IMPROVING STUDENTS' TOEIC GRADUATION BY USING SELF-HELP GROUP (SHG) METHOD ON STUDENTS OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT

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ABSTRACT

Graduation TOEIC with grade 450 was one of the main requirements for student graduation in undergraduate education. The majority of students at Business Administration Department, State Polytechnic of Bengkalis had difficulties in achieving these grades. Therefore, using the Self Help Group (SHG) method could increased the knowledge and abilities about the issues they need specifically about the TOEIC. The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of the self help group (SHG) method on increasing student TOEIC graduation. The research method was Action Research pre-test and post-test design. The sampling technique used purposive sampling, with the number of samples were 44 respondents. Based on the study results, it was found that the TOEIC score of nursing students after the intervention was higher compared with before the intervention (t (44) = -2.947, p < 0.05). It was showed that the SHG activity program was effective in increasing the TOEIC score of students, besides the number of students who passed the TOEIC increased from 1 person before the intervention became 4 students after the intervention. Recommendations, it was suggested to the Business Administration Department, State Polytechnic of Bengkalis and other educational institutions to be able to apply SHG program for students' TOEIC sustainably and in a longer period of time, so that there will be a greater increase in TOEIC graduation.

Key Words : Self Help Group, Graduation, TOEIC

INTRODUCTION

English is a language that is used internationally and is a transactional language where in general entrepreneurs, students, private or public employees must be able to master English. Vocational study programs at the tertiary level are study programs whose graduates are prepared to become a ready-to-use workforce. Therefore, the learning system and courses taught almost one hundred percent lead to the preparation of students to become ready-to-use workers. One of the elements of concern is the elements needed when students have graduated and are ready to apply for a job. Because it is not only a diploma, but often private or public institutions have several additional requirements that are mandatory.

Iswara (2020) states that in the process of recruiting workers in private and state agencies, one of the elements that is the main requirement is attaching a certificate of English language proficiency. TOEIC®, TOEIC®, IELTS® certificates, with a certain score as a prerequisite for registration for jobseekers are preferred by many public or private agencies. Therefore, the requirement to pass the TOEIC exam is one of the mandatory requirements for students to participate in the final project session.

Based on data obtained from UPA Bahasa that students of the Public Finance Accounting Study Program in 2022, only 29.67% of students passed the TOEIC test in the 2021/2022 academic year. This shows that many students do not pass TOEIC as one of the requirements to be able to continue the final project trial. TOEIC® or the Test of English for International Communication, measures the ability of non-native English-speaking test takers to use English in daily work activities. TOEIC® also has six secondary purposes: (1) to verify the current level of English proficiency; (2) to qualify for a new position and/or promotion in a company; (3) to improve professional credentials; (4) to monitor progress in English; (5) to set learning goals; and (6) to involve employers in advancing English language skills (ETS, 2022).

The introduction of TOEIC® and the provision of simulations of TOEIC® questions are expected to provide a stimulus for students to be more interested in deepening English language materials so that their professional abilities become more qualified. (Purnama, et al, 2019). Furthermore, based on the results of interviews with students of the Public Finance Accounting Study Program in 2022, the factors that affect students' TOEIC graduation are lack of knowledge about the TOEIC test even though students have taken the TOEIC course, lack of self-training, and no one facilitates special classes for TOEIC test practice. This causes the completion time of students' studies not according to the schedule set by the Study Program. Therefore, a TOEIC training program is needed to increase students' TOEIC passing scores.

Several efforts have been made by the Public Finance Accounting Study Program to improve student TOEIC scores such as including English I and English for Special Puspose (TOEIC) courses in the semester, as well as giving assignments to students related to journal reviews in English, but this has not been able to increase student TOEIC graduation. Therefore, another method is needed to improve students' TOEIC pass rate. Based on the results of research from Sulistyowati (2017), the use of Self Help Group can increase knowledge, where respondents who are in the Self Help Group group have good knowledge about decision making (66.7%), compared to the group not Self Help Group (33.3%).

Similarly, research conducted by Mashitah (2015) showed a significant increase in the knowledge of cadres about Diabetes Mellitus after participating in the Self Help Group, from 25% (pre-test) to 91.67% (post-test). Based on related research, it can be concluded that Self Help Group can increase the knowledge of participants who participate in it, so Self Help Group can be applied to students to increase knowledge about TOEIC and increase TOEIC pass rates.

Self Help Group is a group or peer whose members are homogeneous, share problems and motivate each other (Narang, 2012). It aims to develop empathy among fellow group members where the members provide mutual reinforcement to form adaptive coping. The development of the group is strongly influenced by the role of each member in the group. In addition, a Self Help Group is also useful in increasing knowledge about certain issues that they need. Therefore, this is sought to improve the student learning system related to English, especially TOEIC because with this method students motivate and help each other in overcoming any problems they face related to TOEIC so that problem solving is more effective.

In the process of forming a Self Help Group, there are some principles to be concerned such as 1) each group member plays an active role in sharing knowledge and hopes for problem solving and finding solutions through the group, 2) fellow members understand, know and help each other based on equality, respect for each other and reciprocal relationships, 3) It is an informal group and is guided by volunteers, 4) A self supporting group, the members share knowledge and hopes for problem solving and find solutions through the group. Financing for the implementation of activities is borne by the group, 5) the group must respect the privacy and confidentiality of its group members, 6) decision making by involving the group and the group must be responsible for making decisions.

Moreover, the characteristics of Self Help Groups consist of small groups of 10-12 people, homogeneous, fully participating, having autonomy, collective leadership, voluntary membership, non-political and mutual help. There are rules such as being cooperative, maintaining group safety and security, expressing feelings and the desire to share experiences, effective and efficient use of time, maintaining confidentiality, commitment to change, having a sense of belonging, contributing, being able to accept each other, listening, interdependence, having freedom, loyalty, and having power (Utami, 2008).

The purpose of this action research is to examine the effectiveness of Self Help Group

(SHG) on students' TOEIC pass rate. It is hoped that with this program, it can increase student participation in taking the TOEIC test and increase student TOEIC passes. Thus, the student study period will be faster, which indirectly improves the quality of education in the Public Financial Accounting Study Program.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The design of this research is action research, pre-test and post-test design, where researchers implement the Self Help Group program to students to increase the student's TOEIL pass rate. The research sampling method is purposive sampling technique based on inclusion criteria: 1) TOEIC score below 400, 2) have taken TOEIC courses, 3) students are in semester 7, and 4) willing to participate in the study. The total sample of this study was 44 people.

The Self Help Group program consists of two stages, namely SHG formation and SHG implementation. The program lasted for 3 months. Before starting the program, students will take the TOEIC test first as a pre-test value. During SHG activities, the group is observed by 1 facilitator and gets the TOEIC module. In the formation stage, the Self Help Group has five steps including 1) understanding the problems faced by students in the TOEIC test, 2) identifying ways to solve problems, 3) choosing ways to solve problems, 4) taking action to solve problems, and 5) doing TOEIC test exercises. The next stage, the implementation of Self Help Group includes compiling a schedule of self help group activities, compiling the topic of each meeting related to the TOEIC test, arranging the leader of each meeting (the leader chosen is a member of the group itself, and each group member has the opportunity to become a leader), implementing five steps of self-help group activities starting with opening, working and closing (as at the time of the self-help group formation meeting), recording the abilities possessed by the group, evaluating the implementation of group activities.

The first stage of SHG formation, the first step taken is for researchers to understand the problems faced by students in the TOEIC test. Researchers identified students' TOEIC scores by requesting data from the final project section of the Public Finance Accounting Study Program, related to student TOEIC graduation data for the 2021/2022 academic year. Then, identified the TOEIC scores of students who had taken ESP English courses, where it was found that the majority of students had quite good listening scores, but for structuring and reading they got low scores. The second step, identified ways to solve the problem, namely by increasing students' knowledge and abilities in terms of structure and reading. Step three, chose a way to solve the problem with the SHG method and asked for suggestions and materials from the Language Center for suitable modules for students to use in improving their knowledge and abilities. Step four, the researcher takes action to solve the problem. In this step, the researcher briefed the students by explaining about the SHG program that they would carry out, making a contract for the implementation of the SHG program and asking for commitment from the students to follow the program. The last step was to conduct a TOEIC test exercise as a pre-test value for students. 50 student respondents were selected to be the sample.

The second stage was SHG small group formation. Before conducting SHG group formation activities, researchers conducted a seminar first. At the seminar, students will be given material related to tips for passing the TOEIC test delivered by expert speakers from the Bengkalis State Polytechnic language center. In addition, students also get information regarding the implementation of the SHG program. Thus, students know how to solve TOEIC questions and the details of the implementation of SHG activities. Furthermore, 5 small SHG groups consisting of 10 students were formed which were facilitated by 1 facilitator, where the facilitator had been briefed in advance regarding the implementation of SHG. The division of small groups is based on students' TOEIC scores where participants who have TOEIC

scores above 400 are evenly distributed in each group. So that they can help group members in the SHG discussion process. Next, the SHG simulation was conducted. In the SHG simulation, students seemed active and eager to solve problems, where leaders were able to lead discussions in their respective groups accompanied by each facilitator. In addition, students in the SHG group were able to discuss Exercise I well, respect the opinions of other members, identify the abilities that the group already has and analyze the abilities that must be improved. They also shared problems and possible solutions that could be used to solve the problems that were decided based on group opinions.

The implementation of SHG activities in small groups according to the agreement, where this activity is performed as many as four sessions every Saturday for 2 hours of meeting. Each SHG group will be facilitated by a facilitator and a leader who takes turns in each session. During discussions in small groups, students will discuss TOEIC questions and how to solve them based on the themes that have been divided at each meeting, and the facilitator will facilitate the discussion. At the end of the meeting, the group will identify the strengths and weaknesses of the group and how to solve the problem. During the SHG activities, there were 6 students who had to be dropped out. This was done, because these students could not participate in SHG activities due to family illness and other activities. So they could not regularly participate in SHG activities. Finally, the research sample became 44 respondents. After the implementation of 4 SHG group sessions, researchers evaluate the SHG program by giving questionnaires and conducting TOEIC tests to all students who participated in the SHG activity process as a post-test value.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Data

The demographic data of the respondents can be seen on the table 1 as follow:

Table 1. The Frequency Distribution and Percentage of the Students' Demographic Data

No	Variabel	Frekuensi	Persentase
1	Jenis Kelamin		
	a. Laki-laki	4	9,1%
	b. Perempuan	40	90,9%
2	Umur		
	a. 20 Tahun	5	11,4%
	b. 21 Tahun	32	72,7%
	c. 22 Tahun	7	15,9%

The Impact of Using Self Help Group on students' TOEIC scores

Data were analyzed using the t-test (pre and post test design). Before conducting the t-test, researchers conducted a data normality test using the Shapiro-Wilk test, homogeneity, and histograms. Based on this test, the data was found to be normally distributed because the p-value> 0.05, which means that the TOEIC score data of pre-test and post-test students are homogeneous. Furthermore, the results of the analysis of the effect of SHG activities on student TOEIC scores can be seen in Table 2. It shows that there is a significant effect of the Self-Help Group program on student TOEIC scores (t (44) = - 2.947, p < 0.05).

Table 2. The Comparison of Mean TOEIC Score of Students Before and After Intervention by using Paired T-Test (n = 44)

Test Times	TOEIC Score		t	p-value
	Mean	SD		
Pre-Test	400,18	34,36	-2.947	0.005
Post-Test	411,02	42,41		

DISCUSSION

Based on table 2 above, it can be seen that the mean TOEIC score of students after receiving the SHG activity intervention was higher than before getting the SHG activities. This shows that SHG activities can effectively improve the TOEIC scores of students. There are several factors that can affect

these results, one of which is one of them is the increase the knowledge about TOEIC.

This is in accordance with Sulistyowati (2017) states that Self Help Group group has good knowledge about decision making (66.7%), while the (66.7%), while the group did not have good knowledge about decision making (33.3%). Self Help Group (33.3%). Same with research conducted by Mashitah (2015) which showed a significant increase in significant increase in cadre knowledge about Diabetes Mellitus after participating in the Self Help Group, which is from 25% (pre-test) to 91.67% (post-test). Research also showed a significant increase in significant increase in knowledge after respondents applied SHG ($p < 0.05$) (Mertha, Ribek, & Widastra, 2016; Salmiyati, 2018). In Salmiyati's research (2018), knowledge increased by 50% in good category where 10% of respondents had knowledge category at the time of the pre-test and increased to 60% during the post-test. Based on related research, it can be concluded that Self Help Group can increase the knowledge of participants who participating in it, so Self Help Group can be applied to improve knowledge about TOEIC so that the TOEIC pass rate increases with an increase in knowledge about TOEIC.

In this study, students were given module that contains material and questions related to the TOEIC test. questions related to the TOEFL test. Key answer key for each question is given to students after each exercise by the facilitator. Thus, students answer each question with the knowledge they they have and understand both from the material material in the module as well as the material obtained ESP (TOEIC) course beforehand. course. Each student had opportunity to give their opinion when discuss each problem in determining the answer that is considered correct. Information from group members is a wealth for SHG group members that can be used to consider existing problems (Utami, Keliat, Gayatri, & Utami, 2011).

Students know the answer is right or wrong after the facilitator provides the answer key. Then, students know the problems they have in answering these questions, so that students know the

competencies they must improve again. Information obtained from SHG group members can improve the ability of SHG group members to solve their problems (Utami et al., 2011). Based on research conducted by Meena and Sing (2013b), the results showed a significant change in solving problems in group members after participating in SHG. Problem-solving ability can be improved by supportive behavior between members (Meena & Singh, 2013a). In this study, the problem can be the obstacles they face when answering TOEIC questions. By having the same problem, they motivate each other in solving TOEIC questions consisting of structure and reading.

After SHG members discovered the obstacles to their lack of TOEIC skills, each member discussed and developed a plan to improve these skills. In Self Help Group, each member will determine the plan they will do to achieve the expected goal (Meena & Singh, 2013a). In addition, through the SHG program, each member can develop a positive attitude in finding new strategies to deal with problems or obstacles experienced by the group to achieve the expected goals (Meena & Singh, 2013b).

Furthermore, the plans that have been prepared will be implemented and re-evaluated at the next meeting. With a sense of trust, solidarity and belonging between fellow SHG members, the plans set can be implemented well, making them more independent (Saha, Annear & Pathak, 2013). This can be seen through observation of changes in their group behavior as a comparison to individual SHG members' behavior and improvement in their abilities (Meena & Singh, 2013a).

Based on the facilitator's observation, most leaders are able to encourage group members to give opinions and have the ability to influence group members to actively participate. This is in accordance with Narang (2012) who states that Self Help Group is a group or peer whose members are homogeneous, share problems and motivate each other. This is in accordance with research conducted by Meena and Singh (2013a) where individuals who follow SHG help each other members by providing

support and motivation, so as to increase self-confidence.

In addition, the leader also has empathy, loyalty to the group and accepts the opinions of group members. This is in accordance with the purpose of the Self Help Group, which is to develop empathy among fellow group members where fellow group members provide mutual reinforcement to form adaptive coping. Group development is strongly influenced by the role of each member in the group (Narang, 2012).

Based on the results of this study, students who passed TOEIC after participating in SHG experienced an increase, namely before SHG activities only 1 person who had a score above 455, after participating in SHG activities for 4 sessions for 1 month there were 4 people who had a score above 455 and passed. In addition, 53% of students experienced an increase in TOEIC scores. Therefore, researchers suggest that educational institutions can use the SHG method to improve student TOEIC scores, so that there will be an increase in student TOEIC graduation.

The time period required in this study is 1 month of intervention, although in a short period of time, this program has been able to improve TOEIC scores, but it is important that this program is carried out on an ongoing basis. Based on the results of student evaluations, most argue that the time given is still very short while there are many examples of TOEIC questions that need to be discussed. Therefore, a sustainable SHG program is needed, so that the number of students who pass can increase.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of the study, it was found that the TOEIC scores of students after the SHG program experienced a significant increase compared to before the SHG program was conducted, which is an important factor affecting the results to be achieved with a p value of 0.005 ($p <$

0.05). Therefore, this SHG activity program can be considered as a method to increase the number of student graduations, but this program is only carried out in a short period of time, namely 1 month. So, a longer period of time is needed to get maximum results.

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