



Enhancing TOEFL Structure Scores with TOEFL Test Pro: An Insight into Android-Based Learning

Arda Adianto¹, Eva Sulistiana², Wardatun Nadzifah³

¹Ilmu Farmasi klinis dan komunitas, Universitas Hafshawaty Zainul Hasan, Probolinggo,
Jawa Timur

^{2,3}Ilmu Keperawatan, Universitas Hafshawaty Zainul Hasan, Probolinggo, Jawa Timur

Corresponding E-mail: unhasa.arda@gmail.com

Received: 2024-12-29 Accepted: 2025-06-30

DOI: 10.24256/ideas.v13i1.6103

Abstract

Generally, English has been taught in Indonesia for ages, yet it is still accounted as a great barrier for Indonesian people. They often faced the necessity of good English proficiency in many areas, such as school or even the workplace, proven in such a certification. TOEFL is one of the most commonly known certification providers, yet many students reported having difficulties in reaching a certain score, especially in the structure and written expression section. This is a pre-experimental study with a one-group pre-post-test design in an effort to improve structure using the TOEFL Test Pro application. The population sample of this study was 104, with 78 respondents using probability sampling under some inclusion criteria. The data collection was done by using an assessment format and an interview, which were then analyzed by using t-tests and paired t-tests. The results show that there were significant differences in the students pre- and post-test scores with a significant value of $0.000 < 0.05$. Therefore, the use of TOEFL Test Pro enhances students' structure and written expression scores.

Keywords: *English proficiency; TOEFL Score; TOEFL Test Pro*

Introduction

Based on observations in the academic environment, many students have difficulty in improving or achieving desired score of the TOEFL test. This is reflected in the test results of previous studies which show that most students obtain low scores or fail in meeting the standard score needed, especially structure section (Akmal et al., 2020; Hadi, 2020; Sari et al., 2021). Recent statistics indicate that students scored much lower than the average score for Indonesian reported by Educational Testing Service (ETS) with only 37.4 and 53.3 % of Indonesian students perceived written expression as more difficult to tackle (Setiawati et al.,

2024). This difficulty is often caused by limitations in understanding and applying English grammar rules effectively.

In addition, with the development of technology, various applications have emerged that are claimed to help improve English language skills, including the structure in the TOEFL test. One such application is TOEFL Test Pro. Research shows that the use of technology in learning can improve student motivation and learning outcomes.

Technology-based learning has the potential to significantly enhance students learning outcomes, according to theory (Bernacki et al., 2020). According to constructivist learning theory, learning happens most effectively when students actively participate in the process and create their own knowledge. The practice questions and comments offered by mobile apps can aid students in comprehending and becoming proficient in English grammar. This study aims to investigate the following research questions: (1) How does the use of TOEFL Test Pro impact students' scores in the structure section of the TOEFL test? (2) What is the relationship between the frequency of app usage and improvements in TOEFL scores? Highlight is on the significance of self-efficacy in learning, as an individual's confidence in their capacity to achieve can influence their learning results (Jaekel, 2020). It is anticipated that students' self-efficacy in answering TOEFL questions will rise as a result of using the apps, enhancing their structural scores.

Structure is a basic skill that must be mastered by test takers to be able to communicate properly and correctly in English, especially in written form (Sari et al., 2021). Structure includes knowledge of grammar, rules, and sentence patterns in English. Structure also affects the overall TOEFL score, because every part of the test requires proper application of structure. Moreover, structure has a very high value compared to listening and reading considering the number of questions is the least but has the same total value conversion as the other two sections (Phillips, 2001). Which is the same as the other two parts. So that often the TOEFL scores of test takers get scores that do not meet the standards if they do not have mastery of grammar.

However, the use of mobile phone applications as learning media also has challenges, namely limited resources, external interference, and technology dependence. Test takers need to pay attention to aspects such as the quality, quantity, and relevance of the mobile apps used (Sulaiman, 2020). Test takers also need to organize time, place, and a conducive learning atmosphere to avoid distractions that can reduce concentration and learning effectiveness (Flanigan & Titsworth, 2020). learning effectiveness. Test takers also need to develop independence and responsibility in learning, without relying too much on mobile phone applications, which can lead to boredom in learning (Derakhshan et al., 2022).

Hafshawaty Zainul Hasan University, with its commitment to the development of science and technology based on Moderate Islam with Spiritual Care, is an ideal place to conduct research related to students' TOEFL scores. Factors such as lack of facilities, suboptimal teaching methods, or lack of exposure to English can be common causes of low TOEFL scores, especially in the structure section. On the other hand, to improve structure skills, test takers need to study and practice regularly and intensively (Fitria, 2021). However, many test takers experience difficulties and boredom in learning structure, because the material is considered difficult, complicated, and boring. Therefore, an interesting, interactive, and effective learning media is needed to help test takers learn structure more easily and enjoyably (Ayu et al., 2021).

This study is primarily aimed to find out more on the use of mobile apps in learning English. Many have reported on the positive outnumber the negative effects on using mobile apps. However, there is a lack of research specifically addressing the context of Islamic boarding schools and their responses to technology-enhanced learning. The discussion on how an Islamic boarding school reacts upon such condition is also little to no existence. Therefore, this study uses a more specific apps, TOEFL Test Pro in assisting students improving their score.

Method

This study used a one-group pre-test and post-test format as part of its pre-experimental design. The study's population comprises of 104 nursing students enrolled at Hafshawaty Zainul Hasan University (UNHASA). To ensure statistical accuracy, a sample size of 78 students was determined based on a 5% margin of error. The sampling technique employed is probability sampling, adhering to specific inclusion criteria. Simple random sampling was used to ensure that each individual within the population had an equal chance of being selected as part of the study, thereby minimizing sampling bias and enhancing the representativeness of the sample.

Data collection was carried out at Hafshawaty University, which had previously identified respondents according to the research criteria. Respondents are those who are willing to become participants. The researcher explained the aims and objectives to the respondents and then gave informed consent to the respondents as proof of availability to become respondents during the study. Informed consent is proof that all respondents are willing to be involved in research without any element of coercion.

Furthermore, the researcher conducted a pre-test to measure the structure score of respondents before being given the intervention. The pre-test was conducted through an online-based e-learning platform. After the intervention using TOEFL Test Pro (an Android-based application) was carried out, the data were analyzed by the researcher regarding the effect of TOEFL Test Pro on the improvement of structure score on TOEFL for level I students at Hafshawaty University, Pajarakan, Probolinggo.

The TOEFL Test Pro intervention lasted for 8 weeks, with students engaging with the application for at least 3 hours per week. The specific features utilized included practice tests, interactive grammar exercises, and instant feedback on performance. Based on the research data obtained, a subsequent bivariate analysis was conducted to determine the effect of the TOEFL Test Pro (an Android-based application) on students' structure scores in the TOEFL test. This analysis utilized the paired t-test statistical method to compare pre-test and post-test scores, ensuring a significance level of $p < 0.05$ to establish statistical validity. The use of the paired t-test allowed for a precise measurement of any improvements in structure scores attributed to the application. All statistical data processing was performed with the assistance of SPSS software, ensuring accurate and efficient data handling and analysis.

Ethical considerations were paramount in this study. Approval was obtained from Research Ethical Committee at Hafshawaty Zainul Hasan University number 083/KEPK-UNHASA/IV/2024, and all participants were informed of their rights, including the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. This approach provided a robust framework to validate the research hypothesis and interpret the impact of the TOEFL Test Pro application on students' performance.

Results

Research Results

Assistance in using the TOEFL Test Pro Android application was provided to participants over the course of 8 meetings. A pre-test was administered at the beginning of the sessions, and a post-test was given at the end to measure any improvements in structure scores on the TOEFL test. To further support the research findings, participants also completed a questionnaire regarding the frequency of their use of the TOEFL Test Pro Android application. The questionnaire data provided insights into how often participants engaged with the application and how this usage correlated with their test performance improvements. The following is an analysis of the data gathered from the questionnaire, highlighting the frequency of usage and its impact on the participants' TOEFL structure scores.

Table 1 Frequency of Use of the TOEFL Test Pro Android Application

Frequency	Number of respondents	%
Very often	5	6.41
Frequently	43	55.13
Rarely	22	28.21
Never	8	10.26
Total	78	100

Table 1 shows that most students tend to use the TOEFL Test Pro Android application frequently. This is indicated by 55.13% of students stating that they often use this application. However, a small proportion of respondents (10.26%) stated that they never used the TOEFL Test Pro Android application. This frequency of usage has a considerable influence on the success of the intervention in this study, as indicated by the correlation analysis which showed that students who used the app more frequently had an average score improvement of 50 points compared to those who used it less often.

The following are the results of research that displays descriptive statistics of student grades before and after using the Android TOEFL Test Pro application.

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics of student structure scores before and after using the TOEFL Test Pro application

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std.Deviation
Pre-Test	78	320	480	398.59	39.435
Post-Test	78	360	530	440.00	40.259

Sig.000<0.05

According to table 2, the pre-test minimum score of students places them in the poor category based on the score system that Hafshawaty Zainul Hasan University has adopted and is typically used to standardize student ability in Indonesia. In a similar vein, the pre-test average score of less than 400 was classified as poor. The minimum score in the post-test remained in the low range. Nonetheless, students' average scores improved and fell into the good range.

Table 3 Frequency of structure score categories before and after the use of TOEFL Test Pro.

Category	Before intervention		After intervention	
	N	%	N	%
Good	15	19.23	33	42.31
Fair	22	28.21	37	47.44
Poor	41	52.56	8	10.26
Total	78	100	78	100

Table 3 shows that the majority of students' structure scores were at the "poor" or "low" level prior to the use of TOEFL Test Pro. Students' structural scores considerably improved following the TOEFL Test Pro assistance. This is demonstrated by a 23.08% increase in the percentage of scores in the "good" category and a 42.31% drop in scores in the "poor" or "low" category. The paired sample test results, which have a sig value of 0.000 < 0.05, support this significant difference and demonstrate that taking TOEFL Test Pro has a positive impact on Hafshawaty University students' TOEFL structure scores.

The findings of this study demonstrate that students' structure scores can be considerably raised by using the TOEFL Test Pro application. In order to raise student results, this program can be utilized as a TOEFL learning tool, particularly for grammar content.

Discussion

One of the most important factors that determines high TOEFL scores is ability to use grammar. According to Wibowo (Wibowo, 2024) research, attaining good TOEFL scores is significantly influenced by the importance of structure. According to this study and research by Sari et al. (Sari et al., 2021), students' average structure scores remain in the low or "poor" range, necessitating particular attention to raise the stu(Saputri & Fransisca, 2020)dents' scores.

Although the grammar proficiency of the students in this study varies widely, it is nevertheless regarded as poor overall. This is demonstrated by the fact that 52.56% of students received low pre-test scores. Two major variables that frequently lead to students' poor grammar scores are ineffective teaching strategies and a lack of exposure to the English language in everyday situations (Saputri & Fransisca, 2020). Many children consequently struggle to comprehend and use appropriate grammatical rules. Furthermore, one of the reasons for poor English language proficiency, both active and passive, is students' lack of understanding of the language's significance (Sam, 2024).

The effectiveness of the TOEFL Test Pro intervention can be attributed to several factors. First, the application provides immediate feedback, allowing students to identify and correct their mistakes in real-time. This instant reinforcement is crucial for learning grammar, as it helps solidify understanding and application of rules. Second, the app's interactive features, such as quizzes and practice questions, engage students more effectively than traditional methods, making learning more enjoyable and less monotonous. This aligns with the findings of Aisyah & Hidayatullah (2023), who noted that frequent practice leads to improved learning outcomes.

More engaging and successful teaching strategies are required given the low proficiency of the students. Android apps may be a useful way to get around this issue. Interactive and easily available study resources are provided by apps like TOEFL Test Pro (Sulaiman, 2020). In this age of rapid technological development, where smartphones are now considered to be among the necessities of modern life, this application is ideal for the growth of students.

By using the TOEFL Test Pro application, students proved to be very helpful in learning grammar material. This can be seen from the post-test results, which show a significant increase in student structure scores in the "fair" and "good" categories, as well as a decrease in the "poor" category. Specifically, the percentage of students in the "good" category increased from 19.23% to 42.31%, demonstrating a clear shift in performance. This increase in value is closely related to the frequency of how often students use the TOEFL Test Pro application in

learning TOEFL material, especially in the structure section.

In accordance with what Aisyah & Hidayatullah (2023) said, the more often students are given exercises, the more students will get used to completing exercises so that they can give a good response in the form of improving students' learning abilities. Apart from the frequency of using this application, the features offered in this application also make students enjoy learning grammar material. This is in accordance with Arirahmanto's (2018) statement that with interactive features such as various practice questions, challenging quizzes, and clear and easy-to-understand explanations, applications on mobile phones are able to provide a more enjoyable and interesting grammar learning experience.

Moreover, this TOEFL Test Pro app allows students to study anytime and anywhere, according to their convenience. With a more personalized and adaptive approach, this app not only helps students understand grammar rules better but also significantly improves their overall English proficiency. This can ultimately increase students' confidence in using English in various contexts, whether for the TOEFL test as a whole or just the structure section. However, it is important to note that some students reported not using the TOEFL Test Pro application outside of class, despite encouragement. This could be attributed to varying levels of interest in different TOEFL skills, which may influence overall performance. Additionally, potential confounding factors, such as prior knowledge of English and individual learning styles, may have impacted the results. Future research should consider these variables to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the intervention's effectiveness.

The results of this study demonstrate that the TOEFL Test Pro program can raise students' TOEFL structure scores when comparing their pre-test and post-test results. Despite some students' varying levels of interest, using the TOEFL Test Pro program was generally successful in raising low English scores, particularly in the structure segment, which was the study's main focus.

In terms of practical implications, this study suggests that educational institutions should consider integrating mobile applications like TOEFL Test Pro into their curricula to enhance grammar instruction. Such integration can provide students with flexible, engaging, and personalized learning experiences that can significantly improve their English proficiency. Additionally, educators should receive training on how to effectively incorporate these tools into their teaching strategies to maximize their impact.

Future research could explore the long-term effects of such interventions, examining whether improvements in structure scores are sustained over time. Furthermore, studies could investigate the potential of combining mobile applications with traditional teaching methods to create a blended learning environment that caters to diverse learning styles. This approach may provide deeper insights into how technology can complement conventional education and further enhance student outcomes in language learning.

Conclusion

Based on the research findings, it can be said that the majority of students had "poor" or "low" structural scores on the TOEFL test before to receiving treatment utilizing the Android TOEFL Test Pro application. Students' structural scores on the TOEFL test dramatically improved after utilizing the Android TOEFL Test Pro program. While the proportion of scores in the "poor" category fell, the proportion of scores in the "good" category rose. This notable variation demonstrates how well the TOEFL Test Pro application raises the structure score on students' TOEFL exams.

Suggestion

The TOEFL Test Pro application must be used more frequently and with a larger sample size in order to produce the best results. To get more thorough data, this study should include participants from a range of age groups and educational backgrounds. Furthermore, increasing the range of practice materials and the duration of application use might give a more realistic view of the application's efficacy under different learning circumstances. As a result, the research findings are not only more trustworthy and legitimate, but they may also offer better suggestions for using the TOEFL Test Pro program to learn English in a variety of settings.

Acknowledgement

I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to all the parties who have contributed to this research. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all those who have contributed to this research. First, my sincere thanks to Hafshawaty Zainul Hasan University for providing the research facilities and financial support necessary to conduct this research. I am also very grateful to the lecturers and students of UNHASA for their participation and cooperation during the research process.

References

- Aisyah, N., & Hidayatullah, M. H. (2023). Implementasi Aplikasi Duolingo dalam Meningkatkan Kosa Kata Bahasa Inggris. *Bidayatuna Jurnal Pendidikan Guru Mandrasah Ibtidaiyah*, 6(1), 44–59.
- Akmal, S., Rasyid, M. N. A., Masna, Y., & Soraya, C. N. (2020). EFL learners' difficulties in the structure and written expression section of TOEFL test in an Indonesian university. *Englisia: Journal of Language, Education, and Humanities*, 7(2), 156–180.
- Arirahmanto, S. B. (2018). Pengembangan aplikasi penurunan kejenuhan belajar berbasis android untuk siswa SMPN 3 Babat [PhD Thesis, State University of

Surabaya].<https://ejournal.unesa.ac.id/index.php/jurnal-bk-unesa/article/view/15194>

- Ayu, M., Sari, F. M., & Muhaqiqin, M. (2021). Pelatihan guru dalam penggunaan website grammar sebagai media pembelajaran selama pandemi. *Al-Mu'awanah*, 2(1), 49–55.
- Bernacki, M. L., Greene, J. A., & Crompton, H. (2020). Mobile technology, learning, and achievement: Advances in understanding and measuring the role of mobile technology in education. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 60, 101827.
- Derakhshan, A., Kruk, M., Mehdizadeh, M., & Pawlak, M. (2022). Activity-induced boredom in online EFL classes. *ELT Journal*, 76(1), 58–68.
- Fitria, T. N. (2021). Students' ability In The Structure And Written Expression Section In Toefl Prediction Test. *Celtic: A Journal of Culture, English Language Teaching, Literature and Linguistics*, 8(2), 152–163.
- Flanigan, A. E., & Titsworth, S. (2020). The impact of digital distraction on lecture note taking and student learning. *Instructional Science*, 48(5), 495–524. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11251-020-09517-2>
- Hadi, F. (2020). Study of Students' Difficulties in Structure and Written Expression on Paper-Based TOEFL. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Islamic Integration*, 3(2).
- Jaekel, N. (2020). Language learning strategy use in context: The effects of self-efficacy and CLIL on language proficiency. *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 58(2), 195–220.
- Masruddin, M., & Nasriandi, N. (2022). Lexical and Syntactical Errors Performed by Junior High School Student in Writing Descriptive Text. *IDEAS: Journal on English Language Teaching and Learning, Linguistics and Literature*, 10(1), 1094–1100.
- Phillips, D. (2001). *Longman introductory course for the TOEFL test*. Pearson Education.
- Sam, R. (2024). Factors causes students low English language learning: A case study in the National University of Laos. Available at SSRN 4850858. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4850858
- Saputri, R. P., & Fransisca, M. (2020). Analisis Kebutuhan Siswa Terhadap Media Pembelajaran Berbasis Android Mata Pelajaran Simulasi Digital. *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Terapan Riset Inovatif (SENTRINOV)*, 6(1), 902–909. <https://proceeding.isas.or.id/index.php/sentrinov/article/view/555>

- Sari, Y. A., Latief, S., & Umar Al Faruq, A. H. (2021). Student Difficulties on Structure and Written Expression Section of TOEFL In Higher Education at Metro City. *Curricula: Journal of Teaching and Learning*, 6(1), 33–69.
- Setiawati, S. A. P., Farahsani, Y., & Febrindasari, C. (2024). Difficulties of Non-English Study Program Students in Taking the TOEFL-Like Test at Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta: A Case Study of UMY Economics Study Program Students batch 2022. *SHS Web of Conferences*, 202, 04002. <https://doi.org/10.1051/shsconf/202420204002>
- Sulaiman, J. M. (2020). Pengaruh Media Belajar Smartphone Terhadap Belajar Siswa Di Era Pandemi Covid-19:(The Influence of Smartphone Learning Media on Student Learning in The Era Pandemi Covid-19). *Indonesian Educational Administration and Leadership Journal*, 2(2), 94–106.
- Usman, N., Hendrik, H., & Madehang, M. (2024). Difficulties in understanding the TOEFL reading test of english language education study program at university. *IDEAS: Journal on English Language Teaching and Learning, Linguistics and Literature*, 12(1), 755-773.
- Wibowo, V. G. (2024). The Correlation Between English Department Students' Grammar Scores And Their TOEFL Grammar Scores (Students Of English Department Academic Year-2018 UIN Ar-Raniry) [PhD Thesis, UIN Ar-Raniry Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan]. <https://repository.ar-raniry.ac.id/id/eprint/35680/>