

## **TECHNIQUES FOR TEACHING TOEFL FOR THE POSTGRADUATE PROGRAM STUDENTS OF IAIN PONOROGO**

**Ari Amnan**

Master of English Education, Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta

Email: arirocker28@gmail.com

### ***Abstract***

*Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) is an English proficiency test of language skill which is as the most well-liked and followed by people in the world. Postgraduate program of State Islamic Institute (IAIN) of Ponorogo Issued a policy which obligates the students to take language proficiency test (TOEFL) as one of obligatory requirements to pass the thesis examination. The kind of this research is descriptive qualitative. The result of the research shows that Techniques used by tutors in the TOEFL preparation class are Drill, Warm-up, Dialogue/Narrative presentation, discussion, and checking. The use of those techniques is to help students in understanding the materials. The existence of TOEFL preparation class is very important. Its role as the bridge for students makes it strategic in accompanying students to get the target of score.*

***Keywords:*** TOEFL Preparation, Test, Techniques, Teaching.

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

According to Crystal (1997) cited in (Sharifian, 2015) told that people preferred to use English today than other language all over the world. It makes English as the international language. Approximates of the amount of English language user are unsure. Possibly 380 million people use English as a first language; on the contrary more than a billion people utilize it as a second language, mainly to speak with other second language users with them who do not share their cultural and linguistic background.

As international language, English language spread well around the world. It makes the world globalised, and unavoidable. There is much development of knowledge's of subjects such as mathematic, physic, chemist, pharmacy, history, and many more subjects that use English before transformed and translated into vernacular language. Therefore, English language can be concluded as lingua franca in science developing.

English as international language has central role for academic field. Nowadays, Test of English as A Foreign Language (TOEFL) has become a trend in the universities. Some universities in Indonesia, both private and state, relate TOEFL score as one of the requirements to pass thesis examination; additionally, the importance of English in higher education is shown by the existence of English subjects.

Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) is an English proficiency test of language skill which is as the most well-liked and followed by people in the world. Based on Sharpe (Iis kurnia Nurhayati, 2014: 2), about 180 million students in the world who has joined TOEFL. Since 1963, TOEFL test has been be used by government agencies, universities, and

scholarship agencies to conduct the tests. Students and public recognize this test as a cognitive and organizational instrument. The TOEFL's existence is considered as an indicator of a person's ability, whether native speakers or non-English native speakers in understanding and mastering English well. Even several universities have required Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) as a completion in entrance test for applicants with certain score in order to be accepted.

Postgraduate program of State Islamic Institute (IAIN) of Ponorogo Issued a policy which obligates the students to take language proficiency tests; Test of Arabic as a Foreign Language (TOAFL) and Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) with score 450 shown by certificate issued by language development center, as one of obligatory requirements to pass the thesis examination. The students may choose one by considering their prominence as the focus. An effort to get the best result, all test takers must join the TOAFL/TOEFL Preparation class to enhance the capability in doing the test. The TOAFL/TOEFL preparation is provided as a preliminary class that will be conducted by *Pusat Pengembangan Bahasa* (Language development centre) which trained by tutors. During the class, test takers will have materials which compiled by language development center as a guide to face the test.

Techniques in the teaching have the significant role to attain the objective of teaching-learning process, the tutors must be able to find out and employ the teaching techniques which are possibly appropriate with the students' personality. Technique is something that actually takes place in language teaching or learning in the classroom. Here, the researcher wants to highlight the teaching technique of TOEFL preparation class because most of students choose TOEFL.

The researcher wants to highlight the teaching technique of TOEFL preparation class because most of students choose TOEFL. When doing observation, the researcher paid attention the TOEFL result announcement. According to that announcement, it showed that there was only one test taker who could pass the test well with score 480. And the rest has failed to get minimal score. Based on information from the chairman of language development center, the test takers (students) come from many backgrounds. Not all test takers are prominent in English. It may be the difference of undergraduate major background, language experience, culture and etc.

Harmer in (Kurniliawati, 2013:73) states that, Approach pass on theories about the nature of language and language learning provide as the source of practices and principles in language teaching. An approach describes how language is used and how its constituent parts interlock – in other words. The following illustration is worth considering for better understanding of what is meant by approach. Let's think a set of linguistics assumptions below: (1) language is human, aural-oral, and symbolically meaningful; (2) any given language is structured uniquely or no two languages are structured alike ; (3) the structure of a language can be discovered, and systemically described, although such descriptions may differ at various levels and for various purposes. (Fauziati, 2017a:12).

Anthony (1963: 95) in (Fauziati, 2015: 22) defined method as “an overall plan for the orderly presentation of language material, no part of which contradicts, and all of which is based upon the selected approach. An approach is axiomatic whereas a method is procedural”. Method is treated at the level of design in which the roles of teachers, learners, and instructional materials are specified. Thus, method is theoretically related to an approach and is organizationally determined by a design. Within one approach, thus, there can be several methods.

Brown (2007:16) told that method is a generalized set of classroom specifications for accomplishing linguistic objective. Methods tend to be concerned primarily with teacher and student roles and behaviors and secondarily with such features as linguistics and subject-matter objectives, sequencing, and materials. They are almost always thought of as being broadly applicable to a variety of audiences in a variety of contexts.

Then according to Anthony in (Fauziati, 2017a:13), technique is a particular trick, strategy, or contrivance used to get done an immediate intention. Technique must be consistent with a method, and therefore in harmony with an approach as well. Thus, technique includes the actual moment-to-moment practices and behaviors that work in teaching a language according to a particular method. In other words, technique is classroom practices done by the teacher when presenting a language program. This is the way the classroom activities are integrated into lessons and used as the basis for teaching and learning. Richards and Rodgers (1987:146) stated that there are three dimensions to a method at the level procedures. First, the use of teaching activities (drills, dialogues, information gap) to present new language; second, the ways in which particular teaching activities are used for practicing language; and third, the procedures and techniques used in giving feedback to learners concerning the form or content of their utterances or sentences.

In response to Anthony's conceptualization, Richards and Rodgers (1987:146) have proposed a modification to the conceptualization by using method as an umbrella term for the specification as interrelation of theory and practice. They modify Anthony's terminology and propose the terms approach, design, and procedure, their three terms are used to label three interrelated elements of organization upon which language teaching practices are founded. They define approach as "assumption, beliefs and theories about nature of language and nature of language learning which operate as axiomatic contrasts or reference points and provide a theoretical foundation for what language teachers ultimately do with learners in classroom" (Richards and Rodgers, 1978: 146). The second in the system is design. It "specifies the relationship between theories of language and theories of learning to both the form and function of instructional materials and activities in instructional setting" (Richard Rodgers, 1978:146).

## **2. RESEARCH METHOD**

This research uses a qualitative. A qualitative research is the way which is used by the researcher to overcome the problems and to find out the answers of his research questions (Afrizal, 2015: 12). In accordance with Sharan B. and Merriam (Sugiyono, 2017:4), Qualitative research is an query approach that helpful to explore and understand a essential occurrence. Then, Cresswell (2014:32) explains that a qualitative research is actually an approach which is used to discover and comprehend the meaning individually or in groups attribute to a public or human being dilemma. The data usually collected in the participant's setting, the data analysis inductively built from specifics to common topics in interpretation of the meaning of the data. And the structure of the final written report is usually flexible. Collecting data is a technique or setting used by the writer to find the data (Sugiyono, 2007:193). The researcher uses four ways of collecting data. They are observation, interview, questionnaire, and document. The research mainly employed data triangulation. That was data gathering various source of data to attempt data validity, which consists of information that can answer the research problem: from informant condition, activities seen from observation, and content analysis on purposeful document. The researcher compares the data which found during

observations, taking interviews, and questionnaires. After observing the process of teaching, the researcher performs the crosschecking by comparing them to data of interviews, questionnaires and documents. The research has been conducted from September 28<sup>th</sup> 2018 until February 28<sup>th</sup> 2019, and took place at Postgraduate Program of IAIN Ponorogo

### 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

During the class of TOEFL preparation observation, the researcher found one of the announcements. The announcement issued by Academic affair entitled “*Pendaftaran ujian thesis semester gasal tahun akademik 2018/2019*” (Thesis examination registration for the odd semester academic year 2018/2019). One of the requirements in the announcement above which should be fulfilled by student is capability to show the TOEFL certificate with the least score 475. Therefore, by showing that certificate, the student will be allowed to register the thesis examination.

From the announcements above, it assigns the students to pass the TOEFL score at least 475, if the score is lower than the decided one, the students must get remedial test in attaining the least score. Then, as the informant Mr. Arif said that, the students of postgraduate program of IAIN Ponorogo come from various backgrounds. Due to the various English skill owned by students, it requires to conduct the TOEFL Preparation class to achieve students’ capability.

From the above explanation, the researcher found that the objective of the TOEFL preparation class is to make sure that students are ready to face TOEFL test, and motivate them to get maximal score. It was in line with the tutor response, “...*Untuk membekali mahasiswa agar mendapatkan nilai Toefl secara maksimal*” (in order to make students to get the score maximally.) (Questionnaire response of Mrs. Prylla, Thursday, February, 28<sup>th</sup> 2018)

The schedule of TOEFL Preparation class for this year is different. Usually, students have to come to the class for 7 or 10 meeting. But, in this year they just need to spend two days joining the TOEFL preparation class started in November 3<sup>rd</sup> 2018 - November 4<sup>th</sup> 2018, and finished with the TOEFL test after all sections are delivered. The class of TOEFL preparation is divided into three section (Reading, Structure & written expression, and Listening), and clustered into three groups randomly. The participants came from different background of field study; they were Manajemen Pendidikan Islam (Master of Management of Islamic Education) listed as MPI, Ekonomi Syariah (Master of Syaria Economy studies) listed as ES, and Akhwalus Syakhshiyah (Master of Family law studies) listed as AS. Totally, there are 69 postgraduate students who take a part in the TOEFL Preparation class. The rate of attendance of this TOEFL preparation class is better, as Mr. Arif Said that in this year almost 100% students join and come to the TOEFL Preparation. On the contrary, in the previous years the attendance of students was so less. Due to students were mostly workers, so they had daily schedule which was busy. In the preparation class, tutors use some source such as Cliff, TOEFL preparation Guide, Barron's TOEFL test, and Longman Introductory Course for the TOEFL test to arrange the module.

There are five techniques used by tutor in teaching TOEFL Preparation that is implemented at postgraduate program of State Islamic Institute (IAIN) of Ponorogo. The techniques are Drill, Warm-up, Dialogue/Narrative presentation, discussion, and checking.

a. Drill.

When the researcher was observing in the class, he found that the tutor implemented drill technique. Drill technique is classic language activity which linking the fixed patterns of


teacher prompting and student responding, regularly with substitution, repetition, and other variation (Brown, 2001:19). In the reading section, the tutor gave such as a simple way how to answer the question. She showed a text accompanied by a question, then she guided students trying to answer the question with her clue as the following;

Contoh soal :

Basketball was invented in 1891 by a physical education instructor in Springfield, Massachusetts by the name of James Naismith. Because of the terrible weather in winter, his physical education students were indoors rather than outdoors. They really did not like the idea of boring, repetitive exercises and preferred the excitement and challenge of a game. Naismith figured out a team sport that could be played indoors on a gymnasium floor; that involved a lot of running, that kept all team members involved, and that did not allow the tackling and physical contact of American style football

Pertanyaan :  
What is the **topic** of this passage ?  
(A). The life of James Naismith  
(B). The history of sports  
(C). Physical education and exercise  
(D). The origin of basketball

Cara menjawab :  
1. Baris pertama tertulis Basketball was invented  
2. Kata invented kemungkinan topik dari cerita tersebut  
3. Membaca dengan cepat secara keseluruhan cerita  
4. Memilih jawaban yang benar yaitu (D)



She did the same thing from part 1 to the rest with repetition to students. After students got the explanation, they got started to do the exercises by themselves. (Field note 1, Saturday, November 3rd 2018), Drilling was also adapted in the Structure & written expression section. While the process of teaching was going on, the researcher saw the tutor explained about the form of plural of *child* was *children*. Then she said that how to decide regular or irregular of the forms, it required more exercise, then by habit it would make a sense of understanding. She continued to explain the degree of comparison. She said that there were three kinds of degree of comparison; *Positive form*, comparative form, and superlative form. Then she carried on explaining the use of *auxiliary verbs* such as are, am, and is. She clarified that the use of auxiliary verb belonged to the subject (*are* for They, We, You), the researcher saw that the tutor did some repetition in delivering the grammar review.

b. Warm-up.

When the researcher was observing in the class, he found that the tutor applied warm-up. Warm-up is activity that gets the students excited, motivated, thoughtful, or otherwise engaged and ready for the lesson (Brown, 2001:19). It does not engage the use of the target language.



In the listening section, the researcher found that the tutor firstly checked the speaker by playing music to make sure that the device was ready to use. While the music is being played, students looked happy and motivated in the opening the class (Field note 3, Sunday, November 4<sup>th</sup> 2018)

- c. Dialogue/Narrative presentation. When the researcher was observing in the class, he found that the tutor employed Dialogue/Narrative presentation technique. Dialogue/Narrative presentation is a passive activity. Passively, students pay attention to the reading/listening or speech provided by tutor. There is no specific production or target. And students may be asked to understand (Brown, 2001:19). In the reading section, the researcher found that the researcher used Dialogue/Narrative presentation technique. In the preceding of listening section, the tutor explained that there were three parts of listening section. Then she informed students that in the listening section test takers (students) should manage the time well. She also gave some tips in facing listening section as the following;

### Tactics for Dialogs

- Be familiar with the directions for Part A.
- Remember that the answer for the question is generally contained in what the second speaker says.
- If you are not sure of the answer, eliminate as many answer choices as you can.
- After you have chosen an answer, use the remaining time to preview the choices for the next item.
- If the answer choices are long, just skim over them quickly.
- Try to anticipate what the question will be by the form of the answer choices.
- If you don't understand all or part of a conversation, guess and go on

(Field note 3, Sunday, November 4<sup>th</sup> 2018)

- d. Discussion.

When the researcher was observing in the class, he found that the tutor used discussion technique. Discussion technique is an activity which runs a group discussion of specific

or unspecific topic. In the last moment of reading section, the tutor asked students to discuss the previous pretest which done by them. The discussion ran well, in the discussion they found the answer and its explanations. After discussion, students were asked to count the total score of pretest, and then they told their score one by one to the tutor.



e. Checking.

The tutor employed checking technique. Checking technique is an activity which Teacher either circulating or guiding the correction of students' work, providing feedback as an activity rather than within another activity (Brown, 2001:19). In the Structure & written expression section, the researcher found that the tutor used checking technique.



In the last moment of written expression & structure session, after explaining the part of speech the tutor she asked students to do five number of practice one. After students finished, the tutor guided the correction of students work. And the tutor gave feedback of each question. All students look so serious.

Students of postgraduate program who take a part in TOEFL preparation class come from different backgrounds. Certainly, students have different capability in Basic English. Some of students of postgraduate program come from English major which is certainly undertaken in IAIN Ponorogo. Of course, it belongs to them who are familiar with English understanding including basic structure. Naturally, they take a part the TOEFL preparation class easily, because their habit before in the undergraduate gives them good opportunity in learning English. On the contrary, students who come from English major, they actually look burdened. Certainly, they who undertook non English major (undergraduate) would have no good chance in gaining

English lesson, not as good as English major students. Another problem faced by tutor is the student's motivation (enthusiasm) which is lack. Most of students in the postgraduate program are workers. They go to the office in the morning, and go to campus after work to study. Because of the most students are workers, so their focuses were divided not only to study in the postgraduate program. Then, the schedule to work which is crashed with the working time influences students in taking apart the TOEFL preparation. In one time they should join the Preparation class, on the contrary, they have to go to work accompanied with office's duty. In overcoming the problems, the tutors have the solutions through tips, and motivations.

Anthony in (Fauziati, 2017a:13) defined that technique is a particular trick, strategy, or contrivance used to get done an immediate intention. Technique must be consistent with a method, and therefore in harmony with an approach as well. Teaching techniques has the vital role. To attain the goal of teaching-learning process, the tutors must find and use the teaching techniques which are appropriate with the students' characteristics. Technique is something that in reality takes place in language teaching in the classroom or technique in simple term, technique refers to classroom activities or practices.

Drill technique is classic language activity which linking the fixed patterns of teacher prompting and student responding, regularly with substitution, repetition, and other variation (Brown, 2001:19). By Drilling in the TOEFL preparation class, the tutor guide students trying to answer the question with her clue. The clue which she delivers to students is done with repetition. Through that repetition, the tutor tries to build the pattern or understanding for students, and students will find their understanding and information easily. It was in line with Huebener in (Mauliyana, 2016:47) the advantages of Pattern Drill is: 1) It makes sure the involvement of the students because the students have sole, important information; and learners need to gain other's information 2) It assists the students in getting the content of the subject, 3) It has a strong impact on studying attitude and social relationship, 4) It allows the students to understand the dialogue because while they are doing the activity, they will try to know the meaning of the words or sentences in order to get the complete content of the dialogue.

To make students triggered, the tutor employed warm up technique in delivering listening section. The warming up which tutor used is by playing music in the beginning of the class. Then the aim of this warm up is to make students feel relaxed & motivated to go on the preparation class. In was in line with Rushidi in (Mauliyana, 2016:10) A warm-up is a preparatory stage which helps the students feel relaxed and also sets a positive mood for learning. In addition Lassche (Mauliyana, 2016:10) stated that for language learning lesson a warm-up stage is the "initial orientation". So, a warm up activity is employed to begin a class with an attractive task to help the students be comfortable in classroom, and to assist them start thinking in English. In special occasion, the tutor needs to deliver the material passively, students pay attention to the reading/listening or speech provided by tutor. There is no specific production or target of the use this Dialogue / Narrative presentation technique. This technique is actually passive, even though it becomes useful to use. It was in line with (Brown, 2001) Reading or listening passage or activity presented for passive reception. No implication of student production or other identification of specific target forms or functions (students may be asked to "understand").

In order to invite students as inquirer, through discussion technique the tutor tries to let students to find their own understanding. Due to in discussion technique, students have chance to explore and share each other. It was in line with Killen in (Menggo, 2013:5) that discussion



technique is helpful for students: (1) think critically about the subject and, they will be able to enlarge their skills (analysis, synthesis, and evaluation), (2) students will be encouraged in working together and share their ideas; (3) students' communications skills will be developed, such as to express their ideas clearly, listen to others, or to respond appropriately to others; (4) students' own ideas will be generated; and (5) students will discover new knowledge through sharing ideas in group. In addition, Brown (2001:178) affirms the essential advantages of group discussion as the following: (1) students can produce interactive language; (2) students will be embraced by an effective atmosphere; (3) students are to encourage learner responsibility and autonomy; and (4) students will be able to understand toward individualizing instruction. Hence, it can be summed up that the strong points of discussion technique are students are able to promote their higher-level thinking, initiative learner, autonomous language user, caring student, and high responsible student. And through checking technique, the tutor is to help students in getting understanding easily. Due to students will find feedback or reflection of the answer and explanation conducted by tutor after checking their own answer of the questions. It was in line with Brown (2001:1) Teacher either circulating or guiding the correction of students' work, providing feedback as an activity rather than within another activity.

The changing of Preparation class schedule which is different as usual creates different pattern for students. The students look has more energy to focus on the material absorbing. The various technique used by tutors are to set the class be well prepared, although there is no any printed lesson plan. The presence of students in the preparation class is good enough, it shows that students longing in taking apart the TOEFL preparation class is good. Based on the result of TOEFL test, it shows that 40 participants from 69 could pass, and the rest might get remedial test on another day. It shows good progress, because the previous year's usually just a quarter who could pass, and this year got achievement. The tutors find some problems when delivering the materials in the class such as students experience in English which is different (Basic English), and students' daily activity which requires more focus in working. Students come from different background; the diversity makes the student's English skills different. Then, some of the students who have been working look have less focus. In overcoming the problems, the tutor tried to overcome the problem through giving motivation, and tips in doing the TOEFL Test.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

Techniques used by tutors in the TOEFL preparation class are various. The use of those techniques to help students in understanding the materials. Techniques in the TOEFL Preparation class facilitate students to master the three section of TOEFL test (Listening, Written expression & Structure, and Reading).

The existence of TOEFL preparation class is very important. Its role as the bridge for students makes it strategic in accompanying students to get the target of score. Before running the TOEFL Preparation class, it is better for Language center development to open a general English class, as a preliminary step before facing the TOEFL preparation class. So that students may be more ready.

The tutors should be maintained regularly through competence improvement activities, for instance by joining them into training classes such as Indonesia Australia Language Foundation (IALF), British council, and other international standardized classes to make them more

prominent. In choosing techniques to be applied, tutors should have some a simple research about student's background, preferences, pre-test, and other source.

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