

THE STUDENTS' NEED ANALYSIS TO DEVELOP TEACHING AND LEARNING MATERIALS OF ENGLISH PROFICIENCY TEST

Tita Ratna Wulandari

titawulandari@mail.binadarma.ac.id

Universitas Bina Darma

Jalan Jenderal Ahmad Yani No. 3, Plaju, Palembang, 30264

Abstract: Developing teaching and learning materials on English proficiency test is an essential attempt to help people successfully taking the test. This study focused on Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) which is really recognized and acceptable in Indonesia. In fact, TOEFL is mostly used by Indonesian Government Agencies and private companies as one of their employees' recruitment standards, for example, the recruitment of public servant in State Ministry of Women Empowerment and Child Protection in 2014 requires the applicants to have a certificate of 450-TOEFL score. This study was only a first stage (i.e. need analysis) of future research (i.e. research and development stages) which followed the procedures of Dick and Carey's instructional design. Therefore, this initial study was only aimed to collect the data of test takers' needs for their learning in order to help writers to the next stage of R&D procedures. At the initial level, writer had done test for twice and was considered as tryout cycle 1 and 2. The test resulted the average score for 358 and 365. This study was done by distributing questionnaire for 20 samples (senior high school students). At the end, the results of questionnaire distributed showed that there were eleven instructional goals which the students want to reach, based on the order of frequency improving their skill on analyzing grammar became the most wanted goal, and the last expected goal was improving their skill on listening to short dialog. In addition, this research also figured out three ways that the candidate expect during the process on achieving the instructional goals targeted.

Keywords: *English Proficiency Test, Instructional Design, and Learning Materials.*

INTRODUCTION

Education is the only key for a nation to develop. Therefore, Indonesian Government issued a program of 12-year compulsory education for its people where government encourages people to study starting from primary schools to high schools. During the program, students are free from school fee and are given grants for their school needs. At schools, students are taught how to read, write, speak, listen, count, do sport and so on. One of the student's favorite lessons is language subject, especially Bahasa Indonesia. But, this feeling of like would not be applied to English. In general, students feel that English is nightmare.

However, it is agreed that language role is as a media for someone to express and communicate their feeling. In general, language is defined as a means of communication for human to deliver their ideas, thoughts, and opinions in daily lives. There are approximately 6000 types of human language in this world (Anderson, 2004). For example, *Indonesia* has Bahasa Indonesia, Japan has Japanese, China has Chinese, and England has English. Of course, these language diversities will automatically lead to linguistics differences in every country such as alphabets, pronunciation, and structure.

Government of Indonesia addresses English as a foreign language which must be mastered by Indonesian. Many efforts and policies have already issued to support English lesson for society started from primary school up to universities. For example, government policy about learning and teaching English as local content subject in primary school and English is tested in final exam for high schools. In addition, government agency through its training centers, such as *widiaiswara* and LPMP, always provide students and teachers training on improving English skills. Unfortunately, empowerment given by government even from policy or government agency has not achieved to maximum result.

Stakeholders, government institutions, and even universities have targeted high standard score of TOEFL to recruit employees and students. For instance, Public Servant Recruitment for Women Empowerment and Children Protection Ministry (*Kementerian Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Perlindungan Anak, KPPAI*) target their candidate to have at least 450 score as it is published on <http://panselnas.menpan.go.id/>. In addition, Indonesian State Owned Enterprises, such as PT. Pertamina, set even higher score for English proficiency test, TOEFL PBT (450)/IBT (45)/ IELTS (5.5)/TOEIC (550). This standard score could be seen on <http://www.pertamina.com/company-profile/karir/peluang-karir/job-fair-pertamina/>. Besides, universities or scholarship foundation also set for certain English comprehension test. Of course the standard will be different from one country to another country, one scholarship to another scholarship, and/or from one university to another university. However, one thing for sure is that the target score will not be below 500. Therefore, most students would have their TOEFL preparation class before having a test.

Based on his own experience, Kim (2010) stated that learning in a TOEFL Preparation class only concerned to target scores without concerning to language ability or skill. Is this situation applied in Indonesia?. Besides, Martono (2013) agreed that students' motivation in learning foreign language has not yet optimized and this might cause low scores gotten in 2008-2010. This is implied that teaching and learning process in classroom, especially test preparation class, gives much more contribution to students' achievement on score progress. However, this also contributes to the students' stagnancies if the teaching and learning process is done monotonously. Having good resources of learning might encourage the students' motivation and achievement. And, the writer agreed that handbook/book/teaching and learning material which suit to the students' need would be very beneficial media to fix the students' existing problems.

Therefore, the writer is interested in doing a research and development of teaching and learning materials for English Proficiency Test classroom preparation

material. The writer has met several TOEFL test takers with different background. Some of them are employees, university students, and senior high school students. The participants are mostly employees or undergraduate students who want to apply scholarship. Unfortunately, even if they have taken the test for twice or three times, the result of their TOEFL score did not reach the target. In contrast, they said that they have prepared themselves by joining a preparation class, self-study, trying out the TOEFL software, and so on.

This encouraged the writer to do prior investigation about the students' entry level. The writer tested the students twice with the same set of questions for TOEFL like which were considered as tryout cycle 1 and 2. Between the time cycles, the students were given exercises for TOEFL about one hundred hours learning time. Unfortunately, the result of the first and second cycles did not really meet the qualification. The average score for first cycle was 358 and the average score for second cycle was 365. There was no significance improvement of TOEFL score for the students since it was only 7 point difference. This very little improvement might be caused the students were already familiar to some questions due to the same set of questions were given to them for the two cycles. Based on the tryout results and reasons, the writer tried to build a material for TOEFL class preparation which would really match to the students' needs and problems. And, this material development must be started from the early stage of education where English Proficiency Test has been acknowledged that is senior high school level. It would hopefully help senior high school students to face their undergraduate program or job career. At the end, this material development study entitled "The Students' Need Analysis to Develop Teaching and Learning Materials for English Proficiency Test".

METHOD

The writer modified the instructional design for this research and development based on Dick and Carey's instructional design (1985, P. 5-6) and Borg and Gall cited in Abdullah, Herpatiwi, and Tarkono's (2013) designs. The design would be described as follows: (1) need analysis, (2) entry behavior analysis, (3) setting the instructional goals, (4) material design, (5) small group tryout 1, (6) first revision, (7) small group tryout 2, (8) second revision, (9) large group tryout 3, (10) third revision, (11) operating product revision, (12) final product and publishing.

This initial study was still in the first step of the design, identifying an instructional goal. It meant that the writer needs to do need assessment to be able to get list of goals. To deal with the need assessment process on this study, the writer made use of questionnaires. The questionnaire was divided into four areas where part one was talking about the students' general English understanding, part two was talking about the students' problems in English, part three was talking about students' TOEFL background knowledge, and part four was talking about students' needs on TOEFL preparation class. This study descriptively described the result of the questionnaire and analyzed the questionnaire results. All the data were taken from senior high school number 9 Palembang which is located at Kertapati, Palembang, South Sumatera, Indonesia.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the result of survey, we can interpret that the students' general English understanding was not in advanced level since most of the survey results showed that most students can only comprehend some of message in communication. For students' problems in English, the survey results showed that most of students' skills fell into not well condition. It sends the idea that most students have problems on their English skills such as listening (to short dialog, long dialog, and lecture), structure analysis (basic grammar, part of speech, and tenses), and reading (main idea, synonym, antonym, and referent). Therefore, instructors of TOEFL preparation class need to set the instruction for those areas.

Most of students have taken TOEFL test. It meant that they can figure out the format of the test. However, the students felt that they still that taking the test once or twice could not really help them to be familiar to TOEFL. Therefore, all students agreed that they need a class of preparation to help them. Since there were three parts of TOEFL (listening, structure, and reading), the students agreed that listening session needs to have extra treatment compared to structure and reading. Based on the idea of need assessments for TOEFL preparation class, the instruction or material development should have more focus on exercises of new grammar, lectures, new vocabularies, scanning main idea, predicting antonym and synonym, and scanning referent. During the teaching process, students required teacher to correct their mistakes on grammar, diction, and pronunciation. And, one thing for sure, the class should be done in bilingual system.

The instructional goals which can be targeted, based on the order of urgency, for TOEFL preparation class, especially materials development based on need analysis done were (1) students improve their understanding for tenses analysis, (2) students improve their listening skill for long talk, (3) students improve their reading skill for identifying main idea, (4) students know how to identify referent in a text, (5) students improve their understanding for English part of speech, (6) students improve their reading skill for identifying synonym of word, (7) students improve their reading skill for identifying antonym of word, (8) students improve listening skill for lecture, (9) students improve their comprehension on English information, (10) students improve their understanding on basic English grammar, and (11) students improve their listening skill for short dialog. Not only the goal but also the teaching techniques expected by the students during the class were identified as something important to know. They were (1) giving more exercises of new grammar, new vocabularies, scanning main idea, scanning referent, predicting the antonym and synonym of word, (2) correcting mistakes exist especially grammar, diction, and pronunciation, and (3) using bilingual system.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The students obviously need to be helped regarding their TOEFL need and background knowledge, besides their TOEFL score result from tryout. There were eleven instructional goals which can be set based on the survey result obtained. Based on

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its urgency, it showed that the teaching and learning materials design must focus on giving more extra attention to grammar analysis lesson.

Moreover, dealing with the teaching techniques, it was found that there were several ideas gotten for teaching and learning instruction during the class by seeing the survey result. The main idea is that the classroom management must not neglect extra exercises for students. However, it should be remembered that the classroom management must be away from monotonous activity in order to motivate students. It was suggested for teachers or course designer to deal with these findings in order to design good materials for students who join the TOEFL preparation class. Or, they can do their own need analysis in order to have better preparation for course designed.

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