

## STUDENT'S DIFFICULTIES IN LISTENING TOEIC TEST OF SEMESTER II (MECHANICAL ENGINEERING STUDENTS) AT THE STATE POLYTECHNIC BENGKALIS

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**Abstract:** *Toeic test is one of the requirements to graduate at State Polytechnic Bengkalis. To pass in Toeic test, some students get difficulties to pass passing grade. The aim of this study is to find out students' difficulties in listening to Toeic tests and how to overcome the problem. The research involved semester II (Mechanical Engineering Students Class A and B) by purposive sampling technique with a total sampling of about 30 students. In this study, qualitative research was used. Meanwhile, in collecting research data, a questionnaire was given and a test analysis was used to analyze the data. This study found that students' ability in listening comprehension on Toeic test was average category from 11 students by 36.7%. Then students' difficulties in Toeic tests were in Picture description (used similar sound answered agree by 50%), question response (the speech rate answered agree by 53.3%), short conversation (unfamiliar word answered strongly agree by 53.5%), short talks (can easily miss the text answered agree by 43.3%).*

**Keywords:** *difficulties, Toeic test, listening*

### INTRODUCTION

In developing countries such as Indonesia, the skill of English is important to have. Therefore, some universities or even companies require English skills for their worker. To get English skills should be learned at an early stage. Learning English started with the base vocabulary, grammar, listening, speaking, and reading, an English skill is important in writing.

To prove someone has skilled English will be done by test.

One of the English skill tests is called the Toeic Test (Test of English for International Communication). The test has some parts such as Listening Comprehension (photos, question responses, conversations, and talks) and Reading Comprehension (incomplete sentences, text completion, and reading

comprehension).

According to Grant Trew (2011:3), The TOEIC test is an objective test using an optically-scanned answer sheet. There are 200 questions to answer in two hours in Listening (approximately 45 minutes, 100 questions) and Reading (75 minutes, 100 questions). Test scores indicate how well test takers can communicate with others in English in business, commerce, and industry. And the test does not require specialized knowledge or vocabulary beyond that of a person who uses English in everyday work activities. There is some description of questions in ToEIC Listening and Reading from ETS (2017) as the following explanation:

First, the listening section is four parts such as 1) a photograph by six pictures multiple choice question, 2) a question response about 25 multiple choice questions, 3) a short conversation about 13 conversations each with multiple choice questions, and 4) talks about 10 talks each multiple-choice question. Second, the reading section is three parts such as 1) sentence completion with 30 each multiple-choice questions, 2) text completion with four texts each with

four multiple-choice questions, and 3) reading comprehension (ten single passages each with two to four multiple-choice questions and multiple passages each with five multiple choice question).

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **Related Theory**

#### **The Nature of ToEIC Listening Test**

According to Rohana and Syamsudin (2021:31), Hearing is defined as a process of receiving sounds coming from outside without paying a lot of attention to the meaning and message of the sound. While listening is the process of hearing with understanding and attention to the meaning and sound message. The listening process includes hearing, but hearing is not necessarily listening. In English, there is the term "listening comprehension" for listening and "to hear" for hearing. In the listening ToEIC test, the test taker will listen to some (questions responses, conversations, and talks) that they have answered in multiple choice questions.

Another opinion about listening also stated by Nunan (1988) asserted that "listening is the basic

skill in language learning. Without listening skills, learners will never learn to communicate effectively. In fact, over 50% of the time that students spend functioning in a foreign language will be devoted to listening”.

To be clearer, Jinghua Lie Hui (2013:22), said the listening test measures how well a test taker understands spoken English. Test takers are asked to answer questions based on a variety of statements, questions, conversations, and talks recorded in English. The listening section consists of 100 multiple-choice questions. The testing time is about 45 minutes. Each test taker receives a score for listening on a scale from 5 to 495 points with increments of 5 points.

Here are some related researches from previous research by Bret Miller (2021:1) about the effect of metacognitive intervention on listening comprehension. The research found strong empirical evidence that our lower proficiency EFL Learners’ listening performance improved. Such as these results provide evidence of a potential proficiency threshold for EFL learners to start to benefit from a strategy-focused metacognitive intervention.

This researcher noticed that metacognitively influences listening skills.

Another research was carryout by Hiep (2020:16) about difficulties in Studying TOEIC Listening Comprehension. The study's findings would point out learners’ general difficulties (vocabulary, pronunciation, background knowledge, and psychological). It can be concluded that the material of learning listening TOEIC listening comprehension can be the problem, and the physiology of students should be considered in skilled listening.

The next research on the same topic was also carried out by Koryati and Aisyah Sahab (2021:41) about the correlation between Students’ Listening Comprehension Strategy and Their TOEIC Score at the State Polytechnic of Sriwijaya. Their research found that most students had Good (49%) and Average (48%) Listening comprehension Strategies and most students got level 3 (the highest level) for TOEIC listening score (51%). The Pearson-Product Moment Correlation Coefficient showed a negative and insignificant correlation between the student’s

listening comprehension strategy and their TOEIC listening score. From their research, it can be concluded that although students used some strategy in listening to TOEIC they cannot achieve a good score in listening TOEIC test. From the previous theory and research, the researcher carried out research about students' difficulties in listening to the Toeic test because some of the students who have done pre- test got bad scores. The researcher would know what the student's difficulties in Toeic listening and the solution to the problem would be used for students to improve their skill in listening comprehension.

**METHODOLOGY OF STUDY**

The research was done from March to April 2023. The research involved semester II (Mechanical Engineering Students Class A and B) by purposive sampling technique with a total sampling of about 30 students. The researcher used qualitative research which data is collected by observable people (Bogdan and Taylor in Moleong, 2007:3). In collecting research data, the descriptive method did by test analysis and a questionnaire. Then, the procedure of this research

used a listening TOEIC test which was divided among Mechanical Engineering Students. After that, both data were analyzed by the researcher. The last, the researcher drew a conclusion from the result.

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**  
**Listening Comprehension Test**

This part shows the findings of the test and the questionnaires. Based on the test that the researcher gave to students, the listening comprehension TOEIC test, the description of the resulting test would be presented below.

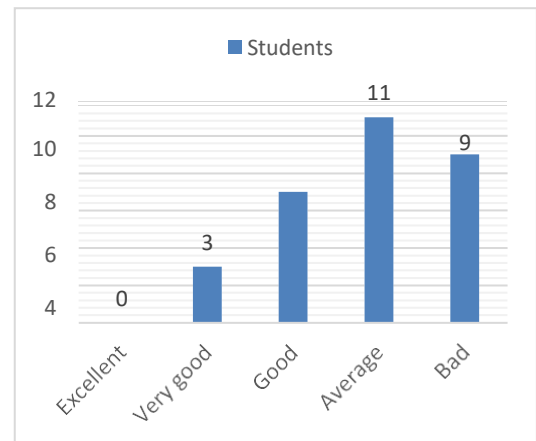


Figure 1: Students' scores in listening Toeic Test

The figure above presented students' scores in the listening TOEIC test, 11 students got the average category of (36.7%), 9 students got the bad category of (23.3%), 7 students got the good

category (30%), 3 students got very good category by (10%), and there were no students got excellent category. So, the result above indicated that students still got difficulty in listening comprehension TOEIC test because many students were in the average category by 36.7%.

### **Questionnaire**

Based on the Questionnaire that the researcher gave to students, the result found that:

#### **Students' general problems with listening**

First, Students 'general problems with listening because of vocabulary, pronunciation, background knowledge, and physiological factors. There was 40% of students did not have the opportunity to use words regularly, 36.7% of students did not know the meaning of the word in different contexts, and 23.3 % of students got hiding collocation for vocabulary.

Second, Students had general problems with listening because of pronunciation. There was 53.5% of students got difficulty recognizing the word, 43.3% of students did not understand the meaning of the word, and 3.4 % of students did not identify the main information.

Third, Students had general problems with listening because of background knowledge. There was 36.7% of students got difficulty recognizing specialized terminology, 46.7% of students did not understand unfamiliar topics, and 16.7 % of students did not have a cultural background in English.

Fourth, Students have general problems with listening because of physiological factors. There 63.3% of students got stressed in doing listening tests, 23.3% of students get bored, and 13.3 % of students did concentrate on doing listening tests.

#### **Students Difficulties in Each of Parts of TOEIC Listening**

First, regarding Students' difficulties in picture description with the question (unclear and invisible picture), students answered agree by 46.75%, students answered strongly agree by 26.7%, students answered no idea by 23.3%, and students answered disagree by 3.3%.

Second, Students' difficulties in picture description with the question (the picture had too many details), students answered strongly agree by 43.3%, students answered agree by 43.3%, students answered no agree by 43.3%, students answered no

idea by 10%, and students answered disagree by 3.4%.

Third, regarding Students' difficulties in picture description with the question (used collocations instead of simple words), students answered strongly agree by 30%, students answered agree by 50%, and students answered no idea by 20%.

Fourth, regarding Students' difficulties in picture description with the question (used similar sound), students answered strongly agree by 43.3%, students answered agree by 50%, and students answered no idea by 6.7%.

Fifth, Students' difficulties in question and response (students cannot recognize what type of question is), students answered agree 43.3%, students answered strongly agree 50%, students answered no idea 3.35%, and students answered disagree 3.35%.

Sixth, Students' difficulties in question and response (used many different contexts), students answered agreed 43.3%, students answered strongly agree 20%, students answered no idea 26.7%, students answered disagree 7%, and students answered strongly disagree 3%.

Seventh, regarding Students' difficulties in question and response (the speech rate), students answered agree 53.3%, students answered strongly agree 20%, students answered no idea 20%, students answered disagree 3.35%, and students answered strongly disagree 3.35%.

Eight, Students' difficulties in question and response (difficult to understand speaker intention), students answered agree by 33.3, students answered strongly agree by 40%, students answered no idea by 20%, students answered disagree by 3.35%, and students answered strongly disagree 3.35%.

Ninth, regarding Students' difficulties in short conversations (unfamiliar words), students answered agree by 36.7%, students answered strongly agree 53.5%, and students answered no idea 10%.

Tenth, regarding Students' difficulties in short conversations (trouble in different accents), students answered agree 43.3%, students answered strongly agree 23.3%, students answered no idea 23.3%, and students answered disagree 10%.

Eleventh, regarding Students'

difficulties in short conversation (hard to find the keyword), students answered agree 46.7%, students answered strongly agree 26.7%, students answered no idea 20%, and students answered disagree 6.6%.

Twelfth, Students' difficulties in short talks (cannot easily follow the text), students answered agree 40%, students answered strongly agree 16.7%, students answered no idea 36.7%, and students answered disagree 6.6%.

Thirteenth, Students' difficulties in short talks (can easily miss the text) students answered agree 43.3%, students answered strongly agree 33.3%, students answered no idea 13.3%, and students answered disagree 10%.

Fourteenth, regarding students' difficulties in short talks (not concentration when listening in a long time) students answered agree by 43.3%, students answered strongly agree by 33.3%, students answered no idea by 13.3%, and students answered disagree by 10%.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

### **Conclusions**

Based on the test and the

questionnaire that the researcher gave to students, it can be concluded that students have general problem with listening because of several factors such as background knowledge, vocabulary (students did not have the opportunity to use words regularly by 40%), pronunciation (students got difficulty recognizing the word by 53.5%), background knowledge (students did not understand unfamiliar topics by 46.7%), and physiological factor (students got stressful in doing listening test by 63.3%).

Then, students had problems in part of each listening test were Picture description (the picture has too many details answered strongly agree by 43.3%, using collocations instead of simple words answered agree by 50%, using similar sounds answered agree by 50%), question response (students cannot recognize the type of question was answered strongly agree by 50%, used many different contexts answered agree by 43%, the speech rate answered agree by 53.3%, difficult to understand speaker intention answered by 40%, short conversation (unfamiliar word answered strongly agree by 53.5%, trouble in different accent answered

agree by 43.3%, and hard to find the keyword answered agree by 46.7%) short talks (cannot easy follow the text answered agree by 40%, can easily miss the text answered agree by 43.3%, and not concentration when listening in a long time answered agree by 43.3%).

In conclusion, students' scores in listening comprehension TOEIC test (mechanical engineering students) from 30 students who carried the test, there were 11 students in an average category of 36.7%. this happened because of general factors (vocabulary, background knowledge, physiology, and pronunciation. Then, the material in the listening test also made students got difficult to understand it.

### Suggestion

From the research problem above, the research suggested that for general listening comprehension, students should practice more and more listening to the English language. It could be stated with music, film, YouTube, and some interesting media on the internet. Then for improving the test and skill in listening comprehension, students should follow some applications of the TOEIC test because only by doing some tryouts,

students could be known and measured their listening skills.

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