

Socialization of Introduction and Benefits of Toefl Functions for Students SMA Swasta Pematangsiantar

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ABSTRACT

This socialization activity on the introduction and benefits of the TOEFL function was conducted with the aim of enhancing the understanding of the students of SMA Swasta Teladan Pematangsiantar, particularly the eleventh-grade students, regarding the importance of the TOEFL test as one of the requirements in education and employment. TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) is an international standardized test that measures English language proficiency in four main skills: reading, listening, writing, and speaking. Unfortunately, many high school students still lack understanding about the function, format, and benefits of this test. Therefore, this socialization activity was designed to provide a comprehensive introduction to the concept of TOEFL, its test types (ITP, iBT, and CBT), question structure, and basic strategies for taking the test. Through material presentation, interactive discussions, and practice sessions, this activity is expected to motivate students to take English learning more seriously and to prepare themselves early. The results showed that students responded positively, with enthusiasm, and began to realize the importance of TOEFL as a valuable asset for their academic and professional future.

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INTRODUCTION

The development of technology and globalization has brought new challenges for students, especially those in the 11th grade of senior high school. English language proficiency is becoming increasingly essential as a dominant tool of international communication. English enables individuals to convey ideas, share information, and build relationships across various fields, both in educational and professional contexts. This skill is now a fundamental requirement to compete globally, particularly with the growing academic and professional mobility across nations.

TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) functions as a comprehensive assessment tool aimed at evaluating non-native English speakers' proficiency in key language domains—listening, reading, writing, and grammatical structure. According to (Sutanti & Salma, 2022), TOEFL provides a standardized framework that measures how well students can understand spoken English, interpret written texts, express ideas in writing, and apply English grammar accurately. It not only serves as a foundation for academic readiness but

also helps identify areas where learners need further improvement. As such, TOEFL plays a critical role in preparing students for the linguistic demands of higher education and enhancing their overall quality of English competence.

However, many high school students still lack a comprehensive understanding of what TOEFL is and its benefits. The limited information and lack of socialization result in low awareness and inadequate preparation among students in planning their futures. Research shows that students' motivation to learn English increases when they understand the importance of TOEFL in achieving academic and career goals. This is supported by (Mardiyah, 2024), who emphasized that TOEFL preparation classes significantly influence student outcomes.

A wash back study by (Wang & Huang, 2020) also revealed that participating in TOEFL training enhances students' positive attitudes and motivation to learn. This is further reinforced by research from (Arsyad et al., 2024), which demonstrated that TOEFL preparation programs have a measurable impact on improving students' scores.

In active learning contexts, methods such as flipped classrooms and gamification have proven effective in increasing engagement and TOEFL scores, as found. Reading techniques such as skimming and scanning are also highly beneficial for efficiently understanding TOEFL academic texts.

Moreover, teaching styles play an important role. A study by (Luong-Phan & Effenev, 2014) found that facilitator and delegator teaching styles significantly increased student motivation in TOEFL learning. In another local study, a four-week intensive TOEFL training program significantly increased the number of students achieving scores above 400.

Not only strategies, but emotional factors such as anxiety and intrinsic motivation also influence TOEFL writing performance. In the Indonesian context, (Purwanti et al., 2019) found that intrinsic motivation had a greater effect on TOEFL success than extrinsic motivation.

In light of these research findings, the activity titled "Socialization of TOEFL Introduction and Its Benefits for High School Students" is organized with the aim of providing comprehensive knowledge about TOEFL to students at SMA Swasta Teladan Pematangsiantar. Through this initiative, students are expected to be better prepared to face the challenges of higher education and an increasingly competitive workforce, while also gaining a broader understanding of the importance of English proficiency in their future lives.

IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

The socialization activity introducing TOEFL and its functions to the students of SMA Swasta Teladan Pematangsiantar was conducted on May 3, 2025. This activity was held in person and attended by 40 students, consisting of 17 male and 23 female students. The socialization activity was carried out in several stages.

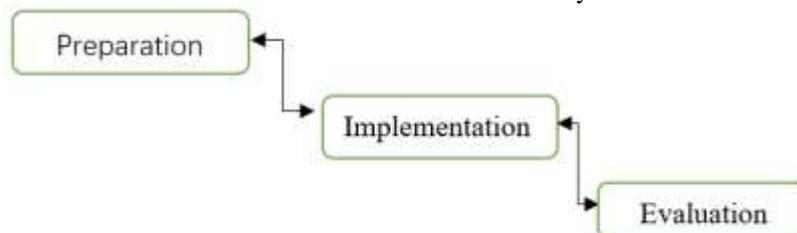


Figure 1. Process of the socialization

Stage 1 preparation

The first stage of this activity was the preparation phase, carried out by the socialization team prior to the implementation in class. During this stage, the team conducted an initial observation to identify the students' needs regarding their understanding of TOEFL. Next, the team prepared the materials to be delivered, including explanations about the definition of TOEFL, its functions, the types of TOEFL tests, and sample questions. The materials were arranged in the form of a PowerPoint presentation to make them easier for participants to understand. In addition, the team also prepared supporting equipment such as stationery, a laptop, and a projector to be used during the practice sessions. Coordination with the school was also carried out to ensure the availability of classroom space and proper scheduling. The purpose of this stage was to ensure that the socialization activity would be conducted effectively and according to plan.

Stage 2. Implementation

Next, the second stage is the implementation stage, where the implementing team delivers the previously prepared material. At this stage, the team begins to present complete information about TOEFL to students. The explanation includes the definition, its benefits in education and career, its role as a measuring tool for English language proficiency, the types of TOEFL available, and the structure and time of the test. All

materials are delivered interactively so that they are easy to understand and can increase students' interest in the importance of preparing for the TOEFL test.

Stage 3. Evaluation

The last stage is the evaluation stage. At this stage, students in grade XI at SMA Swasta Teladan Pematangsiantar were given practice in the form of TOEFL sample questions to measure their understanding of the material that had been presented. The team also gave students the opportunity to ask questions and discuss questions that were considered difficult, so that two-way interaction occurred that supported the active learning process. The following is a version of the sentence that has been changed but still has the same meaning. At the end of the activity, the socialization team concluded that introducing and understanding the function of TOEFL to students is an important step as a provision in facing higher education levels and the world of work in the future.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The socialization activity of introducing TOEFL and its functions to grade XI students at SMA Swasta Teladan Pematangsiantar went well and received a positive response from the participants. The students seemed enthusiastic in following each session that had been prepared by the socialization team, starting from the introduction of TOEFL, explanation of the types and structures of the tests, to the practice questions session. Through this activity, students gained a clearer understanding of the importance of TOEFL as a requirement for continuing their studies or applying for jobs. They also began to get to know the TOEFL question format and basic strategies in working on it, such as speed reading techniques and noting important points while listening.

In the evaluation session, most participants were able to answer the example questions well, although some students still had difficulty in the listening and reading sections. This became input for the team so that in the future they could add more intensive practice sessions on these aspects. Overall, this activity had a positive impact in increasing students' awareness of the importance of preparing for the TOEFL test early on. This socialization is expected to motivate them to be more serious in learning English as an important capital for further studies and competition in the world of work.

Table 1. Structure of TOEFL Introduction and TOEFL Function Socialization Activity Materials for Students

No	Time	Material
1	09.30–09.35	Introduction of the socialization team and delivery of the activity objectives
2	09.35–09.45	Definition and function of TOEFL
3	09.45–09.55	Types of TOEFL (ITP, iBT, CBT)
4	09.55–10.05	TOEFL test structure (number of questions, duration, and question types)
5	10.05–10.15	Tips and strategies for working on TOEFL questions
6	10.15–10.30	Q&A and discussion session
7	10.30–10.40	Closing and conclusion of activities

Stage 1. Preparation

- The team conducted initial coordination to determine the target class that would be the place for the implementation of the socialization activity, namely class XI, and ensured that the number of participants who would attend was 40 students.
- The socialization material was prepared in the form of presentation media such as PowerPoint slides so that the delivery of information was easier for participants to understand.
- Supporting equipment such as stationery, laptops, and projectors were prepared to support the smooth running of activities during the socialization process in the classroom.

Stage 2. Implementation

In the implementation stage, the socialization activities were divided into two main sessions. The first session began with the presentation of material by the socialization team to grade XI students at SMA Swasta Teladan Pematangsiantar. The explanation began with the definition of TOEFL.

(A). TOEFL (definition, function and types)

According to (Juliantina & Yuni Permatasari, 2024), the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) is an internationally standardized test designed to measure the English language proficiency of non-native speakers, especially in academic and formal communication contexts. In their research, they emphasize that TOEFL plays a critical role not only in assessing a person's linguistic ability, but also in determining academic readiness and professional qualifications. With the rapid development of technology and globalization, the format of TOEFL has evolved significantly—from paper-based (PBT) and computer-based (CBT) versions to the internet-based test (iBT), which allows for broader access and more efficient administration. The iBT format, according to their findings, provides more accurate and comprehensive measurement because it integrates the four primary language skills: reading, listening, speaking, and writing. They also note that the accessibility of TOEFL iBT has increased significantly across educational institutions in Indonesia, enabling more students to participate in international academic exchanges and scholarship programs. Furthermore, the shift to digital platforms not only improves logistical efficiency, but also reflects the real-world use of English in academic and professional settings. Therefore, TOEFL is not merely a test of knowledge, but a gateway for Indonesian students to access global opportunities in education and employment.

Test of English as a Foreign Language, which is an internationally standardized English language proficiency test and is widely used as a measuring tool in the academic world. TOEFL is designed to assess four main skills in English, namely reading, listening, writing, and speaking. These four components complement each other to describe the overall ability of participants in using English in the context of education and formal communication. Participants who take the TOEFL test will receive an official certificate that is valid for two years from the date of the test. This certificate can be used for various purposes, including registering for college, applying for a job, or as one of the requirements for participating in a government scholarship program. After the presentation of the material, the second session continued with a discussion and Q&A. In this session, students are given the opportunity to ask questions about the material they do not understand. The socialization team responds to each question with a detailed and easy-to-understand explanation, creating an interactive and fun learning atmosphere.



Figure 2. Opening the activity with an introduction to team members and conveying the objectives of the socialization

In addition to being used as a requirement to register for a scholarship program or continue studying to a higher level, the TOEFL certificate also plays an important role in the world of work. This certificate is often used as a reference in the employee recruitment process, especially in companies that have international relations or networks. The reason is because English language skills are now a basic skill needed in many fields of work, especially in business communication, negotiation, technical reports, and cross-country cooperation. By having a TOEFL certificate, applicants show that they have standardized and globally recognized English language competencies. This can provide added value in the eyes of recruiters and open up wider career opportunities, both domestically and abroad.



Figure 3. Explanation of the definition and importance of TOEFL and the types of TOEFL

The next material is an introduction and explanation of the types of TOEFL. TOEFL, or Test of English as a Foreign Language, is an English language proficiency test used to assess the extent to which someone is able to understand and use English in an academic context. This test is specifically designed for speakers of languages other than English and has been internationally recognized as a credible standard for measuring English language competence. TOEFL is widely used as an entry requirement to universities, both domestically and abroad, and is an administrative requirement in scholarship or job selection. The importance of TOEFL lies in its function as an objective measuring tool for four basic English skills: reading, listening, writing, and speaking. These four aspects are the foundation for daily academic activities, such as reading reference books, listening to lectures, writing essays, and conducting presentations or discussions in English. TOEFL is also a requirement in various government scholarship programs, and is even used by many companies to assess the communication skills of prospective employees.

TOEFL has several types of tests that are tailored to the needs of participants. The first is TOEFL ITP (Institutional Testing Program), which is a paper-based test that is usually used by educational institutions for internal purposes such as graduation requirements or selection of certain programs. Second, TOEFL iBT (Internet-Based Test) which is most commonly used globally, where the test is conducted online and covers four main skills. Finally, there is TOEFL CBT (Computer-Based Test), which is now rarely used and has gradually been replaced by TOEFL iBT. Although different in implementation methods, all types of TOEFL are designed to assess academic ability in English in a comprehensive and structured manner.

By understanding the definition, importance, and types of TOEFL, students are expected to be able to prepare themselves early and realize that English language skills are not only a necessity in the world of education, but also the key to opening up more opportunities in the future.

TOEFL has several types, two of which are quite well-known are TOEFL iBT (Internet-Based Test) and TOEFL CBT (Computer-Based Test). TOEFL iBT is the latest and most widely used version globally. This test is conducted online and measures four main skills in English, namely reading, listening, writing, and speaking. TOEFL iBT is very relevant for use by students and college students because its format is adapted to international academic needs and can be accessed more flexibly via the internet. Meanwhile, TOEFL CBT is a transitional form from the paper version (PBT) to digital, where the test is done using a computer, but is not yet internet-based. This type also measures four abilities, but the question structure and scoring system are different. TOEFL CBT is now rarely used and has been completely replaced by TOEFL iBT. The development from TOEFL CBT to TOEFL iBT shows an increase in terms of efficiency, reliability of results, and ease of access by test takers in various regions of Indonesia.



Figure 4. Discussion of questions given by students to members of the socialization team

According to (Fera Tri Susilawaty et al., 2023), students' understanding of the TOEFL format and test-taking strategies can improve significantly through intensive training and test simulations. In their study, students who previously had limited knowledge of the TOEFL structure including the CBT version showed more than a 26% increase in post-test scores after participating in the workshop. Similar findings were reported According to (Kartika Putri et al., 2023), who conducted a TOEFL training program for 11th grade high school students. The participants were introduced to various TOEFL formats, including CBT and iBT, and were trained to understand the differences in test structure, scoring, and strategies. The results indicated a 26.6% improvement in average post-test scores, reflecting a tangible impact of TOEFL format recognition on students' comprehension.

Meanwhile, According to (Utomo & Damayanti, 2019) provided an in-depth explanation of the characteristics of each TOEFL format. They highlighted that the PBT, CBT, and iBT versions differ significantly in approach and assessment PBT is paper-based and excludes a speaking section, CBT introduces computer-based delivery with writing tasks, while iBT is fully internet-based and includes both speaking and integrated writing tasks. The researchers emphasized the importance of early training and familiarization with TOEFL types so that students are not only able to distinguish between test formats but also adapt their learning methods accordingly.

Thus, based on the views of Indonesian experts, students demonstrate a better understanding of the differences between TOEFL CBT and iBT after receiving proper orientation. Practice-based training effectively increases their readiness to face the TOEFL in various formats—both in terms of technical familiarity and academic strategy.

Some examples of structural SMA TOEFL questions:

Question 1

Which of the following sentences is grammatically correct?

- A) Me and my friend going to the movies tonight.
- B) My friend and I goes to the movies tonight.
- C) My friend and I are going to the movies tonight.
- D) My friend and me is going to the movies tonight.

Answer: C) My friend and I are going to the movies tonight.

Question 2

By the time I _____ (finish) my homework, it was already midnight.

- A) finish
- B) finishes
- C) finished
- D) will finish

Answer: C) finished

the TOEFL reading comprehension questions for SMA:

Question 1

Read the following passage:

"The Great Barrier Reef is one of the most biologically diverse ecosystems on the planet. It is home to more than 1,500 species of fish, 600 species of coral, and many other creatures, including sharks, rays, and turtles."

What can be inferred from the passage?

- A) The Great Barrier Reef is a popular tourist destination.
- B) The Great Barrier Reef has a high level of biodiversity.
- C) The Great Barrier Reef is only inhabited by fish and coral.
- D) The Great Barrier Reef is located in the Atlantic Ocean.

Answer: B) The Great Barrier Reef has a high level of biodiversity.

Question 2

Read the following passage:

"Many people believe that reading is one of the most important skills a person can have. Reading can help people learn new things, improve their vocabulary, and even reduce stress. In addition, reading can be a fun and enjoyable activity."

What can be inferred from the passage?

- A) Reading is only useful for learning.
- B) Reading can help reduce stress.
- C) Reading is not an enjoyable activity.
- D) Reading is only important for children.

Answer: B) Reading can help reduce stress.

(B). Question and answer session (students ask questions about material they don't understand)

In this session, several students asked questions about the TOEFL material that was taking place:

1. What exactly is TOEFL, and why is this test important for students like us?
TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) is an internationally recognized English language proficiency test. This test is important for students because it is often a requirement for entering university, getting scholarships, or applying for jobs, both domestically and abroad.
2. What is TOEFL only required for those who want to study abroad?
No. TOEFL can also be required to apply for scholarships, work, or enter universities in the country that require it.

Stage 3. Evaluation

At this stage, students of grade XI at SMA Swasta Teladan Pematangsiantar together answered questions about the TOEFL material that had been presented. The socialization team facilitated an interactive discussion session to discuss things that students had not yet understood. The atmosphere was active, and many students showed interest and better understanding. This activity was considered effective in increasing students' awareness and motivation regarding the importance of TOEFL in their education and future careers.

CONCLUSION

The socialization activity of the introduction and benefits of the TOEFL function to class XI students of SMA Swasta Teladan Pematangsiantar is a very important initial step in raising awareness of the importance of mastering English as a basic skill in the current era of globalization. In the increasingly competitive world of education and work, TOEFL is not only a measuring tool for English language skills, but also a key to opening up opportunities for higher education, scholarships, and careers at the national and international levels.

Through the implementation of this socialization activity, students are systematically introduced to the meaning, benefits, types of TOEFL (such as TOEFL ITP, iBT, and CBT), as well as the structure and strategy for working on TOEFL questions which include four main skills: reading, listening, writing, and speaking. The delivery of the material is carried out with an interactive and communicative approach so that it is easy for participants to understand. The evaluation results show that the majority of students begin to understand the structure of the questions and the importance of preparing themselves for TOEFL early on.

In addition to providing basic knowledge, this activity also forms a new mindset for students that English language skills are not just administrative requirements, but life provisions that will strengthen their competitiveness in various aspects of life. This activity is able to increase students' motivation to learn English and encourage them to use TOEFL certification as an investment for the future.

Although there are still some obstacles, especially in listening and reading skills that are considered difficult by some students, this is an important note for the organizers so that in the future they can hold further and more intensive training. Thus, students' understanding of TOEFL is not only theoretical but also practical and applicable.

Overall, this activity has a significant positive impact on students' understanding and readiness to face the challenges of higher education and the world of work. This kind of socialization needs to be carried out continuously and comprehensively, not only limited to one institution, but can be expanded to various other schools, so that more students have access to this important information. It is hoped that with the right understanding and preparation, the young generation of Indonesia will be better prepared to compete globally and be able to become superior, quality human resources, and adaptive to the development of the times.

Thank You Note

We, as the Socialization Team from the English Language Education Study Program of HKBP Nommensen University, Pematangsiantar, would like to express our deepest gratitude to all parties who have helped smooth the socialization activities of the introduction and benefits of the TOEFL function carried out at SMA Swasta Teladan Pematangsiantar.

Our special gratitude goes to the school that has provided permission and facilities for the implementation of this activity. Without the support of the principal, teachers, and all staff involved, this activity certainly could not have run smoothly.

We are also very grateful to our fellow class XI students who have participated in this activity with great enthusiasm and enthusiasm. Active participation in the material presentation, question and answer sessions, and discussions showed that our friends have a strong desire to learn and understand the importance of TOEFL as a provision for the future, both in education and career.

We hope that this activity can provide real benefits for all participants, especially in increasing insight and motivation to continue learning English more seriously. Hopefully, activities like this can continue to be carried out in the future with a wider reach so that more students can get good information and preparation regarding TOEFL.

Thank you for the attention, cooperation, and warm welcome from all parties involved. Hopefully what we have conveyed can be useful and be the first step in a better educational journey.

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