

Online IELTS (International English Language Testing System) Training for High School Teachers as Preparation for Applying for Foreign Scholarships

Andri Suherman*, Hamzani Wathoni, and M. Adib Nazri

Universitas Hamzanwadi, Pancor-Lombok Timur, Indonesia *andrisuherman@hamzanwadi.ac.id

Abstract: IELTS is a mandatory requirement in applying for overseas master's degree scholarships. However, many people, including senior and vocational high school teachers in Selong City, East Lombok, face difficulty answering IELTS questions. Other than having no educational background in the English Language, they also have no time to take IELTS courses because of their heavy workload. Therefore, this community service activity aims to provide IELTS training to high school teachers in Selong City, East Lombok. This IELTS training is expected to help them meet the IELTS score when applying for overseas scholarships. Twenty teachers participated in this IELTS training, which was held in August 2023. Data from the pre-test and post-test revealed that the participants showed increased IELTS scores, although insignificant. Besides, data obtained from the online questionnaire and interview session showed that the participants positively responded to this IELTS training.

Keywords: IELTS training; overseas scholarships; school teachers

© 2024 Bubungan Tinggi: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat

 Received: 5 October 2023
 Accepted: 31 January 2024
 Published: 7 March 2024

 DOI
 : https://doi.org/10.20527/btjpm.v6i2.10301
 Published: 7 March 2024

How to cite: Suherman, A., Wathoni, H., & Nazri, M. A. (2024). Online IELTS (international english language testing system) training for high school teachers as preparation for applying for foreign scholarships. *Bubungan Tinggi: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat*, 6 (2), 337-343.

INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental pillar of a nation's progress. Without education, society will certainly lag behind in the global competitive world. Many factors certainly cause the decline of education. In Indonesia, many dropouts end up unemployed. One of Indonesia's most influential factors in education is the cost factor (Hasibuan et al., 2021; Sofya et al., 2018).

The economic situation of the Indonesian people, most of whom are below the poverty line, as mentioned by Mujiati et al., (2018), is one of the reasons they cannot afford school fees and eventually fail to continue to higher levels. However, there are many ways to ensure that someone can still receive an One way is education. through scholarship programs (Aliyyah et al., 2020). There are quite a few scholarship programs, both from the government and from private parties, that offer financial assistance for education every year. These scholarship programs vary, ranging from non-degree scholarships (short courses, research, internships) to degree scholarships (Bachelor's, Master's, and Ph.D.) offered by domestic

Bubungan Tinggi: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 https://ppjp.ulm.ac.id/journals/index.php/btj/index



and foreign governments. These scholarship programs can be easily obtained as long as the applicants meet the criteria or requirements listed. One of the scholarships that is a dream for students who have graduated from Bachelor's programs is the foreign Master's degree scholarship.

Many foreign Master's degree scholarship programs open registration every year, and successful applicants will have the opportunity to attend level lectures in certain master's countries. The target of these Master's degree scholarship programs is usually bachelor's graduates who already have work experience and meet the English language proficiency test scores. Besides TOEFL (Test of English as a Language), Foreign the English language proficiency test that is often a requirement for applying for foreign Master's degree scholarships is IELTS (International English Language Testing System). For example, the Chevening scholarship opens registration every year for Indonesian citizens to continue their master's studies at prestigious universities in England. This scholarship requires applicants to have a minimum IELTS score of 6.5 to proceed to the next selection stage. Meanwhile, the LPDP (Education Fund Management Institute) scholarship opens registration every year with various types of scholarships. For those who want to apply for regular foreign Master's degree scholarships, applicants must have a minimum IELTS score of 6.5. Of course, there are still many other types of Master's degree scholarships that can be applied for by anyone interested.

Quite a few high school teachers in Selong (East Lombok-NTB) are interested in trying to apply for these Master's degree scholarships. However, one of the registration requirements that they find difficult to fulfill is the IELTS score. Besides the cost of the IELTS test, many of them admit that they do not have experience in studying IELTS or taking the IELTS test. They feel more familiar with the TOEFL test. Rooted from this problem, this Community Service activity aims to provide an opportunity for high school teachers in Selong who are interested in attending free online IELTS training via the Zoom application. This is done online because of the participants' location differences, making scheduling difficult. So, it was agreed that the training would be conducted online using the Zoom application. This kind of PkM activity has also been carried out by several people in Indonesia (Daud et al., 2022; Mahmud, 2022; Nurchaerani & Nursyamsi, 2021; Onny & Renreng, 2020; Susanti et al., 2022; Widiyarto et al., 2021).

The understanding gained from this IELTS training is expected to help them understand the IELTS test more deeply and become a capital for them to achieve the certain IELTS score required by dream Master's scholarships. their Specifically, the type of IELTS in this training is academic IELTS. As we know, there are two types of IELTS: general IELTS (for work or residency purposes) and academic IELTS (for educational purposes). Because scholarships are closely related to education programs and are used as registration requirements for foreign degree scholarships, Master's this academic IELTS type is used as the training in this Community Service activity.

METHOD

The method used in implementing this community service activity is by applying the Service-Learning (SL) method, where the community servers provide IELTS learning services to high school teachers in Selong, East Lombok. It should be noted that this IELTS training was held four times a week on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday for approximately one month, namely in August 2023.

As mentioned earlier, this IELTS training was conducted online through the Zoom application. The participants in this IELTS training were 20 high school teachers in Selong with different educational backgrounds (Computer Engineering, Biology Education, Mathematics Education, Informatics Engineering, Physics Education, and Biology Education). They are interested applying for foreign Master's in scholarships but still have a limited understanding of IELTS. Therefore, they felt the need to attend IELTS training early to prepare for applying for Master's scholarships in the future.

Regarding the teaching materials, the book used in this IELTS training was the book "IELTS Strategies and Tips" by Dr. Lin Lougheed, 2nd edition published in 2013. Participants were provided with this IELTS book in PDF format, which they could print themselves. For your information, this book contains strategies and tips for quickly answering the four components of the IELTS test (listening, reading, writing, speaking). These strategies and tips were taught to the participants and served as the approach in this IELTS training.

A pre-test was given before the training began to determine the IELTS scores of the participants. After the training ended, participants took a post-test to determine their changes in IELTS scores. Additionally, participants were asked to answer some questions in a questionnaire provided online through Google Forms. This questionnaire contained several questions about the participants' perceptions of the IELTS training they had attended and any suggestions they could give, as seen in Figure 1.

			D		Zoom Musikug Ab Miladas	24	1.0
		~ Participants (16)			(1733) # here	- Participants (15)	
		C. Field a portripost	* 11		Same 2 ====	C rist a sartispan Avalatie	
		G +0	÷.DI				ŗ
ATT - CARTER - CARTER -	HUNR. RELI-RUNPER 1.517	10 Harts Japan	0.01		WHEN FAITH AND A REAL THAT AND A REAL THAT	Hand Jayof	
The charts before provide information or propular modes of transport or the		D starter	8 05		Fiel Dark Finand - Isotransport - > Situase	Correct Hartywetz	
oily of Cambridge for the point 2008 and 2018. Summarium the Information Sy subscript and reporting the seath functions and tracks comparisons where relations. Notice at least 1 of a entry.	Council Transf	N tatuda	0 EM	The sec charact article education data institute to overage addets agest to years in the definition countries in 2015. The fract data shows in which countries a addeesants also the match transmission is more all heavy an elses. The executed data shows the section that assess the least on an instructational bolices and data shows the data is enabled as in beautro ally many tables and data.	Mady assegued: 1) Tary - England server 4 Ferry Chart - Print - Nylved server Redy seguester: 10 - 10 (Charg - 5 (L) servering	Abread rolese	
fan Blann States Blans	The pix sharts assesses the possible by of various includes of topographic and in Cambridge in 2018 and 2018.	Renad Takan	0.01	Burrenzene für data lig unterding and nganting für man hadens und nation sampartaurs auterieten mervent. Webe al least 1967 words.	Endown S2Country Institution in the district Rep 10 Consistent constraints between country of HAL repair and	Margari	
	Council, where a strends, the general terministenced that Constraining is propulation had reasond away been using strategies of which any preferred in the production that the form of systems are preferred as the form	🔼 Antigin	4 DI	The second secon	anna Aradacha	Mahamad Natur	
	by the respectly is 2006, in ference of variating and cycling, by 2018.		4.04		The first har shart Businesis the number of hours essenting 15 year out addressed on temperature in various searching in 2015. The second closed	2 PROFE DIVINI CAUNT	
	2006, performed by 42% of paraple. This was followed by has unage at 10%. As well, 10% of paraple used attract of these forms of because of the second second second second second second	Materianad Nask	0.0	1	highlights the lap spectrum, with source counciled in same lap the same age group, also in 2015, responsed agence as international standard. Ownedse	Wingaga Russiana	
	which are include significantly and by 2018 I was the loast pepular increased laws. Go the ultar laws, the percentage of has usage	TT WITH YO KANATA	9 CH		Overal, there appears in the a secondation between reportion values children specific life interesting transmission and ligher sale rate factors. Bittle Francework 1	Am.	
Paulorfu of Tangent Hole: Resolution of Tangent Hole: In Contemps, UK 2018	in agent to shar modes of inseparializy and egand systing	N sei	// CR	a the second sec	Of the top these rations by hear spars their photoseters. Finance spars the beant time (2.5 hours a while South Growen net insperson instants servinged bit and (3.5 hours a monitorial transmission) and an administration of the analysis.	H ref. Sahka Nicilana	
Step 1: Analyse the sharks and plan have is group the information by 17% of	options once appared to 2008. Reycle Compart was only observed by 17% of progets and transiting on hard near the found property observed of 17%, Toportheses, To 2014, and the and the found back and property observed on the second sec	1441 Saltia Richana	# 10	accepted belower they and second to any which there are farging and the request the (bit is nown) doing homewood, our fair their to fair the togen that home is from all in the second to the second to the togen that home is from all in the second to the second to the togen that home is from all in the second to the second togen that home is from all in the second togen togen that home is from all in the second togen t	mutamental tarie		
Pant providing Contra -> decrease from (2%) to photy persprint 1 20% Busin -> decrease from 20% to 19% bases	wate in papeledly. Of patients' role is the filet solarity was had made up from the field of scholar interpatience networks a 30%	Statement Nation	# 14		Andy Perspected 2 With sequel to concern second, landages in Protoci date to concern the	😰 este racheracherae	
Second grouping Boycles> increase from 12%	Wood County 100 years of tops meaningly provide the restricts	A 22 Maridawak Bats	# 13	1/11/11/	between the Assiss here theng Keng (China) with 640, and here with it the here she water as seen a second second SD party. The here a series were recented by Mathematican in a first Lithian (Mathematics Lady all not party within the		
Body paragraph 8 No 2216 Walking> increase hors 1116	reported functional words	Solto PC settings to activose Window	6. · ·		tay tan	Go to PC settings to orthone Winds	

Figure 1 Athmosphe during the online IELTS 2023 training

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data obtained in the pre-test and post-test showed a change in each participant's IELTS scores, which can be seen in the Table 2. For the sake of personal data, the participants' real names are listed in initials only.

Table 2 Results of the pre-test and posttest of the IELTS 2023 training

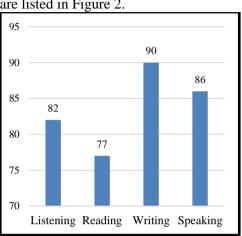
	participants				
No	Name	Pre-Test	Post-Test		
1	WD	4	4.5		
2	TSK	4.5	5		
3	MS	5	5.5		
4	AA	4	5		
5	KF	4	5		
6	IM	3.5	4		

No	Name	Pre-Test	Post-Test
7	MA	4	4.5
8	AF	5	5.5
9	YDF	3	3.5
10	RT	4.5	5
11	ES	4	4.5
12	TRW	5	5.5
13	RE	3	3.5
14	MA	4.5	5
15	YF	4	4.5
16	BS	4	5
17	AAS	5	5.5
18	LS	4.5	5
19	AY	4	4.5
20	FPT	5	5.5

Table 2 shows that the participants showed an increase in IELTS scores in

the post-test results. This finding is in with the community service line activities conducted by Juliarta, (2022). IELTS training held for nursing students that participants Bali showed in achieved an increase in IELTS scores after training. However, this training conducted was only to provide participants with an understanding of IELTS without knowing the targets or goals of the participants, as done in this service activity. community Additionally, in person, IELTS training by Hartono dan Prima (2022) was provided to the general public. Unlike this PkM activity, they provided IELTS training only for the writing component and was not specifically aimed at a particular group. Slightly different, the IELTS training by Fitriana et al., (2017) was given to students and lecturers from the English Language study program in Kalimantan. From the results of this training, it was obtained that the participants showed a fairly good increase in IELTS scores. However, the participants in the IELTS training they conducted came from the English Language study program, so they certainly have basic English language skills. Meanwhile, the participants in the IELTS training in this community service activity come from various study programs, so it can be concluded that they do not have a strong foundation in English and academic IELTS.

Additionally. from the online questionnaire, the participants' perceptions of this IELTS training can be seen as shown in the graph below. The component that received the most positive responses was the writing comprehension training (90%), followed by speaking comprehension (86%). After that, 82% of participants gave positive feedback on the listening comprehension training, and only 77% benefit felt the of the reading comprehension training. Participants'



perceptions of the 4 IELTS components are listed in Figure 2.

Figure 2 Participants' perceptions of the 4 IELTS components

Direct statements during the interview process support the assessment by participants in the above graph. Regarding the writing comprehension section, WD and TSK stated:

"To be honest, I am least confident in my writing ability. Let alone writing academically, even in general writing, I often run out of ideas. However, this IELTS training has been able to help me improve my writing skills, especially academic writing, as in the official IELTS test. Considering its many benefits, I hope IELTS training like this will continue to be held."

"Writing is indeed the most challenging component for me, especially in the first writing part where we have to understand tables or graphs and convey them in writing. Fortunately, many effective techniques in answering the first part of the IELTS are taught in this training. Hopefully, training like this will continue to be scheduled."

Regarding the speaking comprehension section, AA and MA gave their opinions and hopes during the interview:

"At first, I thought that speaking was the easiest part of IELTS because we only express opinions without having to use formal sentence structures. But it turns out I learned many things from this IELTS training to get a high speaking score, especially about vocabulary that is rarely used, which can improve the speaking score. My hope is that there will be IELTS training like this next year that those in need can attend."

"I really enjoyed learning the speaking part in this IELTS training because of its relaxed yet focused learning method. Many tips were given, especially in the monologue part, where participants had to speak for 2 minutes. I was very helped by this IELTS training. It's very beneficial."

For the listening comprehension section, LS and AY expressed their opinions during the interview:

"Let alone the listening IELTS, even for general listening, it is still difficult for me. It takes a long time to get used to hearing the differences in English accents. But in this IELTS training, I learned quite a few strategies to answer listening quickly the IELTS and accurately. Hopefully, this IELTS training will continue because it is very beneficial."

"In my opinion, listening is the determining factor when taking the IELTS test because it is in the first part of the 4 IELTS components. If I feel bad when answering the listening session, I will be uneasy in the other sessions, affecting my answers. However, in this IELTS training, participants are also taught how to remain calm when facing the listening session, and they are also given tips and strategies to answer quickly. It is very beneficial."

For the component with the lowest positive response, reading comprehension, AAS gave his opinion and suggestions during the interview:

"This IELTS training has indeed been quite beneficial for me personally. However, I feel that I have not been very helpful in answering the reading session that contains very long texts. Perhaps future IELTS training could focus on quickly finding answers in long texts. But overall, this IELTS training is very beneficial for me personally."

YDF expressed a similar opinion. He gave his opinion and suggestions regarding reading comprehension in this IELTS training.

"Reading is indeed challenging, but very tiring because there are too many texts to be understood in a short time. My suggestion is that future IELTS training could allocate more time for reading comprehension considering that many question types in each text need to be answered."

This finding is in line with several IELTS training activities in previous community service activities. For Wardana et al., example, (2020)provided IELTS speaking training to Chinese Literature students in Sumatra. Although the participants responded positively to this IELTS training, their opinions were not further explored through interviews, as in the IELTS training in this community service activity. The same thing happened in the IELTS training by Azhari et al. (2022), who provided IELTS training to high school English teachers in Aceh. From the data obtained, the participants were found to benefit from the IELTS training provided, but their perceptions were not directly conveyed through interviews as done in this community service activity.

CONCLUSION

This community service activity specifically provides academic IELTS training assistance to alumni of Hamzanwadi University. The target participants of this community service activity are alumni who have a strong interest in applying for foreign Master's scholarships but do not have good

IELTS skills yet. The data obtained in the pre-test and post-test shows that the participants showed an increase in IELTS scores, although not too significant. Additionally, during the interview process, many participants gave positive responses to this IELTS training because they felt the benefits of helping them work on the academic test type of IELTS.

The implications that can be obtained from the implementation of this community service activity are that IELTS training can be concluded to be very helpful for alumni to improve their and skills in IELTS. knowledge Furthermore, this community service activity provides information for us to know the perceptions of alumni about this IELTS training and the suggestions they can give for the success of future **IELTS** training.

Although the implementation of this community service activity was quite beneficial, there are still some shortcomings. Besides the number of alumni participating in this IELTS training not being too many, the training time was also not long enough. The implementation of IELTS training in the future may be able to involve more participants and allocate a longer training time.

REFERENCES

- Aliyyah, R. R., Ulfah, S. W., Herawati, E. S. B., Rachmadtullah, R., & Asmara, A. S. (2020). Bidikmisi: analisis pelaksanaan program beasiswa pendidikan tinggi. Journal of Administration and Educational Management (ALIGNMENT), 3(1), 37–54.
- Azhari, T., Rizki, D., & Kurniawati, K. (2022). Pelatihan bagi guru SMU dan SMK Se-Kota Lhokseumawe. *Jurnal Vokasi*, 6(1), 53–59.
- Daud, A., Aulia, A. F., Novitri, Hardian, M., & Rimayanti, N. (2022). Peningkatan kemampuan berbahasa

inggris pemuda riau melalui IELTS preparation workshop. Unri Conference Series: Community Engagement, 4(1), 17–26.

- Fitriana, R., Nur, D. R., & Arbain, A. (2017). Pelatihan dan simulasi IELTS bagi mahasiswa dan dosen di lingkungan Fakultasa Pendidikan dan Keguruan Program Studi Bahasa Inggris Universitas Widya Gama Mahakam Samarinda. Abdimas Mahakam Journal, 1(2), 88–95.
- Hartono, D. A., & Prima, S. A. B. (2022). Pelatihan IELTS writing untuk umum secara daring. *Jurnal Abdi Masyarakat Indonesia*, 2(1), 335–340.
- Hasibuan, L., Us, K. A., & Pendi, H. Z. (2021). Pengelolaan biaya pendidikan: kajian studi pustaka. *Jurnal Literasiologi*, 5(2), 1–14.
- Juliarta, I. M. (2022). Pelatihan bahasa inggris IELTS bagi mahasiswa jurusan keperawatan. *Joong-Ki: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat*, 1(3), 349–355.
- Mahmud, Y. S. (2022). persepsi guru bahasa inggris pemula tentang pelatihan kemampuan menulis melalui lokakarya IELTS daring terintegrasi. *PengabdianMu: Jurnal Ilmiah Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat*, 7(5), 687–698.
- Mujiati, M., Nasir, N., & Ashari, A. (2018). Faktor-faktor penyebab siswa putus sekolah. *Didaktis: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Ilmu Pengetahuan*, 18(3).
- Nurchaerani, M., & Nursyamsi, F. (2021). Upaya meningkatkan minat belajar di masa pandemi melalui pelatihan bahasa inggris secara daring. *ADI: Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat*, 2(1), 1–7.
- Onny, S., & Renreng, I. (2020). Workshop international IELTS bagi mahasiswa dan alumni fresh graduate Fakultas Teknik Gowa Universitas Hasanudin. Jurnal TEPAT:

Teknologi Terapan Untuk Pengadian Masyarakat, 3(2), 35–41.

- Sofya, R., Siwi, M. K., & Oknaryana, O. (2018). Kondisi sosial ekonomi siswa putus sekolah. *JIPE: Journal Inovasi Pendidikan Ekonomi*, 8(2), 90–94.
- Susanti, N. W. M., Sribagus, Sahuddin, Lestari, Y. B., & Lail, H. (2022). Pengenalan jenis dan strategi membaca teks modul akademik IELTS bagi guru-guru MAN di Lombok Barat. Darma Diksani: Jurnal Pengabdian Ilmu Pendidikan, Sosial, Dan Humaniora, 2(1), 35–41.
- Wardana, M., Kiki, A. W., & Mayasari, M. (2020). Pelatihan kemampuan

berbahasa inggris (speaking) dengan menggunakan strategi IELTS bagi mahasiswa sastra cina di Universitas Sumatera Utara. *Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat*, 1(2), 53–57.

Widiyarto, S., Mulyadi, Dja'far, H. I., Harie, S., Manurung, L., Suyana, N., & Abdillah, A. (2021). Pelatihan bahasa inggris bagi guru SMPN 23 Terbuka Kota Bekasi. Community Development Journal: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat, 2(3), 702– 707.