

DOES LISTENING HABIT INFLUENCE STUDENTS' LISTENING COMPREHENSION ON TOEFL? FOCUSING ON UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES

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The aim of this study is to unpack the influence of listening habits on listening skills, particularly in the TOEFL ITP test. Among three available sections in TOEFL, the focus of this study is the listening section. Little did previous research reveal the relevant effect of listening behavior on the listening assessment of the TOEFL. Since listening becomes the most complicated skill for most test takers, this research is going to outline whether there is a correlation between students' habitual listening in the past with their listening comprehension on the TOEFL test. The methodology used in this research is quantitative research with 80 university students as participants. With the result of a significant 2-tailed number at 0.26 using Pearson Bivariate Correlation, the finding reveals that there is no correlation between listening habit and TOEFL listening comprehension from the university student's point of view. However, the arguments by university students of this statistical result are described narratively.

Keywords: TOEFL, Listening Habit, Listening Comprehension

INTRODUCTION

Some of Asia countries, TOEFL ITP is still extensively utilized as mandatory document in applying for either scholarship or working (Golubovich, Tolentino, & Papageorgiou, 2018). TOEFL ITP consists of listening section with 50 questions, structure and written expression section with 40 questions and reading section with 50 questions (Deborah, 2001). All of these sections are presented in multiple-choice questions. A test-taker needs to finish TOEFL ITP within 110 minutes in total.

From three sections tested in TOEFL ITP, listening skill becomes the hardest one for most of the students. The listening comprehension is often ignored and seems to be the most underestimated English competence for test takers. Furthermore, compared to IELTS listening test, the TOEFL listening of ITP seems to be more prominent in higher-order thinking level according to Bloom's Taxonomy (Baghaei, Bagheri, & Yamini, 2020).

However, listening skill can be improved through training program or English listening course. It has been proven that there was a positive change of auditory process after EFL students partook in training program of listening (Butler, Schueler & Lucker, 2022). The most frequently challenges faced by students are the variety of speaking styles, accents, redundancy, clustering and the inability to remember the recent statements in a fast way (Ömer, 2018). In addition, to obtain a good listening of second language several positive actions should be clarified in listening treatment for second language such as the involvement of video or images, redundancy or disruptive noise in listening audio, review the matter of competence, various learning approach for diverse learners, and pursue persistently to observe listening questions to avoid ambiguity (Franz, 2022). This skill seems to be complicated since it requires high concentration as well as needs good understanding of spoken English (Basri, Rafli, & Murtadho, 2020). For most people, listening cannot be learned but it must be trained by habits (Imhof, 1998). Listening comprehension is the only one audio skill that is tested in TOEFL and becomes a challenge for some test-takers who used to learn using visual technique to be able to understand something in audio technique way so suddenly. Not only did the listening technique play important role but also the lexical resource significantly matters for non-native listeners. It stated that there must have been 4000-7000 vocabularies suggested to understand what the native speakers say. Though the glossary of words might have to be enhanced (Malmström, 2015)

The later challenges of listening is audio barrier and lack of facilitation. The relational listening is significant to create better understanding between speaker and hearer (Valikoski, Korttesmaa & Kuuluvainen, 2021). The gesture and the cultural behavior also tends to give an ease for listeners to comprehend the ongoing dialogue. It happened naturally and tacitly but can affect positively to the listener (Shirota, 2021)

However, listening skill of TOEFL ITP does not provide any visual aid or gesture. It completely involves a hearing. It could be something easy and simple for people who used to experience auditory learning or trained themselves in listening English far before they take the official test of TOEFL ITP (Abdullah & Rahman, 2017). As consequence, every listening activity involves three essential parts such as being attentive, perceptive and responsive (Rikkonen, Isotalus, & Haukkala, 2022).

Furthermore, some previous researches about the effect of habits that people had done for such a long time toward a specific language skill have been issued. Both habits and the language skill have shown a positive relation. One of them is shown in a research (Huang, Baile, Sass, & Chang, 2021) that stated there is a strong positive relationship between *TOEFL Junior*® test scores and external variables such as their history of English learning experiences from kindergarten to present and evaluating their own English language skills.

On the other hand, another study (Nurjanah, Miranti, & Dwiastuty, 2018) reveals that there is a significant correlation between students' habits of listening English song toward English listening skill. A correlation research unpacks the positive relation between habits of listening English music and glossary mastery to listening comprehension of high school students (Meutia, Asib, & Rais, 2014).

However, external and internal factors of TOEFL listening section define how uneasy TOEFL for test takers. The disruptions from inside could be lack of listening experiences, lack of English auditory practice, the limited quantity of time, the number of listening questions, lack of listening impairment, and short-term memory of spoken English. Additionally, other factors can be personal issue such as lack of listening enthusiasm, difficulty in concentration, lack of English glossary, feeling unstimulating in listening, being easily distracted, random translation from listening, difficulty in discovering the key words, and multitasking while listening such as listening while writing or taking notes. Furthermore, the external issues addressed by TOEFL listening are caused by the native speakers' accent, the speaking speed, the intonation and pronunciation of the speakers, the word choice, the complexity of used sentences, and clustering or redundancy from the audio (Fitria, 2021)

Additional research mentions that metacognitive awareness strategy performs an essential role in listening comprehension of TOEFL test (In'nami & Koizumi, 2021). Also, the contextual information of a listening affects highly to the test takers while the noise level could significantly decrease the listening performance (Fujita, 2022)

From the result of previous researches mentioned above, there is a correlation

between learning experiences in the past toward students' English general listening performance. However, since there is not any results from previous studies related to listening habits that affect to listening comprehension on TOEFL ITP test, this research will be conducted to find out the relation between listening habits in the past by university students toward their TOEFL ITP listening score.

METHOD

The research method is an outline to measure how a research is conducted. It will determine the ways used to identify and analyze information related to the research topic. Methodology applied in this research is quantitative.

Quantitative research style is the procedures of collecting data and analyzing the instruments of research numerically. This research is to find out the figures, averages, create a prediction, test a correlation between two variables or more and generalize the results of respondents. The quantitative design implemented is correlation

The place where this research conducted is in one of private universities in East Java. The research instruments are TOEFL listening test, questionnaire, and documentation. First, the students were given the test of listening TOEFL to test their listening skill. Then, the students obtained questionnaire through google form to answer some questions related to the listening habit they have in their daily or they did in the past. Last stage, all their records of accomplishment of their study such as attendance list, listening answer samples and the questionnaire samples were collected as documentation.

After data is gathered, the result of the listening TOEFL test is entered into the SPSS as well as the data of questionnaire. Those two results of data were processed by using IBM SPSS 2020 Statistic application. Both the numeric data is operated using Pearson correlation method.

The data from TOEFL listening test and the questionnaire will be processed through SPSS statistics using Pearson correlation. Then, the result is presented in the output of operation. The positive correlation appears when the significant value is lower than 0.05 and higher than 0.01.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

This research has collected two main data. First data is from the result of TOEFL listening test and the second data is from the questionnaire. Eighty one students participate in this research. After they did the TOEFL listening test and answered the questionnaire, the data is processed by using IBM SPSS 2020 and analyzed by using Pearson Bivariate Correlation. Then the result shows there is negative relation between listening habit and listening skill for TOEFL Test. For details, the result can be seen in the table from SPSS below.

Table 1
Correlations

		Listening_Score	Listening_Habit
Listening_Score	Pearson Correlation	1	.127
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.260
	N	81	81
Listening_Habit	Pearson Correlation	.127	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.260	
	N	81	81

From the table above, it can be seen that the significance value is 0.260 which means the significant value is higher than 0.05 and it shows that the hypothesis of this research is refused. This means there is negative correlation between listening habit toward listening skill of TOEFL test.

As addition to the mentioned result from SPSS, this part elaborates the findings narratively. From the number of 80 participants who completed 30 questions

of listening TOEFL section of part A, the participants is divided into three categories. First is low group with correct answer number within 1-10, second category is medium group with true answers ranging from 11-20 and the high group with the number of correction above 20.

To measure the frequency of habitual listening in the past, through questionnaire the students require choosing between intervals 1-5 to decide the regularity of their listening habits. The number of low group is 18 students who stated that eight of them defined their listening habit by number 4 and the rest of them represent the listening nature by interval 2. The medium group consists of 29 students with score range 11-20. Nineteen students portray their listening behavior above 4 while ten students believe their listening frequency no more than number 4. Meanwhile, the high-score students is 33. Twenty students consider their listening habit up to interval 4 but thirteen students reckon the listening they had in the past within 1-3.

Furthermore, the participants contended on how long they have perceived to possess listening habit. Sixteen participants from low group had less than 3 years of English listening activity and three of them confidently stated that they listened English regularly more than 5 years. Furthermore, nineteen people in medium group felt they have encountered listening for less than 3 years and others with up to 5 years. In the high participant's category, twenty six students had barely listening frequency under 3 years while seven of them believed they get more listening exposure for more than 3 years.

Surprisingly, almost all participants have similar thought about what kind of listening they had the most. Most of them affirm that song is the most frequent audio they listen in English. Speech, podcast, news in English become other alternative ways for them to train their English listening skill.

However, the arguments dispute the previous statistic result. Almost 99 percent of participants agreed that listening habit influences their listening comprehension while only one participant disagreed about this. Most of the reasons by the affirmative participants are the listening skill can be gained easier if they get used to listening English. Further, they contend that listening is skill which requires practices and habits, listening practice can assist people to comprehend the language use, spoken information as well as the complicated pronunciation when it becomes a long sentence. In addition, listening habit can affect to writing and speaking skill. Through listening English information, people can be up to date with upcoming

information and current knowledge. By getting more listening exposure, people can learn how to respond any dialogue and learn the accent of English that sometimes can be burden for some English learners. The participants' voices are exactly very unequal with the previous quantitative findings

Discussion

Some of the previous researches related to TOEFL especially listening skill have been found. One of the researches by Yoestara and Putri, (2019) stated that there is correlation between self-efficacy to improve TOEFL score even though the correlation is low, it still contributes to the increasing of TOEFL score. This research only observes the TOEFL test as a whole variable while this current research particularly focuses only on listening skill. However, this previous result can be relevant to this research that test takers who have self-efficacy on listening might perform better than the ones who do not possess self-esteem of listening skill. As it shows similarity with the narrative description on the arguments of participants.

Another research shows that space of time between learning English and taking real test of TOEFL score did influence each other (Cho & Blood, 2020). It has been stated that how much the TOEFL[®] Primary[™] listening and reading scores can be expected in relation to the time interval between test administrations. It shows that the duration of learning can affect to TOEFL score gained by the test takers. This study somehow does not support the previous result due to the unavailability of positive relation between listening habit, that also means similar with space of time or listening learning duration with the score of TOEFL listening test.

Next study revealed that the use of individual feedback as well as group feedback gives a strong effect to students' listening assessment (Min & He, 2022). It seems that listening skill can be assessed by the student themselves. They can find out how far they understand English and what level they have accomplished. Otherwise, this finding only shows the result on listening in general, therefore, this study specified to the listening skill in TOEFL ITP test with the individual habit's listening plan in assessing their own listening skill.

In addition, another finding stated that students used three main strategies to answer such as anticipating the topic, determining the topic or main idea and anticipating question before listening (Silviyanti, Ramadhani & Samad, 2020). It can be seen that this research found some learning strategies for listening skill of TOEFL test. While this research only observed on how the students answer the TOEFL listening section, this study tried to complete the former research by finding out the

hidden factor of listening habits on improving listening score of TOEFL ITP that can probably be learning strategy.

The previous finding of research by Inoue and Lam (2021) revealed that there is no significant improvement of the planning time as well as interaction on the listening-to-speaking section of TOEFL IBT. The former result, therefore, supported this research, which shows that there is not positive significance of time consuming on listening practice with the listening performance in the term of TOEFL ITP test.

However, watching video as one of ways to enhance listening skill for EFL is proven to affect positively (Dehaki, 2017). This is contradictive with the result of this research that shows the negativity between listening habit in the past including learning through English video or audio and the English listening comprehension.

Then, a study by Hayati and Jalilifar (2009) stated that note-taking helps the students in learning listening. On the other hand, doing listening section in TOEFL test does not require note-taking. Further, note-writing is not needed in building the habitual listening either.

The result of this study shows that the students' listening TOEFL test are not contributed highly by listening habit since the data which have been analyzed shows the negative relation. From several of previous researches, most of researchers focused on general listening skill and did not specify to listening skill in TOEFL. Also, some of them only came up with the idea of finding learning strategies for listening without trying to see what came before the learning strategies. Therefore, this research is trying to fill the gap of former studies by finding out the relation between listening activities in the past toward the listening score of TOEFL test.

CONCLUSION

From this research, it can be concluded that the listening habit does not give high contribution to the students' listening TOEFL test. Yet, based on the narrative description of the research respondents, it is still highly recommended to have listening habits as the additional study to learn English listening by self-taught way.

However, the different result of quantitative data from this research and description inquiry might be caused by the lack of seriousness from research participants in filling the questionnaire and defining the rate of their listening habit. It can lead to the erroneous result, which showed the different result from the

statistical data and the respondents' narration. Therefore, it was highly suggested for future researcher to be more precise on the rate criteria of a language skill habits so the possible mistake can be minimized.

Also, the failure of listening habits and listening skill relevancy can be caused by the frequently-mentioned audio kind by participants. The respondents mentioned that most of English audio they listened were music. It can be the effect of insignificance of their listening habit toward their listening performance on TOEFL. However, song is proven to be not really effective in training the listening skill.

This research could be useful for both teacher and students. The English teachers can provide proper English learning strategy by listening more appropriate audio and make the student's better understanding in listening. While the student can take advantages by sorting the English audio, so they could make betterment on listening capability.

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