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ACCOMMODATING STUDENTS' VARIED LEARNING STYLES IN THE CLASSROOM

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Abstract

People depend on their senses to process the information around them. Most people tend to use one of their senses more than the others. Each individual has a preferred learning style, and many have multiple learning styles. One particular style is not better than the others, and a preferred style does not mean one cannot learn in other ways. Students should know what may work best for them to process, learn and retain information. They may become better learners if they know their learning styles and use the respective strategies. From the study conducted at the University of Technology Yogyakarta, the learning styles of students of non-English departments are predicted to be influential to their English Proficiency Test. Therefore, teachers need to be aware of there being varied learning styles in their classes. This study examined primary data in students' learning styles at the University of Technology Yogyakarta, which were analyzed quantitatively with an ex-post facto design. Respondents were non-English Department UTY students totaling 150 students who participated in the English Proficiency Test during September - December 2019. In addition to primary data collected using a questionnaire technique, this study also analyzed secondary data from other studies related to learning styles, especially VAK learning styles (Visual, Auditory, and Kinesthetic). The results showed that students' learning styles affected their English Proficiency Test score acquisition. Secondary data analysis produces English teachers' recommendations to accommodate students' different learning styles in designing classroom learning for better learning outcomes.

Keywords: Learning Style, Preparation, EPT Score, VAK.

I. INTRODUCTION

English proficiency is needed because it is the language of international communication. According to The World Economic Forum in the online portal bbc.com, in 2018, there were around 1.5 billion English users, 400 million of whom were native speakers [1]. It can be seen that the number of users of English as a foreign language is almost four times as many as speakers original.

EF (Education First), an international education company, has since 2011 ranked countries based on average English skills by collecting data through free online English tests. Test result data are analyzed to obtain the EF English Proficiency Index (EF EPI), the EF test taker's English Proficiency Index. At the 2018 EF EPI, which involved 1.3 million test-takers from 88 countries, Indonesia was in the 51st position with a score of 51.58, or was in 13th position out of 21 countries in Asia and was below the average score Asian regional English proficiency (53.94) [2].

Considering the importance of English proficiency as mentioned above, Yogyakarta University of Technology Yogyakarta has designated English as a mandatory subject with a weight of 6 credits. Besides, at the end of the study period, all UTY students must take the English Proficiency Test held by the UTY Certification and Training Center for Education (Pusdiklat). Each faculty has different minimum achievement standards, ranging from 450 - 500.

From the test data from August 2018 to July 2019, there was an accumulation of 3268 test participants, while from the name list of test-takers, the number was 2034. The difference in numbers of 1234 between the number of test-takers and test-takers names was caused by many participants who had to retake the test until obtaining the specified minimum score.

The following is a table of the frequency of taking EPT at UTY from August 2018 to July 2019 and a comparison diagram of test-takers who passed the first test and who had to repeat it.

TABLE I. EPT SCORE ACQUISITION AUGUST 2018 - JULY 2019

FREQUENCY OF TAKING THE TEST					
Accomplished	Test Takers	%	Not Accomplished	Test Takers	%
1x	1098	53,98	1x	58	13,47
2x	400	19,67	2x	258	2,85
3x	122	6,00	3x	16	0,49
4x	42	2,06	4x	7	0,10
5x	12	0,59	5x	3	0,00
6x	13	0,64	6x	2	0,00
7x	3	0,15	7x	0	0,00
Number of Accomplishment	1690	83,09	Number of Failures	344	16,91
Number of Test Takers			2034		
Number of Test Taking			3268		

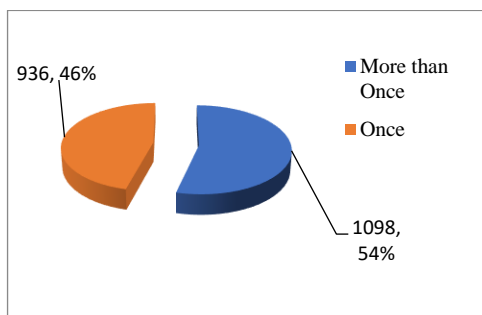Below is the percentage of the frequency of taking the test:

Figure 1.   Percentage of Repeat and Non-Repeat Tests

Based on these data, we researched the factors that influence UTY students from non-English study programs' EPT scores. To meet the novelty element distinguishes from previous studies that have generally examined test takers 'motivation, the study's focus was to see whether students' preparation and learning styles influenced test result acquisition. The formulations of the problem in this study are:

1. Does the Learning Style affect the student's EPT score?
2. Does preparation affect a student's EPT score?
3. What efforts can the lecturer make to accommodate the varied learning styles in the classroom?

The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of preparation and learning styles on the EPT score acquisition so that efforts can be made to increase the EPT score while improving the English UTY students' language skills in particular.

This study analyzes the EPT results from several non-English Departments at UTY from August 2019 - July 2020. Documents, questionnaires, and interviews are also used to dig deeper into the factors that cause this failure.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A. English Proficiency Test

The English Proficiency Test (EPT) is a test designed to measure a person's English proficiency. Tests that are often used to measure English language skills include GEPT, TOEIC, TOEFL, IELTS, and ESOL Exams. All these tests, except TOEIC, have a combination of receptive and productive components: listening, reading, speaking, and writing [3].

EPT values are used for various purposes, including as a requirement to take part in undergraduate and postgraduate programs at several leading universities in Indonesia, recruitment requirements by many national and multi-national companies in Indonesia, one of the requirements by many companies for employees to be sent for attending seminars, courses or training in English [4]. Besides, EPT can provide important information to stakeholders regarding a person's academic ability [5].

The EPT used in UTY adapts the TOEFL test, or in general, this test model is called the TOEFL - like-test in which, like the TOEFL test, the questions given include listening, structure and written expression, and reading with the number of questions, scores, and duration resembling TOEFL. The EPT was compiled by a team from the UTY Training and Certification Education Center and used internally to pass UTY students.

In addition to learning English, students' motivational and disciplinary factors in facing EPT also play a significant role in scoring [6]. Meanwhile, the factors that cause students to fail the EPT include soft necessary English language skills, little vocabulary mastery, insufficient practice portion, and low motivation to learn EPT and take the test.

B. Learning Styles

Linksman [7] mentions the characteristics of learners with style specific as follows:

1. Learners with visual styles tend to like visual aids and be sensitive to the environment visually when meeting new people, pay more attention to faces, clothes, and appearance. Visual style learners enjoy describing visual elements (colors, shapes, size, and appearance).
2. Learners with an auditory style receive information to listen, speak, read aloud, discuss something, process information out loud, always require auditory stimuli, and dislike silence. If meeting new people who pay attention is name, voice, and manner speak it. Auditory style Learner likes to describe the sound and happy repeat other people's words.
3. Learners with kinesthetic style like to move the muscles body and engage in activities that require body movement, interested in all activities in the environment, always in need of vast space, and often feel disturbed by other people's activities. If you meet new people, what you pay attention to is how the person acts, what the person does, what they do together, and how feelings when close to that person. This type of learner does not talk much and likes to use body movements when talking.

Several studies have concluded that there is a relationship between student's learning styles and their academic achievement. One example is an article by Gilakjani [8]. Gilakjani conducted a study on the learning styles of English Translation students at the Islamic Azad University of Lahijan, Iran, which concluded that students with visual learning styles obtained the highest academic achievement than students with auditory and kinesthetic learning styles.

Gilakjani also conveyed several other studies that linked learning styles with increased academic achievement, namely research by Reid [9], Melton [10] and Jones [11], which examined Chinese students in the USA, Rossi-Lee [12], who examined immigrants other than Chinese L2 learners, Hyland [13] who studied students from Japan and Peacock [14] who studied EFL and ESL students. Gilakjani stated that these studies

concluded that students tended to be kinesthetic learning styles while the learning process supported more auditory learning styles. It means that the learning process is still not in sync with the learners' conditions, resulting in not optimal learning achievement [8].

At UTY, English courses are given in. Classroom learning accommodates more visual and auditory learning styles, where instructions, teaching materials, and assignments are given orally or in writing.

III. METHOD

The research was conducted using a descriptive research model. The research was conducted using factor analysis with a population of 1582 UTY students who took EPT from August 2019 to July 2020. The sample selection in this study used purposive sampling. Primary data is obtained directly through the UTY Certification and Training Education Center, namely distributing EPT scores from August 2018 to July 2019 and distributing questionnaires to EPT participants and interviewing those who had to take the test over five times. This study's secondary data is library documentation in textbooks, journals, and various literature from literature and the internet related to the subject to be studied.

The research instrument variables are measured using a Likert Scale, a research scale that uses the respondent to determine the level of approval or disagreement with each question in the questionnaire.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The following is the Table and Graph of the EPT Score Distribution of 150 samples:

TABLE II.   SPREAD OF EPT VALUES

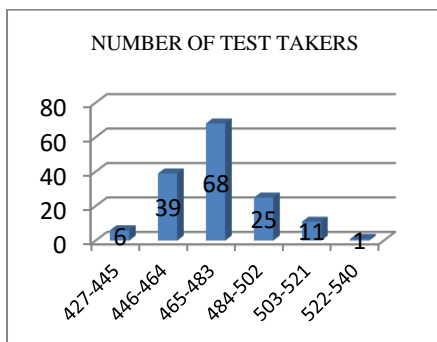| EPT SCORE	427-445	446-464	465-483	484-502	503-521	522-540
NUMBER OF ACHIEVEMENT	6	39	68	25	11	1

Below is the score distribution graph:

Figure 2.   EPT Score Distribution Graph

The following is the average score for each section and the whole sections:

TABLE III.   AVERAGE SCORE OF EACH SECTION AND TOTAL SCORE

LISTENING	STRUCTURE	READING	TOTAL SCORE
478,7	461,1	486,1	475,2

A. The Influence of Learning Styles And Preparation on Students' EPT Score Achievement

Student's preparation and learning style data were obtained by distributing questionnaires via Google Form to 150 samples taken by purposive sampling. Before distributing, the questionnaire was tested for validity and reliability with the help of SPSS.

Before testing whether there is an effect of independent variables (learning style and test taker preparation) on the EPT score acquisition, the data is first tested with classical assumptions. Following are the classical assumption test; the data will be analyzed with the SPSS program's help.

1.   Normality Test

TABLE IV.   ONE-SAMPLE KOLMOGOROV-SMIRNOV TEST

		Unstandardized Residual
N		150
Normal Parameters[a]	Mean	.0000000
	Std. Deviation	15.86503664
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.103
	Positive	.069
	Negative	-.103
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		1.260
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.083

a. Test distribution is Normal.

From the table above, it can be seen that the K-SZ values are 1,260 and Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) 0.083> 0.05. Thus, it can be concluded that the data are normally distributed. From the histogram, as shown in Figure 02, it is also seen that the data is normally distributed.

2.   Linearity Test

Based on the Table V, it can be concluded that the data used can be explained by linear regression quite well because of the Sig. The linearity of the data is 0.000 (less than 0.05), and the Sig. The deviation from the data's linearity is 0.151 for learning styles and 0.734 for preparation (greater than 0.05).

3.   Multicollinearity Test

From the Table VI, it can be seen that the Tolerance value for learning style and preparation> 0.1 and VIF value <10, so it can be concluded that there is no multicollinearity in the regression model.

TABLE V.   ANOVA

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
GayaBelajar * SkorEPT	Between Groups	(Combined)	33.321	19	1.754	3.469	.000
		Linearity	20.754	1	20.754	41.054	.000
		Deviation from Linearity	12.567	18	.698	1.381	.151
	Within Groups		65.719	130	.506		
	Total		99.040	149			
Persiapan * SkorEPT	Between Groups	(Combined)	14.833	19	.781	4.478	.000
		Linearity	12.423	1	12.423	71.248	.000
		Deviation from Linearity	2.410	18	.134	.768	.734
	Within Groups		22.667	130	.174		
	Total		37.500	149			

TABLE VI.   COEFFICIENTS

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	479.332	4.232		113.257	.000		
	GayaBelajar	-7.240	1.721	-.287	-4.207	.000	.870	1.150
	Persiapan	19.312	2.797	.472	6.905	.000	.870	1.150

a. Dependent Variable: SkorEPT

4.   Heteroscedasticity Test

TABLE VII. CORRELATIONS

			GayaBelajar	Persiapan	abs_res
Spearman's rho	GayaBelajar	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.461	.015
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.290
		N	150	150	150
	Persiapan	Correlation Coefficient	.461	1.000	.141
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.238
		N	150	150	150
	abs_res	Correlation Coefficient	.087	-.285**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.290	.000	.
		N	150	150	150

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Sig value. (2-tailed) in the table above for both variables> 0.05, so it can be concluded that there are no symptoms of heteroscedasticity.

B. Multiple Correlation Analysis (R)

This analysis is used to determine the relationship between two or more independent variables on the dependent variable simultaneously. This coefficient shows how much the relationship between the independent variables simultaneously and the dependent variable. The value of R ranges from 0 to 1.

The closer to 1 means that the relationship is more substantial; on the contrary, the value is closer to 0, the weaker the relationship is.

According to Sugiyono [15] the guidelines for providing interpretation of the correlation coefficient are as follows:

0.00 - 0.199 = very low
0.20 - 0.399 = low
0.40 - 0.599 = moderate
0.60 - 0.799 = strong
0.80 - 1,000 = very strong

Following are the results of the regression analysis in the output model summary:

TABLE VIII.   MODEL SUMMARY

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.635a	.403	.395	15.97260	2.058

a. Predictors: (Constant), Persiapan, GayaBelajar

b. Dependent Variable: SkorEPT

C. Determination Analysis (R2)

Analysis of determination in multiple linear regression is used to determine the percentage of the independent variables' contribution simultaneously to the dependent variable. This coefficient shows how much the variation in the independent variable used in the model can explain the dependent variable's variation. If R^2 is equal to 0, then there is no slightest percentage of the independent variable's influence on the dependent variable. The variation in the independent variable used in the model does not explain the slightest variation in the dependent variable. On the other hand, R^2 is equal to 1, so the independent variable's contribution to the dependent variable is perfect. The variation in the independent variable used in the model explains 100% of the dependent variable variation.

From the results of the regression analysis in the table above, it can be seen that the R^2 value is 0.403. This shows that the percentage of the independent variable's contribution to the dependent variable is 40.3%. Alternatively, the variation of the independent variables used in the model can explain 40.3% of the variation in the dependent variable (stock price). Simultaneously, the remaining 59.7% is influenced or explained by other variables not included in this research model.

Adjusted R Square is the adjusted R Square value, this value is always less than R Square, and this number can have a negative value. According to Santoso [16], for regression with more than two independent variables, Adjusted R^2 is used as the coefficient of determination.

Standard Error of the Estimate calculates the number of errors in the regression model predicting the Y value. From the regression results, the value is 15,97260. This can be interpreted that the number of errors in the EPT score prediction is 15.97.

D. Test of the Regression Coefficient Together (Test F)

This test is used to determine whether the independent variables together have a significant effect on the dependent variable or to determine whether the regression model can be used to predict the dependent variable or not. Effective means that the relationship that occurs can apply to the population (can be generalized).

From the output of the calculation results with SPSS, it can be seen that the F value is as shown in the following table:

TABLE IX.   ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	25330.665	2	12665.332	49.644	.000ᵃ
Residual	37503.209	147	255.124		
Total	62833.873	149			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Persiapan, GayaBelajar

b. Dependent Variable: SkorEPT

The stages of the F test are as follows:
1. Formulating a Hypothesis
   Ha: There is a significant effect between Learning Style and Preparation together on the EPT Score.
2. Determine the level of significance
   The level of significance uses a = 5%
3. Determine F count
   Based on the ANOVA output table above, it is obtained an F count of 49,644.
4. Determine F table
   Using a 95% confidence level, a = 5%, df 1 (number of variables - 1) = 2, and df 2 (nk-1) or 150-2-1 = 147 (n is the number of cases and k is the number of independent variables), the results obtained for the F table of 3.06.
5. Test criteria:
   Ha is supported if Fcount> Ftable, meaning that the Learning Style and Preparation variables simultaneously (jointly) affect the EPT Score acquisition variable.
6. Comparing F count with F table.
   F value count> F table (49,644> 3.06)
7. Conclusion
   Because F count> F table (49,644> 3.06), Ha is supported; it significantly influences learning style and preparation on the EPT score. So it can be concluded that the learning style and preparation together affect the EPT score acquisition.

E. Partial Regression Coefficient Test (t-test)

This test is used to determine whether, in the regression model, the independent variables partially have a significant effect on the dependent variable.

From the results of the regression analysis, the output can be presented as follows:

TABLE X.   COEFFICIENTS

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	479.332	4.232		113.257	.000		
GayaBelajar	-7.240	1.721	-.287	-4.207	.000	.870	1.150
Persiapan	19.312	2.797	.472	6.905	.000	.870	1.150

a. Dependent Variable: SkorEPT

Testing the coefficient of learning style variable regression
1. Determine the Hypothesis
   Ha: Partially, there is a significant influence between learning styles and preparation with the EPT score.
2. Determine the level of significance
   Significance level using a = 5%
3. Determine t count
   Based on the table, it is obtained that the t count for the learning style is -4.207 and the t count for the preparation is 6.905
4. Specify t table
   The t distribution table is sought at a = 5%: 2 = 2.5% (2-tailed test) with degrees of freedom (df) nk-1 or 150-2-1 = 147 (n is the number of cases and k is the number of independent variables) . With a 2-sided test (significance = 0.025). The t-value for (0.025; 147) is 1.97623.
5. Set Testing Criteria
   Ha is supported if -t count <-t table or t count> t table.
6. Comparing t count with t table
   Learning Style: Value -t count <-t table (-4.207 <-1.97623) then Ha is supported
   Preparation: The value of t count> t table (6.905> 1.97623 then Ha is supported
7. Conclusion
   Because the -t value of Learning Style is <-t table (-4.207 <-1.97623), Ha is supported; it means that partially there is a significant influence between the Learning Style and the EPT score. So it can be concluded that partially the Learning Style affects the EPT score.
   While the t value of Preparation> t table (6.905> 1.97623), Ha is supported, which means that partially there is a significant effect between preparation and EPT score. So it can be concluded that partial preparation affects the EPT score.

F. Observation Results Through Interviews With EPT Participants

Discipline and motivation play an essential role in the scores achieved by test participants [6]. Motivation can positively influence student success in learning

English [17]. In the interviews conducted with test participants who had to repeat the test more than 5 (five) times, it was concluded that all participants were motivated to pass the test. This was indicated by their answers which stated that in two months, they attended EPT 6-7 times. The interview shows that students had difficulties with unfamiliar vocabulary, sentence structures, and grammar.

When they found that they had failed the test for most of the participants, they would register for the EPT test the following week. This indicates that they want to get certified to be able to meet the final exam requirements. However, this strong motivation is not followed by the discipline to prepare for the exam well. Most of the participants mentioned that they did not prepare well before the exam. Lack of preparation before the exam causes them to fail the exam. Pan [18] highlights that the amount of time spent on language learning before the test significantly determines student scores.

Lack of preparation before the test and low English proficiency are two factors that cause test takers to fail the TOEFL test Pan [18]. Besides, none of them take the TOEFL preparation class before taking the EPT. For those who need to take the TOEFL or other English proficiency test, taking an English test preparation class can be very important as it can help them improve their English proficiency and achieve their target score.

The TOEFL preparation program's use increases TOEFL mastery in test performance [19]. The preparation class will help test-takers improve their TOEFL mastery and English proficiency [20]. Furthermore, all participants have never done TOEFL exercises, but they prefer to watch the TOEFL Practice tutorial videos on YouTube.

From the results of data analysis with multiple regression tests and data from observations through interviews with participants, it can be concluded that the learning style and preparation affect the EPT score acquisition. Participants with a visual learning style tended to score higher. This may be due to the lecturer's teaching style, which tends to accommodate students with a visual learning style. Participants who did not make special preparations, such as trying to do a similar test or taking part in a training organized by the Pusdiklat but only watching tutorials on the test via YouTube or asking friends, tended to find it challenging to achieve a standard score, so they had to repeat the test several times, even more than five times.

G. Accommodating Different Learning Styles in Classroom Learning

People predominantly learn using one style– whether visual, auditory, or kinaesthetic. Though every learner often incorporates elements of the other two styles, they are likely to achieve maximum benefit from learning by focusing on their primary style. Teachers often teach to their style of learning and will often hinder the other learning styles. In UTY English classrooms, teachers tend to teach with their learning

styles. There is a module for each English subject. Most of the instructions and explanations are given in the forms of spoken or written on the whiteboard. These activities do not accommodate all learners and may lead to boredom or disinterest in those who have different preferred learning styles, affecting the learning outcomes.

Teachers need to design courses that accommodate all students regardless of their learning style for better learning outcomes.

Based on learners with style specifically mentioned by Linksman [7], the following are activities that teachers can do to accommodate students' varied learning styles:

1. Someone with a Visual learning style prefers to see or observe things, including pictures, diagrams, demonstrations, displays, handouts, films, flip-chart, etc. He or she will work from lists and written directions and instructions. To accommodate this type of learners, teachers can use maps, flow charts, or websites to organize materials, highlight and color-code books/notes to organize and relate material; Students pick out keywords and ideas in their writing and highlight them in different colors to reveal organizational patterns. Writing out checklists of needed formulas, commonly misspelled words. Using flashcards for review of the material, drawing pictures or cartoons of concepts. Writing down material on slips of paper and moving them around into proper sequence. Using the whiteboard to note important information and using the computer, have the student experiment with different font sizes and styles to enhance readability.

2. Someone with an Auditory learning style prefers the transfer of information through listening: to the spoken word, self or others, of sounds and noises. He or she will be best able to perform a new task after listening to an expert's instructions. To accommodate this type of learner, teachers can engage the student in conversation on the subject matter. Teachers are questioning students about the material, asking for oral summaries of material, having them tape lectures, having them tape themselves reviewing material, listening to it together, reading the material aloud to them, and putting the material to a rhythm or tune rehearse it aloud.

3. Someone with a Kinesthetic learning style prefers physical experience - touching, feeling, holding, doing, practical hands-on experiences. He or she will be best able to perform a new task by going ahead and trying it out, learning as they go. He or she likes to experiment hands-on and never look at the instructions first. To accommodate this type of learner, teachers can write out checklists of materials to learn or discover. Tracing words and diagrams on paper, using role-play or dramatizing concepts where students can move objects around,

dramatize a concept or act out the concept themselves. Asking the student to envision a scene in which the material to be learned being used or acted out somehow, have the student take notes (on paper, word processor, in textbooks) while reading or listening, and use some form of body movement (snapping fingers, pacing, mouthing ideas) while reciting material to be learned.

V. CLOSING

A. *Conclusions*

The research findings show that test takers' preparation affects the EPT score achievement. It has been revealed that those who had to take the test five times or more were quite motivated but not well-prepared for the test even though they had taken the test several times. They watched tutorial videos or asked others to realize that they had difficulties with unfamiliar vocabulary, sentence structures, and grammar.

Besides, it also revealed that students' learning styles influence their achievement of EPT scores, so that teachers need to accommodate students' varied learning styles in classroom teaching and learn so that optimum teaching outcomes can be achieved.

B. *Suggestion*

Some improvements need to be made covering students' facilities to prepare for the test and class teaching styles, which accommodate students' varied learning styles to strive for better EPT score achievement.

Besides, there need to be some changes in the teaching material. Instead of giving more material on communication, students need to be given some materials to support their English competence for academic purposes. The materials should cover some TOEFL-like reading passages where students are introduced to unfamiliar words or phrases to enrich their vocabulary and better understand the passages and then lead to learning grammar in context.

UTY Center of Certification and Training (Pusdiklat) also need to facilitate students to get better EPT score by providing a training course to minimize the number of students who have to take the test frequently.

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