

## Correlation between Reading Comprehension and Listening Comprehension Skills in Completing TOEFL-PBT

**Umi Nur Hastuti**

STKIP PGRI Sidoarjo, email: [uminur.miyu@gmail.com](mailto:uminur.miyu@gmail.com)

**Nur Kalim**

SMP PGRI Wringinanom, email: [nurkalim@gmail.com](mailto:nurkalim@gmail.com)

### Abstract

*TOEFL or Test of English as a Foreign Language is a language test to measure someone English ability academically in English communication. In TOEFL-PBT, the participants mostly use their receptive skill and their vocabularies to answer the questions, including in writing test receptive skill is used to understand the sentences given as writing themes. According to Macmillan Dictionary (Macmillan Dictionary, 2019), receptive skills is the skills of being able to understand a language when you listen to it or read it. Listening and reading are considered to be receptive skills. Based on the explanation above, the purpose of this study is to determine wheter there is a correlation between reading ability and listening ability in completing TOEFL-PBT. Research methodology this study used quantitative method. A statistical data from the using of correlation formula in microsoft excel were used to evaluate the result. The scores of listening comprehension test and the scores of reading comprehension test are the instruments were used to measure listening and reading skills. Based on result of this research, there are a correlation between listening comprehension skills and reading comprehension skills in completing TOEFL PBT that indicate had strong relationship (0.60-079). It can be meant that listening comprehension can affected to reading comprehension.*

**Keyword:** *TOEFL-PBT, receptive skills, listening and reading skills*

### INTRODUCTION

TOEFL or Test of English as a Foreign Language is a language test to measure someone English ability academically in English communication. The first TOEFL test was held in 1964 by the Modern Language Association financed by grants from the Ford Foundation and Danforth Foundation. TOEFL was formed to solve the problem of ensuring English proficiency for foreign speakers who is going to study at United State of America. Nowday, TOEFL is used in many universities as a requirement of graduation or to get a scholarships even some minister or department of goverment ask TOEFL score as one of requirements for taking prospective goverment employees.

There are four skills that are tested in TOEFL namely reading, listening, writing, and speaking. One main skill is used in each section of the test with some questions or tasks requiring the use of multiple skills. In TOEFL-Paper Based Test (PBT) only reading, listening, and writing skills is tested. There are four section of test. Section one is listening comprehension test, section two is structure and written expression test, section three is reading comprehension test, and section four is writing test. In TOEFL-PBT, the participants mostly use their receptive skill and their vocabularies to answer the questions, including in writing test receptive skill is used to understand the sentences given as writing themes.

According to Macmillan Dictionary (Macmillan Dictionary, 2019), receptive skills is the skills of being able to understand a language when you listen to it or read it. Listening and reading are considered to be receptive skills. Receptive language skills consist of the abilities to successfully read and listen, and consequently comprehend a foreign language (Ivancic & Mandic, 2014). It shows that reading and listening are interrelated language skills which both skills require comprehensive skills to be able to complete the test correctly in limited time. Based on the explanation above, the purpose of this study is to determine wheter there is a correlation between reading ability and listening ability in completing TOEFL-PBT.

## **METHOD**

The subject of this research are the last semester undergraduate students of STKIP PGRI Sidoarjo. Total subjects are 121 students who participate TOEFL as one of requirements of finishing their study. With regard to their department of study, 54 (44.6%) were Mathematics Education Department students', 49 (40.5%) were English Education Departmen students', and 18 (14.9%) were History Education Department students'. All of the participant have attended the TOEFL training which was held intensively for ten days with training period of 2 hours per day.

Research methodology this study used quantitative method. A statistical data from the using of correlation formula in microsoft excel were used to evaluate the result. The scores of listening comprehension test and the scores of reading comprehension test are the instruments were used to measure listening and reading skills. A pearson

correlation coefficient was used to unravel the relationship between listening and reading skills.

## **FINDINGS**

At the end of the study, all graduate student are required to follow TOEFL test as one of the graduation requirements. Before test was held, the students would get treatment two hours a day for ten days. All students were divided into four class, two classes for students from English education department, one class for students from mathematics education department, and one class was combination students from mathematics education department and history education department. They was treated by lecturers from English education department who also teach TOEFL materials.

In class, the students got many tips and tricks to answer the questions each section in TOEFL test and practice working on TOEFL questions. The way to delivered TOEFL material was not the same in each class, adjusted to the average English skills of the students in the class. Teaching methodology in English education department must be different with teaching methodology in mathematics education department and history education department, which both classes require more intensive learning because they are less likely to accept or use English both in studying activities and daily activities.

The TOEFL PBT lasts 2.5 hours and is divided into 4 section. The listening section is first and lasts 30 to 40 minutes with a total of 50 questions. The second section is structure and written expression section, in which the student must answer 40 questions in 25 minutes. The third section is reading comprehension with 50 questions have tobe completing in 55 minutes (EF Education First, 2020). TOEFL PBT in this institution only applied 3 section above, and negate the writing section.

TOEFL PBT scoring based on a conversion table that was issued by Educational Testing Service (ETS). So are the TOEFL PBT scoring was held in STKIP PGRI Sidoarjo was counted by ETS conversion table. The result of the test was displayed in the tables below:

Table 1. Average Score of TOEFL PBT

<b>Department</b>	<b>Total of Students</b>	<b>TOEFL PBT Score</b>
English Education Department	49	410.7
Mathematics Education Department	54	355.5
History Education Department	18	349.6

The highest score is 633 from English education department and the lowest score is 217 that was gotten by 5 students. Which mean those all 5 students has no right answer on their test. The average score of all student was 376.9 which based on the scale of TOEFL PBT score is categorized low. TOEFL PBT scored on a scale of 310 to 677 which includes only the first three sections of the test. The writing section is not include in the overall score, it is instead reported separately on a scale of 0 to 6 (EF Education First, 2020).

Moreover this research discussed about listening and reading skills that was measured from listening comprehension score and reading comprehension score to found the correlation between both skills, was it related or not. the statistical evaluation of correlation between listening and reading score of TOEFL PBT was displayed in the table below:

Table 2. The Average of Listening Comprehension and Reading Comprehension TOEFL PBT Score

<b>Department</b>	<b>Listening Comprehension Score</b>	<b>Reading Comprehension Score</b>
English Education Department	40.9	40.7
Mathematics Education Department	35.6	35.8
History Education Department	37.4	33.9

Table 3. Listening Comprehension Score and Reading Comprehension Score Correlation

<b>Department</b>	<b>Correlation Value</b>
English Education Department	0.884
Mathematics Education Department	0.783
Sejarah Education Department	0.642

Correlation is an effect size and so we can verbally describe the strength of the correlation using the guide by Evan (Evans, 1996) suggests for the absolute value,

0.00 - 0.19	very weak
0.20 – 0.39	weak
0.40 – 0.59	moderate
0.60 – 0.79	strong
0.80 – 1.0	very strong

Table 2 showed that the scores between listening comprehension section and reading comprehension section showed inconspicuous differences. The range of the score was 0.2 to 3.5, and the furthest differences was in the score obtained by students of history education department.

Then based on the table 3 and the guideliness of the strengths of the positive and negative correlation can be concluded that the correlation between listening comprehension score and reading comprehension score of English education department students' had very strong relationship. Meanwhile the correlation between listening comprehension and reading comrehention skills of mathematics education department and history education department had strong relationship.

## **DISCUSSION**

The average TOEFL PBT score of students of all 3 department showed low scale based on the recognized score level by ETS there is 310 to 677. There a number of possibilities regarding the cause of the students' low score. The limited time of treatment can be the first cause, where the students only studied TOEFL skills for 2 hours a day in 10 days. The second cause it can be to that the students do not actively use English in their activities so their vocabularies is limited and also their grammar skills.

As had explained in the introduction that listening and reading are receptive skill that need comprehension skills to accept the information as an input. M. Palmer conclude that there are some similarities between reading and listening comprehension are as follows (Palmer, 1997) : (1) both are receptive language processes both use internal conceptualization of information, (2) both require short-term memory processing, (3) both form part of central language comprehension system, (4) both require adequate auditory processing skills. The differences between listening and reading comprehension was showed in table 4.

Tabel 4. Differences between Listening and Reading Comprehension

<b>Reading</b>	<b>Listening</b>
reading is a learned skill	listening is a developmental acquisition
reading time controlled by reader	listening received at rate of speaker
can reread	cannot relisten
lack of prosody	there may be inefficient word recognition processes
need to integrate auditory and visual skills	auditory processing skills
decoding visually and auditorily	decoding auditorily only
written language segmented, formal, slow, deliberate	speech is rapid and effortless
words separated by spaces	prosody and intonation used
words always look the same	words differ according to context
used to communicate over time and distance (isolated)	occurs within social environment, face-to-face

The range of the the average score of listening comprehension and reading comprehension was low and the correlation value between listening comprehension and reading comprehension showed that the relationship was strong, so can be conclude that the student abilities in listening comprehension and reading comprehension affected each other. Eventhough have relationship each other, listening comprehension and reading comprehension were different as seen in table 4. The differences of listening comprehension and reading comprehension skill were showed from the both average score of history education department students' that higher than two other department.

## **CONCLUSION**

There are 4 skills that have to mastered to the people who want use English in their activity. Those skills are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. TOEFL is a standardized test to measure the English language ability of non-native speakers wishing to enroll in English-speaking universities.

Listening and reading share many comprehension processes, there are differences in the way the information is processed. Readers often remember more details and can go back to the text. Listeners construct understanding as they listen and often come away with an overall understanding of ideas. Students who are successful at reading comprehension understand at the sentence level as well as understanding the text as an integrated whole (Perfetti, 2007).

Based on result of this research, there are a correlation between listening comprehension skills and reading comprehension skills in completing TOEFL PBT that indicate had strong relationship (0.60-079). It can be meant that listening comprehension can affected to reading comprehension.

The low score that got by the students must be thought deeply to be solved. Increasing English reference studying material can be implemented to increase students' vocabularies, especially for students from mathematics education department and history education department. English proficiency test can be held in the begining of study, so the students English capacity knowing early. Then the duration of pre-treatment before test could be added for the students who have low English proficiency.

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