOEFL may take the TOEFL test as often as possible. Likewise the validation period for the three types of TOEFL tests. The Computer-Based TOEFL and The Supplemental Paper-Based TOEFL have a validation period of two years. Meanwhile, The Institutional TOEFL is based on the policies of each institution. The validation period ranges from six months to one year and is recommended to be adjusted to the respective academic calendar.

The Computer-Based TOEFL was first introduced in July 1998 in the United States, Canada, Latin America, Europe, Australia, Africa, the Middle East, and a number of Asian countries. In October 2000, The Computer-Based TOEFL was introduced in all Asian countries, with the exception of the People's Republic of China. In 2003–2004 the PRC just started implementing this program (Sharpe, 2002). For more details can be read in the following explanation.

Type of PBT test (Paper Based Test)

Namely the most widely used tests such as tests and exams in general. This test usually uses paper media with questions and answer sheets provided. The form of the question itself is usually in the form of multiple choice with the material being tested, such as Listening, Reading and Structure. Meanwhile, the time for this test is usually given for approximately 3 hours with a test score of 310 – 667.

Types of CBT (Computer Based Test) test

Regarding what is TOEFL CBT itself, it is an English language proficiency test which is usually done using computer media. In practice, participants are asked to solve several questions in the form of Reading, Structure, Listening and Writing with the application media provided on the computer. To do this test requires full accuracy and precision because you cannot change the answers that have been previously selected. This test score ranges from 30 – 300.

Type of test IBT (Internet Based Test)

Many people refer to the IBT test as a new generation of CBT tests which are now starting to be replaced. The difference from this IBT test is generally done with computer support media and stable internet network access. In this test, you are asked to work on questions

consisting of Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking with an assessment score ranging from 0 – 120 and a time of 4 – 5 hours. For information, this IBT test is quite expensive, around Rp. 2 million more.

Type of test ITP (Internet Based Test)

What is TOEFL ITP? Well, this type of TOEFL is a test held by a trusted university or language institution with the questions given following international standards. This test is generally not recognized internationally because the certificate is only valid domestically and in some Asian countries.

1. Listening Comprehension. Train the ability to listen to conversations or short English speeches.
2. Structure & Written Expression. Test the ability to understand grammar and expressions commonly used in everyday life.
3. Reading Comprehension. Test the ability in terms of understanding various types of scientific reading such as topics, main ideas, reading content and so on.
4. Test of Written English. Practice skills in writing English essays on the given topic.

The goal of the TOEFL is to measure the English proficiency of international students whose native language is not English. Loughheed (1997) used the term **PSRA** Strategy. He said as follows:

An important strategy for reading comprehension is learning to approach a passage in an organized way. ***First make a prediction about the passage, then Scan it, next Read it, and finally answer the question.***

Prediction

Learning how to make predictions about what you are going to read before you read will help you establish a context for understanding the passage. This will improve your reading score. Before you begin to read one of the reading passages, you should first look at the introduction line. In the introduction line, you will learn how many questions there are and what kind of reading passage it is. The look of the reading passage will also give you a clue: a sport will look like a sport, a phone message like a phone message, and a learning activity like learning activity, etc. This will help you predict the passage is about.

Scan

When we can scan the passage, we look for the key words. You may find the exact words, but you might find words with similar meanings. Look first for the key words from the question. When you find the answer option key words, see if the words answer the question. Try to answer the question in your head, not on the answer sheet.

Read

You must read the passage as well, but when you read, read quickly. Read to confirm your predictions. You should not make any mark on your answer sheet until you have made a prediction based on all of the questions, scanned the passage looking for key words, answered the questions in your head, and read the passage to confirm your answer choices. The answer to the first question is found in the first part of the reading passage. The answer to the second question is found in the next part and so on. The questions follow the sequence of the passage.

Answer

Now you ready to mark your answer sheet. Answer the easy questions first. If you don't know an answer, scan the passage again, look for the key words, read parts of the passage. If you still don't know, guess.

Vocabulary Activation

When quickly skimming through the text, what does the text seem to concern? Does the layout (design) of the text give any clues? Does the publication or type of book give any clues to what the text might be about? Which words can you think of that belong to this vocabulary category? ***Make logical guesses about the meaning of the words in the following paragraph. Use the following approaches*** (the way to understand the sentences meaning).

- 1) Try to determine what makes the sentences difficult?
- 2) If the sentence is very long, try to break up into smaller parts.
- 3) Understand the view of point, is it about economic, political, social, cultural, academic setting; and
- 4) Writer's aim, is it information or suggestion.

Character building

In Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System in Article 1 paragraph (1) it is stated that education is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and learning process so that students actively develop their potential to have religious spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and skills needed by himself, society, nation and state.

The description above explains the meaning of education, then so that we understand the meaning of character education, we must first know the meaning of character. Character is defined as the affective domain that is attached to a person in the form of principles and determination that are actualized in real life as intelligent and moral human beings.

Character can be understood as a personality embodied in the form of permanent traits. In other words, character is a set of values that have become a habit of life so that it

becomes a permanent trait in a person, for example hard work, never give up, honest, simple, and others.

In the Indonesian Dictionary the word 'character' is defined as character, psychological traits, morals or character that distinguishes one person from another, and character. The Director General of Islamic Education at the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia (2010) suggests that character can be defined as the totality of personal characteristics that are inherent and identifiable in individual behavior that is unique, in the sense that these characteristics specifically distinguish one individual from another. From this statement it can be said that character is closely related to a person's personality.

Based on the definitions that have been mentioned there are differences in point of view that causes differences in the definition. However, if you look at the essence of these definitions, there are similarities that character is about something that is in a person, which makes that person characterized.

Referring to various understandings and definitions of education and character, it can simply be interpreted that character education is a conscious effort made by a person or group of people (educators) to internalize character values in another person (students) as enlightenment so that students know, think and act morally in every situation. Many experts have expressed their opinions about character education, including Lickona who defines character education as a genuine effort to help someone understand, care and act on the basis of ethical values.

Academic Setting

In the academic field, especially the world of lectures, the academic achievement index, either the semester achievement index or the cumulative achievement index, can be one of the barometers or indicators of achievement and success in the learning process. This also reflects the different learning styles of students from one another, so that the final results of each student are also the same and some are different.

Each university has its own vision and mission in running higher education organizations, both universities and private. In general, the vision and mission depend on the label attached to the college. An example of an Islamic-based university is, of course, the vision and mission of creating undergraduate graduates who have a strong Islamic spirit, both in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. So in essence, universities provide lecture material to shape the character of undergraduate graduates.

Character education contains three main elements, namely knowing the good (knowing the good), loving the good (desiring the good), and doing the good (doing the good). People who have character as a person's natural nature in responding to situations morally are manifested in real actions through good behavior, honesty, responsibility, respect for others and other noble characters. The three things are beautifully formulated: knowing, loving, and acting the good. According to him, the success of character

education begins with understanding good character, loving him, and implementing or imitating that good character.

C. RESEARCH METHOD

This research includes a qualitative research paradigm with a case study approach. The data in this study are written data and oral data sourced from academic settings. In terms of social dominance, this data is included in the academic domain (academic domain). The sample or object of study under study was selected based on purposive sampling.

The sample in this study was the seventh semester students. The method used to obtain data is the method of observation and interviews with students who have a TOEFL score above 400.

The selected samples were used as data sources and used in accordance with the objectives of this study. In other words, from the sample, the researcher describes things that can be interpreted according to the rules of the case study approach. The number of samples in this study was 20 students spread from different majors. Researchers did not conduct in-depth interviews with all samples.

The sample or respondents who are used as the object of the interview are those who are selected based on the cumulative achievement index score of 3.10 and above. Interviews were conducted face-to-face and via cellphone. Face-to-face interviews were conducted on campus and took approximately 15 minutes for one respondent.

D. RESEARCH RESULTS

Students basically have different perceptions about the existence of TOEFL in a university. These perceptions are related to interests and attitudes towards the existence of English which is different from Indonesian. Students know the purpose of tertiary institutions applying the TOEFL system as a requirement for thesis, thesis, and dissertation trials. The purpose of the TOEFL test is to find out comprehensive English skills, both spoken and written, in the form of listening skills, reading skills, writing skills, and structure/vocabulary skills.

This component of language skills is directly related to communication interactions in the field when someone has a face-to-face dialogue. Monologues are also required to have the ability to compose good and correct words and sentences so that they can be understood by listeners. Therefore, students realize that the orientation of the TOEFL test is to prove their competence in mastering English. TOEFL test results are expressed in the form of a TOEFL certificate.

“TOEFL has the nuances of science and knowledge contents because most of the literature is written in English. So mastering English means being able to understand the knowledge written by the author in English”.

The data above shows or shows that the TOEFL with science (knowledge written in English) has a positive correlation, like two sides of a coin. In other words, someone who has knowledge of TOEFL can understand English text well. Awareness of understanding the existence of English in the form of English books encourages someone to have a positive attitude to master the English language.

Thus a person can understand and get additional knowledge sourced from English books. A person's attitude and perception of English is also very influential. If attitudes and perceptions are manifested in the form of feeling happy or in love with English, the person concerned will learn and work on it with high enthusiasm. Conversely, if a person's attitude and perception of English is negative, then the person concerned will stay away and feel uninteresting to learn.

This certainly affects the TOEFL score.

"I'm not afraid or worried about the TOEFL test because as students any form of test or exam must be faced with pleasure, but those who have an attitude like me are only a few, most students are afraid when faced with the TOEFL test".

Honestly, I have to admit that students' attitudes and perceptions towards the TOEFL test are varied, as in the data above, some are happy, some are not happy, and some are not happy (hate English). This mostly happens to students who are not majoring in English (Non English Department Students).

A person learns English for various reasons. In general, the reason someone learns English is to get a scholarship to study abroad by having a high TOEFL score expressed in the form of a TOEFL certificate. Meanwhile, for those who don't want to learn English because they don't like it, the reading is different and the meaning is different. An example of spelling one is read as wan, even though the letter {o} is read {w}.

From the perspective of character education, attitudes and perceptions as described above, namely attitudes that are not happy with English can be understood as part of a person's diversity. When the TOEFL test is forced on them, the answers to the TOEFL exam questions are answered as is by guessing without being based on knowledge of the English language. This statement is based on the results of observations and interviews with those who have a low TOEFL score.

"Many people think that the TOEFL test is legal commercial or contains commercial elements and I agree with this assumption".

The TOEFL test is carried out to determine a person's level of mastery of English as an intercontinental language or a universal language. The organizers apply an administration charge as one of the requirements to be able to take the TOEFL test. In this context, participants perceive that the TOEFL Program has its commercial content, because participants are required to pay for the TOEFL test in accordance with the policies of each institution.

For example, students taking the TOEFL test are subject to a fee, the amount of which varies according to the policies of each campus. The TOEFL test fee starts from IDR 50,000 to IDR 350,000 per participant, with a minimum requirement of 5 participants for one test.

The TOEFL score has a positive correlation with the student's Grade Point Average (GPA), as shown in the following data below.

	GPA	score TOEFL
Responden #1	2.88	424
Responden #2	2.86	420
Responden #3	2.95	426
Responden #4	3.03	430
Responden #5	3.40	473
Responden #6	3, 28	437
Responden #7	3, 42	476
Responden #8	3, 08	438
Responden #9	3, 24	466
Responden #10	3, 22	450
Responden #11	2, 99	412
Responden #12	2, 88	410
Responden #13	2, 83	412
Responden #14	2, 85	418
Responden #15	3.04	446
Responden #16	2, 84	412
Responden #17	3.08	443
Responden #18	3.17	448
Responden #19	3, 29	453
Responden #20	3.04	450

The data above shows that students with a TOEFL score of 430 and above have a GPA of 3.0 and above as well. So it can be said that there is a correlation between the TOEFL score and the student's Grade Point Average. There are many factors that cause students not to achieve a high TOEFL score, one of which is the students' dislike of English. It is necessary to conduct further research specifically to those students majoring in education and English literature. So it can be understood that a person's ability to master English both spoken and written is a form of positive character in order to increase knowledge to achieve success in the life of the world.

Academically, if a student takes the TOEFL test, then the person concerned (1) shows or measures his cognitive ability in mastering English. (2) if the student achieves a TOEFL score in accordance with the written requirements by the tertiary institution, then the student concerned can continue the trial of theses, theses, and dissertations, even the TOEFL certificate can be used for other purposes, such as to get a scholarship to a higher level or to apply jobs that require a TOEFL score. (3) For self-development of the environment both domestically and abroad, culturally and socially.

E. CONCLUSION

The TOEFL test program is basically a cognitive activity involving many factors, both internal and external. Internal factors such as English competence possessed/mastered by students. External factors are related to the attitudes and mental conditions experienced by students, such as displeasure with English.

The TOEFL score can indicate the level of student mastery of the lecture material studied in an academic setting through the cumulative achievement index (GPA). Students who have a TOEFL score above 450 have a good Grade Point Average (GPA). So there is a positive correlation between the TOEFL score and the Grade Point Average.

Someone with a high TOEFL score has a positive character towards the existence of English as a universal language. This positive attitude and perception can be a valuable asset in order to achieve success in a career (work).

The implementation/implementation of the TOEFL system has a positive impact on an educational institution, because it can encourage students to learn English. TOEFL scores can be used as stipulation to be able to take part in thesis trials for undergraduate students, theses for master's students, and dissertations for doctoral students. A minimum TOEFL score for each level of education needs to be done. It aims to improve and maximize students' ability to master English, both spoken and written.

The presence of a dislike of English has an impact on obtaining a low TOEFL score. This is only one of the many factors that cause students not to get a maximum TOEFL score. On the other hand, students who like English and practice it in communication interactions, both oral and written, get a good TOEFL score. In other words, students who always practice English regularly, including practicing on TOEFL questions, are sure to get a high TOEFL score. From the point of view of character education, the two different attitudes as previously described each get different results and that is normal.

References

- ❖ Suharyanto H.Soro. (2019a). The Existence of Elopement in Perspective Value Education (Study of Penomenology in the Context of Marriage of the Bima Society).1934,7111–7121.<https://www.bircu-journal.com/index.php/birci/article/view/2556>
- ❖ 2. Suharyanto H.Soro. (2019b). Jurnal Pendidikan Progresif Identifying Lecturer – Student Interaction and Preference Toward Four English Skills. 9(2), 156–162. <https://doi.org/10.23960/jpp.v9.i2.2019>

- ❖ 3. Suharyanto H.Soro. (2019c). The Correlation between Lecturer's Performance and the Motivation of Students in Learning English Subject. *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology*, 4(5), 400–405. www.ijisrt.com400
- ❖ 4. Suharyanto H.Soro. (2021). Value Education In The Form Of The Bima Dompu Community Respects. <https://doi.org/10.30868/ei.v10i02.1826>
- ❖ Suharyanto H. Soro. (2018). Menyiasiati Kegagalan Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa Asing. *Riksa Bahasa: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra, dan Pembelajarannya*. Vol. 4 No. 2. 2018.
- ❖ Suharyanto H. Soro (2019). English Vocabulary in the Mind of Student. *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology*. Vol. 4 No 8 Tahun 2019.
- ❖ Suharyanto H. Soro (2016). *The Best Way to Learn English*. Penerbit CV. Mahaqul Setia Rhejeqi.
- ❖ Alderson, J. C. (1989). TOEFL preparation courses: A study of washback. *Language Testing*, 13, 280.
- ❖ Loughheed, Lin (1997). *How to Prepare for the TOEIC Test*. Penerbit: Binarupa Aksara. Jakarta.
- ❖ Mulyasa, E. (2018). *Manajemen Pendidikan Karakter*. Jakarta: Bumi Aksara
- ❖ Sharpe J. Pamela. 2002. *How to Prepare for the TOEFL*, 10th Edition. Binarupa Aksara.
- ❖ <https://edu2review.id/>