

ISSUES IN LISTENING SECTION FACED BY MEDICAL RECORD AND HEALTH INFORMATION STUDENTS IN TOEIC PREPARATION CLASS

by Iik Bhakti Wiyata Kediri Perpustakaan 1

Submission date: 19-Feb-2024 11:40AM (UTC+0700)

Submission ID: 2214762538

File name: rticle_Text-2111-2-10-20240118-1_-_ANGGRAINI_DYAH_SETIYARINI.pdf (198.45K)

Word count: 4063

Character count: 21769

ISSUES IN LISTENING SECTION FACED BY MEDICAL RECORD AND HEALTH INFORMATION STUDENTS IN TOEIC PREPARATION CLASS

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Abstract

This study aims at figuring out issues in listening section faced by medical record and health information (RMIK) students during their study in TOEIC Preparation Class. Accordingly, the issues to be discussed cover common errors and causes of those errors made by the students. Accordingly, by finding out those issues, the solution to overcome them could be figured out and suggested. The method used in this study was qualitative method, by giving a TOEIC Preparation Test, specified in listening section to 44 respondents. The listening test consists of 4 parts, Photographs, Question and Response, Conversation, and Short Talks. This study found that there were wrong answered given by the students in the Photographs part (30%), Question and Response part (23%), Conversation part (20%), and Short Talks (43%). This indicates that Short Talks part might be the most difficult part in the listening section encountered by the students. In contrast, the Conversation part is the easiest phase for them, followed by Question and Response part. After further analysis, it can be concluded that the causes of students' difficulties in Short Talks part were the length and speed of the speech. Realizing the issue, better teaching strategies and learning styles are expected to get the best achievement as well as to improve students' listening skill.

Keywords: Common Errors, Listening, TOEIC.

INTRODUCTION

Learning English is a need by whoever in this decade. Whether it is for academic purpose or not, people learn English to communicate both in formal and informal situations. They need to be able to communicate in English to do business and some other urgencies. Because English requires four fundamental skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing, besides three competencies such as grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, learning English is an extremely complex process (Pratiwi & Andriyanti, 2019). However, Nation & Newton (2009) argue that speaking naturally comes from listening, and listening is also how a person develops their first language in its early stages. From the perspective of language learning, listening is how

a language is learned. It provides the student with information from which to accumulate the body of knowledge required to use the language. After accumulating knowledge, the student is ready to start speaking.

To measure the achievement of English competency, there are several English proficiency tests can be used, such as TOEFL, IELTS and TOEIC. TOEIC is a Test of English for International Communication which is used as a means to test one's English proficiency in speaking English for international communication purpose. Accordingly, vocabulary listed or used in TOEIC conveys professional issues. The questions given are about various topics such as general business, manufacturing, finance and budgeting, corporate development, offices, personnel, purchasing, technical areas, travel, dining out, entertainment, and health. The most common TOEIC used in Indonesia is the TOEIC LR, in which the test is divided into two Sections, Listening Section and Reading Section. The Listening Section consists of 4 parts, namely Pictures, Question and Response, Conversation, and Short Talks. Meanwhile, the Reading Section consists of 3 parts, namely Incomplete Sentence, Text Completion, and Reading Comprehension.

In terms of listening section, the photograph part requires the respondents to hear four statements about a photograph in their test book. When they hear the statements, they must select the one statement that best describes what they see in the picture. Then they are asked to find the number of the question on their answer sheet and mark their answer. The statements are not printed in their test book and be spoken only one time. Those photographs show general situation, two third of the photographs involve one or some people. One third of them involve objects or events without person. The sentences are short and grammatically simple. Generally, they are related to the most important aspect in those pictures, but some of them focus on small details or person at the back scene.

Meanwhile, the second part of the listening section is the question and response part where respondents hear a question or a statement followed with three responses. Each question and its response are spoken only one time. All the statements are not printed in the test book. Then, respondents must listen carefully to understand it. There are some question types in this section, such as: information questions, alternative questions, tag questions, yes/no questions, indirect questions, negative questions,

function questions. Instead of questions, in this section respondents also hear statements and question.

The last two parts of the listening section are conversation and short talks. The conversation part is the third part of the test where respondents listen to a short dialog. The text is not printed in the test book. Respondents are asked to listen to it seriously to get the details since the dialogs are spoken only one time. There 30 questions separated into ten groups. Each group consists of one dialog followed by three questions. Types of questions are about Topics, Occupations, Locations, Plans, Reasons, Problems, Suggestions, Time and Inference. At last, the short talks part enables the respondents to listen to short talk one time. The text is not printed in the test book. There are 10 short talks which followed by three questions each. Topics of these short talks are Business Announcement, Special Announcement, Recorded Announcements, News and Weather.

As many other higher education institutions, Institut Ilmu Kesehatan Bhakti Wiyata Kediri strives to provide better education to prepare its students to be able to compete in this globalization era. Therefore, IIK Bhakti Wiyata requires it students to take TOEIC before they graduate from the institution. However, the institution does not let its students to do the test without any preparation. Accordingly, TOEIC preparation course is arranged for students to facilitate the students to get optimal results of English proficiency test. The course consists of 12 meetings, 10 meetings for lectures and 2 meetings for test simulation. Out of those 10 lectures, 5 of them are dedicated for improving students' listening skill. This indicates just how equally important listening skill is compared to the other language skills.

Moreover, more people are interested in the teaching of listening now that they were a few years ago. Richard (2008) describes that in the past, listening was understood to be the mastery of specific skills, or microskills, such as detecting essential words in a text, recognizing coherent devices in texts, and recognizing reduced versions of words. These skills were to be the main emphasis of instruction. However, listening has also been studied recently in connection to language acquisition as well as comprehension. Unfortunately, there are several challenges in developing listening skills which could arise during the listening test. Azmi et al. (2014), state that there are numerous challenges that students may run into when trying to understand what they are hearing. Diora and Rosa (2020) added that listening requires

comprehension which is a process that seeks to gauge how well the meaning is understood. As a result, listening comprehension involves more than just recognizing and comprehending the speaker's dialog or monolog. Since English is a foreign language which contains some difficult-to-understand sounds, listening comprehension in English is entirely different from other listening activity for it has challenges. These challenges include length of hand listening speed, foreign language, cultural differences, accents, and the quality of the recorded material.

Accordingly, this research focused on the issues faced in the listening section, especially some common errors done by the students in TOEIC preparation test. Even though there are four skills of English, listening, speaking, reading, and writing, this study concentrated on the listening skill because it is a fundamental skill out of the four skills in learning English. Ockey and Wagner (2018) declared that listening helps develop automatic processing skills, or even forces, the students to internalize the core linguistic and cognitive processing skills that are necessary for successful language use. Language processing is far too complex to be done consciously, and successful language processing requires completely automatic processing. Since listening is the only ability in which the user does not control language processing speed, it is thought to be the most effective approach to accomplish that. While the speaker and students are free to read and write at their own pace, in the listening test, student is typically required to digest and interpret language at a speed set by the speaker, which is typically very quickly, at a rate of roughly three words per second. The student is forced to process language automatically as a result. This is referred to as the fundamentals of language proficiency.

There are several processes in listening, this research emphasis on linguistic process only. Rost (2011) divide listening process that complement each other into four types. Those listening processes are neurological processing, linguistic processing, semantic processing, and pragmatic processing. Further, Rost (2011) defined linguistic processing as an aspect of listening that requires input from a linguistic source-what most language users would consider the fundamental aspect of listening to language.

METHOD

This study tried to examine listening difficulties encountered by Medical Record and Health Information students in listening section of the TOEIC and the strategies to overcome them. Accordingly, a qualitative study was employed along with content analysis technique to achieve its objectives. A qualitative method looks into how people behave, which is always influenced by the environment, and how the participants in a given social setting or event construct its own meaning. By examining how people communicate, content analysis allows researchers to gain an indirect understanding of human behavior (Purwanto et al., 2021). This research was done involving 44 medical record and health information students of Institut Ilmu Kesehatan Bhakti Wiyata. Those students were in their fifth semester who were enrolled in TOEIC Preparation Course. The research instrument used was 100 TOEIC-like listening questions to be completed in 75 minutes. The test administered in four parts, namely 10 questions in photograph part, 30 questions in question and response part, 30 questions in conversation part, and 30 questions in short talks part. In order to get valid data on students listening skill ability, the questions were adopted from the Practice 1 Book of Tactics of TOEIC Listening Reading (ETS, 2007). The obtained data were then analyzed separately for each part of the listening section test to get a better understanding on which part considered to be the hardest part of the test for the students.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The listening test consisted of 100 questions in which each question valued 5-point, making the highest possible score to be 500. The final score obtained by the students was divided into 4 ranges of score, namely range 1 (100 – 200), range 2 (201 – 300), range 3 (301 – 400), and range 4 (401 – 500). Table 1 presents the total score of TOEIC Preparation Class students in the listening test. There were 7 students in range 1, 14 students in range 2, 19 students in range 3, and 4 students in range 4. This means that the students' achievement in the listening test is good because most of the students, 23 students (52%) were above the medium score.

Table 1. Total Score of Listening Test on TOEIC Preparation

Number of Respondents	Range	Percentage
7	100 – 200	16%
14	201 – 300	32%
19	301 – 400	43%
4	401 – 500	9%

Then, table 2 presents the most common mistakes made by the students in answering the questions in the listening test in each section. It is clearly visible that short talks part is the most difficult part for the students, followed by photographs part and question and response part. Meanwhile, conversation part is the easiest among all. Those difficult parts were visualized in detail in the following tables (Table 3, Table 4, Table 5, and Table 6).

Table 2. Total common mistake answers in each section

Section	Total questions	Mistake answers	Percentage
Photographs	10	3	30%
Questions and Responses	30	7	23%
Conversations	30	6	20%
Short Talks	30	13	43 %

Table 3. Photographs Section

Question number	Correct answers	Percentage	Wrong answers	Percentage
5	21	48%	23	52%
8	18	40%	26	60%
9	21	48%	23	52%

The table above shows that 30 % of questions are answered incorrectly by more than 50% of students.

Table 4. Question and Response

Question number	Correct answers	Percentage	Wrong answers	Percentage
13	21	48%	23	52%
17	21	48%	23	52%
20	14	32%	30	68%
23	17	38%	25	62%
29	12	27%	32	73%
30	21	48%	23	52%
36	15	34%	29	66%

Table 4 presents that 23% of questions are answered inappropriately by more than 50% of students.

Table 5. Conversations

Question number	Correct answers	Percentage	Wrong Answers	Percentage
51	11	25%	33	75%
53	14	32%	30	68%
57	8	18%	36	82%
65	14	32%	30	68%
66	12	27%	32	73%
69	5	11%	39	89%

Table 5 explores that this is the easiest part, only 20% of students make wrong choices, even though the numbers of them are high, above 60%.

Table 6. Short Talks

Question number	Correct answers	Percentage	Wrong answers	Percentage
74	10	23%	34	77%
79	17	38%	27	62%
81	3	7%	41	93%
82	11	25%	33	75%
85	13	29%	31	71%
90	12	27%	32	73%
93	3	7%	41	93%
94	6	14%	38	86%
95	18	40%	26	60%
96	18	40%	26	60%
97	12	27%	32	73%
98	11	25%	33	75%
100	14	32%	30	68%

Short Talk are the most difficult part of the test, 43% of the questions are answered wrongly by more than 60% of the students.

Based on those tables above, some errors were found in choosing the right answers in this TOEIC preparation Listening Test. This supports an argument made by Rakhman et al. (2019) that despite having studied English for more than nine years, the majority of Indonesian EFL students still face challenges. Many times, listeners struggle to complete listening activities efficiently and effectively using certain strategies. This study found that the most difficult part is the Short Talks Part in which the students face a long speech by one person. Goh in Nation & Newton (2009) mentions that accurately identifying word forms and staying up to date with input can pose challenges for learners. Additionally, they might not have enough time to transform the perceived form into the proper message. They might miss what comes next as they fight with the previous part. A previous study conducted by Purwanto et al. (2021) found that **when students listen to lengthy segments and retain all of the information, their level might play a big influence, since lower level students were found to feel extremely challenged to finish listening assignments that need more than three minutes of listening.**

Furthermore, it might be boring for them compared with the result they get in the Conversation Section. The Conversation Section is the easiest phase for the students to pass, because there are two speakers. This situation makes them feel relax and not boring. Therefore, there is no problem with the vocabulary mastering, because the vocabulary in this test is not something unfamiliar for them as they have learnt about it for one semester before the test is held. This support previous study that for students, listening with well-known vocabulary would be quite simple. Knowing the definitions of

words helps motivate and pique students' interests while also improving their listening comprehension skills (Purwanto et al., 2021).

Another difficulty is at Questions and Responses Section. In this section, students need a very high of concentration, because there is no text printed at all in their test book. The students must find the responses or answers of the questions or statements which is spoken only one time. They have to draw a decision on the best answer as quick as they can, because if they are late, they will miss the chance as the following question follows in a short time. Another factor that might trigger these errors is the accent of the speaker, external factor. As an EFL learners, the students do not familiar with the accent of English spoken man. It is clear from the foregoing explanation that both internal and external influences can have an impact on the listening process (Pratiwi & Andriyanti, 2019).

The least difficult part is Photographs Section. What the students need to accomplish this section is being fully concentrated, because the questions in this section need accuracy and quick decision to choose the answer based on the picture offered. The level of difficultness of Photographs section and Conversation section is nearly the same so the students can do it well. This finding supports previous study which found that one of listening strategies used by most high-level EFL students is by imagining what they have listened into visual picture inside their brain to get an interpretation or concluded the overall idea (Rakhman et al., 2019). Automatically, it is easier for them to do the Photograph part for the picture is already provided without they need to imagine it.

Following the identification of specific listening comprehension difficulties encountered by students, listening strategy training may have an immediate impact on teaching. Since training in listening strategies can be advantageous for students, listening strategies should be well taught in the TOEIC preparation course. Nation & Newton (2009) propose two categories of practical strategies for listening, namely communication strategies and learning strategies. Communication strategies are techniques that help with comprehension. Some of these techniques include listening selectively, anticipating what others will say before they do, knowing when to interrupt gently, and so on. Meanwhile, learning strategies including focused listening, negotiation (asking clarification), and listening for patterns are used to identify language forms in the information during students' independent listening. However, for the

teaching process to be effective, teachers need to have a good understanding of the character traits of the students to be able to treat each student properly. Since each student is unique and has a particular learning style, teachers should be aware of this as professionals (Utomo et al., 2019).

Furthermore, making mistakes is a process of learning, and there is no satisfying result as the end of that process. A learning process is like a moving wheel. Thus, other efforts are still needed to raise the achievement of the students in learning English, especially Listening. Some of the efforts that can be done are; enriching vocabulary and getting more familiar with English pronunciation. Nation & Newton (2009) argue that the same positive benefits that attention to form can have on learning vocabulary, grammar, or discourse are probably going to occur when appropriate attention to form pronunciation is given in the teaching and learning processes.

CONCLUSION

From the study above, it can be concluded that the students of medical record and health information who were in their fifth semester, Institut Ilmu Kesehatan Bhakti Wiyata Kediri, have passed the TOEIC Preparation Test with the greatest of ease, since 52% of them reached the score above 300. This success is reached because of they have been prepared well before the test, so they have been familiar with the vocabularies of TOEIC which mostly about professionals and business, even though they are from health department.

Unfortunately, there is no perfect result in all circumstances. The students still make some mistakes in choosing the right answers. This is natural. The most difficult phase in this test is when the students have to do the Short Talks Section. There are 43% of the questions cannot be answered perfectly by more than 60% of the students. This is caused by the length and the speed of the talks. This conclusion is drawn from the contrast result that the students reap in the Conversation Section, that is only 20% of the questions are wrongly answered by more than 68% of them.

To sum up, this study suggests the teacher to teach adequate listening strategies to the students, both communication strategies and learning strategies. Moreover, students should be encouraged to learn not only in class, but also independently outside the class, focusing on improving their vocabulary and familiarizing themselves with English pronunciation.

In the meantime, future researchers are encouraged to investigate further the issues faced by students in the reading section of the TOEIC which is not discussed in this study to get a better idea on how to improve students' competency as a whole.

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