

The Difficulties Experienced by The Eight Semester Students in The TOEFL Listening Section

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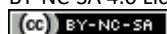
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Abstract

The Objective of the research is to identify the difficulties faced by eight semester students in UKI Toraja in listening section on TOEFL preparation. In this research the researcher used qualitative method. The participant in this research was the eight semester students of English department of FKIP UK Toraja. They were chosen by purposive sample technique. The instrument was interview. Then, the data were analyzed by descriptively. From the result of the research that has been done, the researcher concludes that students of English department of FKIP UKI Toraja have difficulties when they faced TOEFL preparation on listening section. There are some difficulties are: didn't get the point about the conversation, difficult conclude the vocabulary with a variety words, can't figure it out what native speaker said, lack knowledge about idiom, only focus with one word that make students difficult to understand about it and didn't pay attention to the conversation.

Keywords: *difficulties, listening, TOEFL Preparation*

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Introduction

In order to determine one's level of English proficiency, the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) is one of the most popular options in Indonesia. The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) is designed to evaluate the level of English proficiency of those whose native tongue is not English, as stated by Jamieson (2000: 59). In today's competitive job market, a high TOEFL score is essential. This is evident from the standards set by colleges and universities around the globe. Add Indonesia to the list of countries requiring a minimum TOEFL score for graduation.

The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) has become a challenge for certain students because it is often used as a proxy for evaluating the level of English proficiency among recent college and university grads. In order to graduate from the English Department, students must take both a comprehension test and the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) was selected since it is the most recognized standardization exam for students of English in countries like Indonesia. Lack of vocabulary knowledge, test-taking techniques, and language skills are all possible reasons why students don't do well on the TOEFL. In this vein, Mahmud (2014:19) argues that students' lack of foundational English skills, exam preparation, study motivation, and individual differences (such as age and socioeconomic status) were the main causes of their TOEFL test scores falling below the minimum passing threshold.

Skillful listening, according to Russel in Hasyuni(2006:8), entails taking in information while maintaining focus and showing gratitude for what was heard. Then, you'll need to draw on a variety of linguistic abilities—not just listening—when engaging in this exercise. The ability to listen can refer either to paying attention or to actually hearing what is being said. However, hearing and listening are not the same thing. The act of hearing is largely passive and occurs automatically. It is possible to listen to music without paying attention to it. However, when we listen, our minds do not instantly grasp the meaning of the words. Deciphering the intent and message of sounds or words is essentially what listening entails. It's an ongoing process that entails a lot more than just putting names on things.

This study will focus on the challenges students at UKI Toraja face when preparing for the TOEFL listening section. Many students at UKI Toraja report that their scores on the listening section of the test are lower than those they achieved in other parts of the exam. Given the foregoing, the author wishes to pursue the study project titled: Eight semester-long TOEFL prep students had this issue with the listening section.

Method

The researcher choose the interview technique for the purpose of this study. The technique is an appropriate method to use when the topic of research is discuss about feelings, perspective, thought and experiences. An interview is a research tool that can be defined as a person- to- person structured conversation for the purpose of finding meaningful data that has to be collected, analyzed, and validated (Griffie, 2012:24). Interviews can be designed depending on the needs being addressed and the information in three types : there are structured interview, semi- structured interview, and unstructured interview (Edwards, 2013:31). The researcher applied a semistructured interview where the interviewer is free to ask for clarification and even add follow up questions to get the information from the interviewee. The subjects of this research were took purposevely from the eighth semester students. Then, the data were analyzed by descriptive qualitative method.

Results and Discussion

Data were collected by 10 students who were chose purposivly in order to get the information about their difficulties faced by teh eight semester students in the TOEFL listening section. the data were transcribed and then were analysed descriptivly. The result showed in the table 1.

Table 1. The Difficulties Experienced By The Eight Semester Students In The TOEFL Listening Section

No.	The Difficulties Experienced By The Eight Semester Students In The TOEFL Listening Section	Total perceive score
1	Difficult to understand idiomatic expression	10
2	Not familiar with the idiomatic expression	10
3	Difficult to determine main idea	9
4	Low skillful of listening	7
5	Have less of vocabulary	7
6	Just fokus to the short time	7
7	Not good quality of audio	7
8	Less of consenstration	4
9	Lost focus quickly	3
10	Difficult to understand the same pronunciation	3
11	Fail to get the conclusion of the conversation	1
12	Confused to decide the almost same answer options	1
13	Focus to difficult words	1
14	The speed and accent of the speakers speech	1

Based on the table 1, found that the eight semester students of UKI Toraja said that they were difficult to understand and not familiar with the idiomatic expression on the conversation. Most of them were also difficult to determine main idea. Others were have low skillful of listening, less vocabulary, just focus to the short time, not good quality of audio, less of consenstration, lost focus quickly, difficult to understand teh same

pronunciation, fail to get the conclusion of the conversation, confused to decide the most same answer options, focus to difficult words, and the speed and accent of speakers speech. Those difficulties would be discussed as follows;

Students difficulties in determine main idea

Based on the result of research conducted by researcher, researcher saw that there were several difficulties in listening section on TOEFL preparation, namely: Based on the researcher findings, the researcher saw difficulties that faced by students when determine main idea in Listening section on TOEFL preparation is confused when trying to find a main idea on conversation. According Achmad Fanani, S.S., M.Pd., (2014:17- 24) A paragraph is a group of sentences related to a particular topic, or central theme. Every paragraph has a key concept or main idea. The main idea is the most important piece of information the author wants you to know about the concept of that paragraph. The relation with my research and previous study Chairuddin & Ulfa (2018) entitled Students Difficulties in Passing Listening Section in TOEFL Prediction Test was focus on the difficulties in listening section of TOEFL. But sometimes students know to find the main idea sometimes they didn't find it. The other students sometimes understand depending on the audio playing but according to her experience when the listening section, the audio was a coincidence so she don't understand what's being said. Also when students determine main idea students difficult to find it. There are some difficulties they get first is lack of concentration, being unable to distinguish almost the same word and time is given is too short.

Determine idiomatic expression

In this part there are some difficulties that faced by students are most of students that join TOEFL Preparation in listening section felt difficult too in this point. According Achmad Fanani, S.S., M.Pd., (2014:17- 24) idiomatic expressions are formal English expressions that differ from the literal meaning. Thus, idiomatic expression can be difficult for us to understand if we do not have an extensive vocabulary. The relation between my research based on previous study by Darti & Asmawati (2017) entitled Analysing Students' Difficulties Toward Listening Comprehension was focus on listening skill and also students who study foreign language. Based on the result students difficult answer some question in idiomatic expression because lack of vocabulary, cannot to be looked at in a straight line, and when found a new word in idiomatic expression it's difficult translate it and students need a enough time to translate it and move to another question and also lack of knowledge about idiom, just focus on that word and difficult to understand the meaning of that idiom.

Inference

In this stage there are also difficulties that faced by students to summarize the conversation that being discussed. According Achmad Fanani, S.S., M.Pd., (2014:17- 24)

inference is draw logical conclusions based on the limited information contained in the conversation. In other words, an inference question asks you to pick up on information that is indirectly given, rather than being directly stated in the passage. But the result student feel difficult when concluding the conversation because they lack of vocabulary, didn't get the point about the conversation, difficult conclude the vocabulary with a variety words, can't figure it out what native speaker said, only focus with one word that make students difficult to understand about it and didn't pay attention to the conversation.

Conclusion

After conducting the research, the researcher comes to the conclusions. There is conclusion can be stated toward research questions: Almost all the eight semester students at English department of UKI Toraja find the difficulties when faced the listening section on TOEFL preparation. Student feel difficult when concluding the conversation because they didn't get the point about the conversation, difficult conclude the vocabulary with a variety words, can't figure it out what native speaker said, lack knowledge about idiom, only focus with one word that make students difficult to understand about it and didn't pay attention to the conversation.

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