# Tutor's Strategies in Teaching TOEFL to Dompu Scholarship Hunter Community

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**Abstract.** Test of English as a foreign language (TOEFL) is a test instrument to measure an individual skill level to English proficiency. Today, TOEFL is studied by almost students in Indonesia at the university level. The study aims to find out; (1) how are the tutor's strategies in teaching TOEFL to Dompu Scholarship Hunter Community, (2) what are the tutor's obstacles in teaching TOEFL to Dompu Scholarship Hunter Community, and (3) how are the tutor's efforts in solve the obstacles in teaching TOEFL to Dompu Scholarships Hunter Community. The research method was a qualitative research method with a qualitative descriptive approach. The data collection technique used structured interviews with three tutors. The findings were: (1) the tutor's strategies were direct-learning, indirect learning, interactive learning, and independent learning, (2) inadequate time of learning per meeting, different basic abilities of students, and late distribution of TOEFL modules, (3) tutors provide TOEFL ebooks and additional assignments outside of class, and insert general material in each topic discussion.

**Keywords:** teaching strategy, toefl, tutor

## 1. Introduction

TOEFL stands for Test of English as a Foreign Language. Today, TOEFL become mandatory requirements for students who wants to continue studying either in abroad or universities in Indonesia. Moreover, master and doctoral programs in Indonesia also require a certain TOEFL score. Nowdays, TOEFL is a quite familiar for students. Technological advances and policy changes made the TOEFL play an important role in higher education institutions (Hayati & Kurniawan, 2022; Roza, 2020).

In Indonesia, almost all universities require students to have a TOEFL certificate when they are about to graduate (Hampp, Kumayas, & Lengkoan, 2021; Wibowo, 2020; Zalha, Alfiatunnur, & Kamil, 2020). However, each university has different policies on the score of TOEFL. Thus, it is normal if TOEFL has an important role for students who wants to continue studies whether have scholarships or not, both abroad and Indonesia.

The policy of TOEFL requirement for scholarship applicants and graduation is not followed by increasing the English language skills of scholarship applicants and students. Maruf, Rahmawati, Siswantara, & Murwantono, (2020) showed the level of English proficiency in Indonesia is still low. Although, the learning motivation is high (Nurhayati, Hendrawaty, & Angkarini, 2013).

The success of studying TOEFL could be viewed from two aspects, namely tutor and participants or students. The tutor aspects include teaching experience, teaching competence, media, materials, teaching methods, and strategies. Meanwhile, the student aspects consist of learning motivation, learning interest, and basic knowledge (Bulan, Suryaman, & Mardiah, 2020). These aspects are believed as can improve learning achievement, especially in terms of studying TOEFL.

Learning strategy is an action plan or a series of activities, including the methods and resources, as well as the strengths in learning (Zainiyati, 2016). The definition of Zainiyati related to the preparation of a strategy. And, the strategies aims to achieve certain goals. Means, the purpose of all strategy planning decisions is the achievement of goals (Purwati, Mardhiah, Nurhasanah, & Ramli, 2022). Thus, the effort – starting from the preparation of learning steps, use various facilities and learning resources - use to achieve the goals. In short, it needs to formulate clear goals before determine a strategy because goals are the core of a strategy implementation (Zainiyati, 2016).

There is a community called Dompu Scholarship Hunter Community (DSHC) in Dompu Regency. This community builds by young people with a dream to have a scholarship for their education. Interviews with the chief of the DSHC found that most of the DSHC members are fresh graduates. They want to continue their studies at a higher level of education. But, they are faced with a TOEFL certificate with a certain minimum score as the requirement to register at the scholarship granting institution. They have taken the TOEFL test at their campuses but get a low score. The main reason is that they never attended TOEFL training before.

Currently, most of the DSHC members have attended TOEFL training and scholarship assistance, organized by the community service team at STKIP Yapis Dompu. Then, the article tried to find out the tutor's strategies in teaching TOEFL to dompu scholarship hunter community. The study aims to find out; (1) how are the tutor's strategies in teaching TOEFL to Dompu Scholarship Hunter Community, (2) what are the tutor's obstacles in teaching TOEFL to Dompu Scholarship Hunter Community, and (3) how are the tutor's efforts in solve the obstacles in teaching TOEFL to Dompu Scholarships Hunter Community.

## 2. Method

The research method used in this research is the study of the narrative inquiry. Narrative inquiry is a research method that used to describe individual and social experiences that engage and relive the experience through a series of words. This is in line with Bryman (2016) that defines that narrative research is a way to understand experiences by reliving and telling return to the stories of experiences that shape people's lives, good individual and social.

Three tutors were recruited to be participants in the study. A purposive sampling technique was used to select the participants with determined criteria. The concept is in line with (Creswell, 2014; Flick, 2014) that the purposive sampling technique is a technique in which the selection of participants is based on the researcher.

The data collection technique used structured interviews with three tutors. Creswell (2014) defines a structured interview technique as a technique in which researchers have prepared structured questions to collect the data. The researcher prepared several questions, including how are the tutor's strategies in teaching TOEFL, what are the tutor's obstacles in teaching TOEFL, and how are the tutor's efforts to solve the obstacles.

## 3. Result and Discussion

This section discusses the research findings. This finding is the results of interviews with three tutors (A, I, and R). Tutors provide answers by providing arguments based on their experiences in teaching TOEFL. According to (Flick, 2014), qualitative research allows participants to state their perspectives through experiences. To answer the research objectives, the article presents the tutor's strategies, the tutor's obstacles, and the tutor's efforts to solve obstacles in teaching TOEFL to Dompu Scholarships Hunter Community.

**Table 1.** The result of the tutors interview

| Tutor's initial | Tutor's teaching strategies | Tutor's obstacles | Tutor's efforts |
|---|---|---|---|
| A | Direct learning strategies, Indirect learning strategies, Independent learning strategies | Lack of TOEFL learning time per meeting, Uneven student initial abilities, Late distribution of TOEFL modules | Tutors provide additional assignments outside of class, Tutors insert general material in each topic discussion, Tutors give TOEFL ebook to participants |
| I | Direct learning strategies, Indirect learning strategies, Interactive learning strategies | Uneven student initial abilities, Late distribution of TOEFL modules | tutors insert general material in each topic discussion, Tutors give TOEFL ebook to participants |
| R | Independent learning strategies, Direct learning strategies | lack of TOEFL learning time per meeting, Uneven student initial abilities | Tutors provide additional assignments outside of class, Tutors insert general material in each topic discussion |

### 3.1. The tutor's strategies in teaching TOEFL to Dompu Scholarship Hunter Community

Based on the findings of the tutor's strategies, four strategies commonly used by tutors in teaching TOEFL, such as direct learning, indirect learning, interactive learning, and independent learning. This finding is the results of interviews with three tutors in teaching TOEFL to Dompu scholarship hunter community (DSHC).

Direct learning strategies aim to increase knowledge and skills. This strategy is performed by presenting TOEFL material in stages on one particular material, referring to modules to achieve learning objectives. Delivering material proses begins with

conveying a definition, concept, definition, and formula. In studying TOEFL, the tutor must explain certain material or expertise with a definition, concept, and definition. After that, it is followed by formulas, theories, and examples. Referring to the opinion of Zainiyati (2016) that direct learning strategies require guidance, information, and concepts from teachers or tutors.

Indirect learning strategies are performed by activating students by providing opportunities to express their understanding of learning outcomes. This strategy is student-centered. Sumantri (2014) states that indirect learning strategies encourage student interest and curiosity, create alternative problem solving, and encourage creativity and student understanding in answering questions.

Interactive learning strategies are performed through active interactions with participants. This strategy emphasizes discussion and sharing between tutors and participants regarding material, answering the question, and problem-solving in building alternative answers. Strategy is a way of delivering material carried out by teachers or tutors in a learning activity. According to Wang (2019), there must be a balanced interaction between tutors and participants in each learning. Thus, the interactive learning strategy must place participants as discussion and sharing partners to build their knowledge and skills in answering TOEFL questions.

The independent learning strategy is carried out by providing learning opportunities outside the classroom but feeling at home. Participants are given additional questions to train them in independent learning. In addition, tutors also provide independent learning assistance such as studying with the Kahoot application outside of official lesson hours. It aims to solve the inadequate time-learning. Khobir and Qonaatun (2020) stated that active and independent learning can build the nature of the participants' initiative in learning, independence, and self-improvement.

### 3.2. The tutor's obstacles in teaching TOEFL to Dompu Scholarship Hunter Community

Based on the findings on the tutor's obstacles in teaching TOEFL to Dompu Scholarship Hunter Community (DSHC), found inadequate TOEFL learning time at each meeting, different students' basic abilities, and late distribution of TOEFL modules. These obstacles were stated by the tutor during the interview. Interviews were conducted with three tutors who taught TOEFL at DSHC at different times.

Inadequate time for learning is the first obstacle. Roza (2020) states that the time duration can interfere with the learning design designed by the tutor, even if the tutor has designed learning materials and learning strategies for 90 minutes, it is still inadequate. The condition is caused by the dynamics in the class, such as active students asking questions and the content of the material itself. Then, the tutor gave additional assignments and questions outside of class hours to anticipate and solve the obstacle. Moreover, the different basic abilities of participants become a second obstacle. In recruiting the participant, it used a placement test where the participants are heterogeneous on English language skills, which then are analyzed based on the results of the TOEFL prediction score. The last obstacle is the late distribution of the TOEFL

module. The obstacle occurred because of a technical problem, where the photocopying service did not finish the photocopy on time. Of course, it will impact the distribution of modules to participants.

### 3.3. The tutor's efforts in overcoming the obstacles in teaching TOEFL to Dompu Scholarships Hunter Community

Based on the finding, it found three efforts on the tutor's efforts in overcoming the obstacles in teaching TOEFL to Dompu Scholarship Hunter Community. First, the tutor gives additional assignments outside the classroom. Second, the tutor inserts general material in each topic discussion. And, the tutor gives TOEFL ebook. Several ways are taken to give additional assignments, such as giving questions to be answered at home, providing a youtube link for independent learning, and motivating participants to be serious in learning.

Also, the tutor inserts general material in each discussion of the topic. The general material is believed as can stimulate the understanding of participants. And, the tutors give the TOEFL ebook to the participants.

## 4. Conclusion

Based on the discussion section, the article concludes that tutors used various strategies in teaching TOEFL to participants. These strategies include direct learning strategies, indirect learning strategies, interactive learning strategies, and independent learning strategies. These strategies are planned efforts by tutors to achieve the learning goals. However, there are obstacles and solutions performed by the tutor. For example, the tutor inserts general English material in each topic discussion and the tutor gives the TOEFL ebook to the participants.

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