



## ***AN ANALYSIS OF THE STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES IN LISTENING SECTION USING GENIUS TOEFL APPLICATION***

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### ***Abstract***

*The purpose of this research is to know the students' difficulty in doing the Genius TOEFL Application test, especially in the listening section. The method of this research uses descriptive qualitative research. The result shows that the students' difficulty in doing TOEFL listening is both external and internal. External factors: the native speaker's accent, the speaker's speed, and the speaker's intonation. Internal factors: the students do not have previous experience using the Genius TOEFL application Test, the students have a lack of practice, the students do not have a hearing impairment, the students lack of concentration, the students have limited vocabulary, the students have trouble finding keywords, and the students do not know the strategy how to answer the question.*

**Keywords:** *Genius Application, Listening section, TOEFL Test*

### **INTRODUCTION**

TOEFL as a Test of English as a Foreign Language is a standardized academic English test. The TOEFL is also accepted as proof of English skills by some universities outside of the world. This test is not only used to register at the university but is also required if you want to work in government agencies, take care of licensing, companies, and for scholarship registration. Based on Setiawan (2013) states that the TOEFL was used as a criterion for university admission or for obtaining a scholarship. Several Indonesian universities need the TOEFL test examination as part of their graduation criteria. TOEFL has also become one of the standard requirements to enter Indonesian universities.

TOEFL examines language skills that are tailored to the academic and professional fields. This also applies to students D3 Nursing at University of Muhammadiyah Pringsewu (UMPRI) Lampung. These fields are packaged and divided into 3 sections.



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TOEFL test based on Genius application usually consists of three sections with 140 questions. TOEFL Genius application includes three aspects, namely (1) Listening Comprehension there are 50 questions consisting of parts A, B, and C, and measures the skill to understand authentic speech patterns used both in academic (formal) and non-academic (informal) situations. Listening Comprehension (50 questions, 30-40 minutes). (2) Structure and Written Expression there are 40 questions, and (3) Reading Comprehension there are 50 questions too.

The purpose of listening Comprehension on the TOEFL Test is to measure the ability to understand short and long conversations in English. This section contains audio recordings, similar to what you might hear from a group of students at an English-speaking school or university. (Fitria & Prastiwi, 2020 ) mentions that the listening comprehension on the TOEFL section tests is how much we can listen to conversations and monologues in English. These conversations consist of short conversations, long conversations, and speeches. Structure and Written Expression (40 questions, 25 minutes). However, to be able to understand spoken language in addition to having to get used to listening to English spoken, we must know English grammar (grammar) adequately. All sentences in this section use the same sentence grammatical (grammatically correct) and usually in the form of a complete sentence. All these sentences are pronounced in conversational English. According to Ang-zie (2020: 10), to answer the listening comprehension questions well, we are required to have to know the strategies/ knowing tips and trick how to master the listening skill on the TOEFL test, which meant that the students must know the skill to understand the stress and tone, understand the difference in sound, understand idioms, understand conversational phrases, understanding groups or verb phrases, find implied information (not clearly stated), understand comparisons, and understand the meaning of the conversation or conversation.

Listening difficulties for the students of D3 Keperawatan University of Muhammadiyah Pringsewu (UMPRI) Lampung include understanding of vocabulary, grammar, context, accent or pronunciation, and interesting skill conclusions. Some other things that problems when facing the TOEFL listening test include not understanding the topic, foreign words, nervousness, being unfamiliar with diction and grammar, repetitions and pauses, wide imagination, and missing detailed information, lack of concentration,

lack of understanding of English accents, interpret word for word, lack of knowledge of vocabulary and pronunciation, unable to distinguish certain words and sounds, do not know the strategies how to master on listening test capture the idea of the speaker, recognize the idiomatic language, define the coherent marker, give the utterance a literal meaning, retain the important details. Etc. The objective of this research is the students of the D3 Nursing of English course at University Muhammadiyah of Pringsewu (UMPRI) Lampung, there are 18 students.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study used descriptive qualitative research. Neergard & Ulhøi (2007: 383), qualitative research is defined as a study that focuses on understanding in the naturalistic setting or everyday life, or of a certain phenomenon or person. They were studies that include the context in which the study's phenomenon is embedded. He stated that qualitative researchers developed concepts, ideas, thoughts, and understanding from patterns in the data rather than collecting data to analyze models, hypotheses, or theories.

The method of collecting data in this study used a questionnaire. Data collection techniques were the most important step in research because the main purpose of the research was to get the data. McNabb (2004: 109), stated that a questionnaire could be used to gather information about a large number of respondents (populations) or small groups (samples).

In this research, the respondents were the third-semester students of the English Course at D3 Keperawatan University of Muhammadiyah Pringsewu (UMPRI) Lampung. There are 18 students. In this research, the researcher used media for sharing questionnaires by using Google Forms. Google forms provided a simple interface to construct interactive forms that contain a variety of question types (multiple-choice, short answer, long answer, dropdown, etc. (Talbert, 2017). Here, the questions were in the form of multiple-choice with four answer options A, B, C, or D. In this study, the researcher used the technique of data analysis based on Miles and Huberman (1994) which is involving three steps: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. The results of questionnaire data processing were often presented in descriptive form.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The objective of this study is to know the students' difficulty in doing the Genius TOEFL test listening comprehension skills. Two factors cause the students difficulty in doing the TOEFL test in the listening section both external and internal factors. Below are the findings of the research as follows:

**Table 1** External Factor

No.	Statement	Indicators		
		Yes	Sometimes	No
1.	The speaker's accent affects your TOEFL Listening skill.	15	1	2
2.	Speakers' speed affects your TOEFL Listening skill.	12	1	5
3.	Speakers' intonation/emphasis affects your TOEFL Listening skill.	10	6	2
4.	The speakers' pause in pronouncing a sentence affects your TOEFL Listening skill.	9	3	6
5.	The choice of words (diction) and foreign terms conveyed by the speaker affects your TOEFL listening skill.	9	4	5
6.	The sentence structures conveyed by the speaker are too complex, so it affects your TOEFL Listening skill.	11	3	4
7.	An audio interruption makes the audio sounds less/unclear when you are Listening to TOEFL.	12	3	5

The table above shows that several external factors caused difficulty in doing the Genius TOEFL application test of listening comprehension. The first statement is "The speaker's accent affects your TOEFL Listening skill". 15 students said 'yes, 1 student said 'sometimes, and only 2 students said 'no'. Based on those answers, it shows that most students feel that the speaker's accent affects their TOEFL Listening skill". The second statement is about "Speakers' speed affects your TOEFL Listening skill". 12 students said 'yes, 1 student said 'sometimes, and only 5 students said 'no'. Based on those answers, it shows that most students feel that the speakers' speed affects their TOEFL Listening skills. The third statement is about "Speakers' intonation/emphasis affects your TOEFL Listening skill". 10 students said 'yes, 6 students said 'sometimes, and only 2 students or said 'no'. Based on those answers, it shows that most students feel that the speakers' intonation/emphasis affects their TOEFL Listening skills. The fourth statement is about "Speakers' pauses in pronouncing a sentence aff your TOEFL Listening skill". 9 students said 'yes' 3 students said sometimes only 6 students said 'no'. Based on those answers, it shows that most students feel that the speakers' pause in pronouncing a sentence affects their TOEFL Listening skills. The fifth statement about "The choice of words (diction) and foreign terms conveyed by the speaker affects your TOEFL listening skill". 9 students

said yes, and 4 students said 'sometimes only 5 students said 'no'. Based on those answers, it shows that most students feel that the choice of words (diction) and foreign terms conveyed by the speaker affects their TOEFL listening skills. The sixth statement "The sentence structure conveyed by the speaker is too complex then affects your TOEFL Listening skill". 11 students said 'yes', 3 students said sometimes only 4 students said 'no'. Based on those answers, it shows that most students feel that the sentence structure conveyed by the speaker is too complex then affects their TOEFL Listening skills. The seventh statement about "There is audio interruption so that the audio sounds less/unclear in Listening TOEFL." There 12 students said 'yes', 3 students said sometimes', and 5 students said 'no'. Based on those answers, it shows that most students feel that audio interruption makes the audio sounds less/unclear in Listening TOEFL".

**Table 2** Internal Factor (1)

No.	Statement	Indicators	
		Yes	No
1.	Having previous experience doing the Genius TOEFL application test before	3	15
2.	Lack of practice in listening to genius TOEFL application test	5	13
3.	Limited time in doing genius TOEFL application listening test	16	2

The table above shows that some internal factors caused difficulty in doing the Genius TOEFL application test of the listening section. The 1st statement is about "Have previous experience in doing genius TOEFL application test before". 3 students said, 'yes' and 15 students said 'no'. Based on those answers, it shows that most students do not have previous experience in listening to the genius TOEFL application test. The 2nd statement about "Lack of practice in listening to TOEFL". 5 students said, 'yes' and 13 students said 'no'. Based on those answers, it shows that most students do not lack practice in listening to TOEFL before. The 3rd statement is about "Limited time in doing genius TOEFL application ain listening test". 16 students said, 'yes' and 2 students said 'no'. Based on those answers, it shows that most students have limited time in doing the Genius TOEFL application listening test.

**Table 3** Internal Factor (2)

No.	Statement	Indicators		
		Many	Enough	Less
4.	A lot of listening questions which consist of 50 questions	16	2	0

The 4th statement is about “A lot of listening questions which consist of 50 questions”. 16 students said ‘many’, 2 students said ‘enough’, and no one student said ‘less’. Based on those answers, it shows that most students feel that many listening questions because it consists of 50 questions.

**Table 4** Internal Factor (3)

No	Statement	Indicators		
		Yes	Sometimes	No
5.	Have hearing impairment in listening to TOEFL test	4	2	10
6.	Have memory limitations when listening to the TOEFL test	12	6	2
7.	Lack of motivation and enthusiasm when listening to the TOEFL test	4	12	2
8.	Lack of concentration/focus when listening to TOEFL	5	10	3
9.	Have a limited mastery of foreign/unfamiliar vocabulary when listening	9	8	1
10.	The appearance of boredom when listening to the TOEFL test	7	9	2
11.	Easily distracted by sounds or other things when listening to TOEFL test	10	7	1
12.	Tend to interpret any foreign vocabulary when listening to TOEFL	9	6	3
13.	Have trouble catching or finding keywords when listening to TOEFL	6	8	4
14.	Busy along with other activities when listening to genius TOEFL test, for example playing writing instruments, taking notes, or doing other things.	3	12	3

In the 5th statement about “Have hearing impairment in listening to TOEFL”. 4 students said ‘yes’, 2 students said, ‘sometimes’ and 10 students said ‘no’. Based on those answers, it shows that most students do not have hearing impairment in listening to TOEFL. The 6th statement is about “Have memory limitations when listening to TOEFL”. 12 students said ‘yes’, 6 students said, ‘sometimes’ and 2 students said ‘no’. Based on those answers, it shows that most students feel that they have memory limitations when listening to TOEFL. In the 7th statement about “Lack of motivation and enthusiasm when listening to TOEFL”. 4 students said, ‘yes’, 12 students said, ‘sometimes’ and 2 students, said ‘no’. Based on those answers, it shows that most students sometimes feel a lack of motivation and enthusiasm when listening to TOEFL. The 8th

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statement is about “Lack of concentration or focus when listening to TOEFL”. 5 students said ‘yes’, 10 students said, ‘sometimes’ and 3 students said ‘no’. Based on those answers, it shows that most students sometimes feel a lack of concentration or focus when listening to TOEFL. The 9th statement is about “Having a limited mastery of foreign or unfamiliar vocabulary when listening to TOEFL”. 9 students said ‘yes’, 8 students said, ‘sometimes’ and 1 student said ‘no’. Based on those answers, it shows that most students feel to have limited mastery of foreign or unfamiliar vocabulary when listening to TOEFL. The 10th statement is about “The appearance of boredom when listening to TOEFL”. 7 students said ‘yes’, 9 students said, ‘sometimes’ and 2 students said ‘no’. Based on those answers, it shows that most students have boredom when listening to TOEFL. The 11th statement about “Easily distracted by sounds or other things when listening to TOEFL”. 10 students said ‘yes’, 7 students said, ‘sometimes’ and 1 student % said ‘no’. Based on those answers, it shows that most students feel that they are easily distracted by sounds or other things when listening to TOEFL”. The 12th statement about “Tend to interpret any foreign vocabulary when listening to TOEFL”. 9 students said ‘yes’, 6 students said, ‘sometimes’ and 3 students said ‘no’. Based on those answers, it shows that most students tend to interpret any foreign vocabulary when listening to TOEFL. The 13th statement is about “Have trouble catching or finding keywords when listening to TOEFL”. 6 students said ‘yes’, 8 students, said ‘sometimes’ and only 4 students, said ‘no’. Based on those answers, it shows that most students sometimes have trouble catching or finding keywords when listening to TOEFL. The 14th statement is about “Busy along with other activities when listening to TOEFL, for example playing writing instruments, taking notes or doing other things”. 3 students said ‘yes’, 12 students said, ‘sometimes’ and 3 students said ‘no’. Based on those answers, it shows that most students are sometimes busy along with other activities when listening to TOEFL, for example playing writing instruments, taking notes, or doing other things.

The first session of the TOEFL test is a listening comprehension test (Listening Comprehension). This listening session generally consists of 50 questions. The students/learners will hear the recording in English, and we must respond, or answer questions related to the recording. The students/learners must listen to the recording as

much as possible because the students/learners will only hear the recording once and the recorded material is not written in the test book. There are three sessions in this listening test: PART A which consists of 30 short conversations, each conversation is followed by several questions, PART B which consists of 2 long conversations followed by several questions, and PART C which consists of 3 talks/lectures (like a lecturer explaining a certain topic). In the genius TOEFL application test, the students/learners will meet several question sessions. One of them is a listening session. In this session, the students/learners will hear English native speakers talk, have dialogues, or even listen to short speeches or short speeches. After listening to the audio, we must answer the questions related to the audio earlier. In dealing with this listening question, several strategies are needed in doing the listening test. The Listening Comprehension Section aims to test the skill to understand spoken language. However, to be able to understand the spoken language, besides having to get used to listening to spoken English, we must have knowledge of the structure of adequate English (grammar). All sentences in this section use a grammatically correct sentence (correct according to grammar) and usually in the form of a complete sentence (Purnaning et al., 2014: 10). All these sentences are pronounced in conversational English.

Listening is the most difficult part of the TOEFL test for most people. For many people listening is the most difficult language skill (Sudarmono, 2018: 35). According to Marwan (2020), Students experience three categories of difficulties: those related to the subject, those related to the listener, and those related to the physical environment. For the structure section and reading, we can anticipate by understanding grammar material and mastering a lot of basic vocabulary, then practice the TOEFL test. Difficulty in doing TOEFL listening questions is a fairly complex activity, meaning that there are many aspects and many factors that influence it. These factors are interrelated, in other words, that reading difficulty is influenced by one another. Students need to implement more strategies, and teachers or educators are recommended to inspire them and develop their awareness to use more strategies when taking a TOEFL (Razmalia & Gani, 2017). Two factors are because the students are difficulty in doing TOEFL listening in both external and internal factors. In external factors, they are: 1) the speaker's accent affects your TOEFL Listening skill. 2) Speakers' speed affects your TOEFL Listening skill. 3)

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Speakers' intonation/emphasis affects your TOEFL Listening skills. 4) The speaker's pause in pronouncing a sentence affects your TOEFL Listening skill. 5) The choice of words (diction) and foreign terms conveyed by the speaker affects your TOEFL listening skill. 6) The sentence structure conveyed by the speaker is too complex so it affects the TOEFL Listening skill. 7) Audio interruption makes the audio sounds less/unclear when Listening to TOEFL.

In internal factors, they are: 1) Do not have previous experience doing the TOEFL test before. 2) Have a lack of practice in listening to TOEFL. 3) Have limited time in doing the TOEFL listening test. 4) A lot of listening questions consist of 50 questions. 5) Have hearing

Impairment in listening to TOEFL 6) Have memory limitations when listening to TOEFL. 7) Lack of motivation and enthusiasm when listening to TOEFL. 8) Lack of concentration or focus when listening to TOEFL. 9) Have limited mastery of foreign or unfamiliar vocabulary when listening. 10) The appearance of boredom when listening to TOEFL. 11) Easily distracted by sounds or other things when listening to TOEFL. 12) Tend to translate any foreign vocabulary when listening to TOEFL. 13) Have trouble catching or finding keywords when listening to TOEFL. 14) Busy along with other activities when listening to TOEFL, for example playing writing instruments, taking notes, or doing other things. There are a variety of instructor techniques for teaching TOEFL Listening Preparation (Khobir & Qonaatun, 2020). First, teacher strategies will help students become more confident speakers and listeners. Second, instructor tactics will help students feel more at ease when taking the TOEFL test. Third, the student's ability to understand native speakers can be improved by listening to them often. Fourth, the student should take a more involved role in taking the TOEFL. Finally, the student understands how to answer type questions on the TOEFL, especially in the listening section of the strategies.

## **CONCLUSION**

TOEFL Listening section is arguably a little more difficult than the other section. It is not surprising that many people find it difficult to improve their English Listening

skills. Unlike the other TOEFL sections, listening skills cannot be improved in just a short time. It takes stages and processes that are gradual until someone can sort out the words that are heard well. Listening is the most difficult part of the TOEFL test in most people's view. For the structure section and reading, the students/learners can anticipate by understanding grammar material and master a lot of basic vocabulary, then practice a lot to do the TOEFL standard questions. Difficulty in doing genius TOEFL application in listening questions is a complex activity, meaning that there are many aspects and many factors that influence it both external and internal. Internal factors include the listener's physical condition and the listener's psychological condition. The physical condition of a listener is an important factor that determines the success and quality of listening. These factors are interrelated, in other words, that reading difficulty is influenced by one another. External factors include environmental conditions (physical environment and social environment). Environmental factors have a big influence on the success of the listening process. Environmental factors in the form of the physical environment and social environment. As good listeners, the students/learners should know and understand what factors influence the listening process and try to minimize them and should know the strategies/ tips and trick on how to master listening, so that listening can run smoothly and optimally. Listening is an important activity in everyday life, not only in school but wherever we are. Be a good listener so that we can increase our knowledge and knowledge, and strengthen the brotherly relationship between humans, because one of the objectives of listening is to communicate and to get information.

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