

# The Effect of Listening Training Program to Vocational High School TOEIC Score Achievement

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**Abstract**— Having adequate English competence is compulsory as one of the fundamental requirements in entering the working world in this global era. All formal levels of education have been providing their students with curriculum that enable them to have good mastery of English. Vocational schools equip their students with English for Specific Purposes so that they can cope with business English in their future jobs. TOEIC is a tool that the vocational schools use to measure the students' English competence. This research aims at 1) identifying vocational school students' prior listening English competence 2) analyzing the effects of Listening Training Program to students' score achievement of The Listening Part of the TOEIC. The results show that the students prior listening competence are still low. The training program has positive effects to the improvement of students' achievement of the listening score of the TOEIC test.

**Keywords**— listening, competence, listening part, TOEIC, vocational school

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## I. INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, some vocational schools have been using Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) as a tool to measure students' English competence. TOEIC test assess test takers' English-language proficiency across all four language skills needed to succeed in the global workplace — listening, reading, speaking and writing. With your TOEIC score, test takers can get a fair, accurate evaluation of the ability to communicate in English, show potential employers the full range of communication skills, differentiate test takers from the competition, expand job opportunities. According to [www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org), there are three types of TOEIC test, namely, Reading and Listening test,

Speaking and Writing test and Bridge TOEIC test. The one that are generally used for vocational schools are the first one, Reading and Listening TOEIC test.

Students of Vocational High School of Wahidin, one of private vocational schools in Cirebon West should take a TOEIC prediction test in their school as one of the requirements of completing their study. The score results are not yet satisfying. On the other hand, English Departments lecturers have to accomplish one the three pillars of Higher Education; community service. The community service given is providing a training for students on tips and tricks in dealing with the TOEIC test problems. This community service provides a training program that gives students a pre-test, a training on tips and strategies

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in solving TOEIC problems, and a post-test. The TOEIC test is a prediction test. It is expected that when the students do the test, they have been familiar with the types of problems and they know how to solve them.

Listening test for students is not easy to do since the curricula are driven by standardized tests without a listening component (Kevin:2015, Hoven: 1999, Mayer:1997, and Sherman: 2003, Anthony: 2016). Therefore, students find it challenging solving listening problems especially in the TOEIC test.

Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) comprises Listening Part and Reading Part. The Listening Part consists of four parts; Part I is Identifying Pictures, Part II is Question-Response, Part III is Conversation and Part IV is Short Talks. While, there are three parts of the Reading; Part V Incomplete Sentences, Part VI: Error Recognition or Text Completion, Part VII: Reading Comprehension. While, there are three parts of the Reading; Part V Incomplete Sentences, Part VI: Error Recognition or Text Completion, Part VII: Reading Comprehension. Each skill test problems are 100 numbers. The distribution of the test problems is as the following Identifying Pictures 20 numbers, Question-Response 30 problems, Conversation 30 problems and Short Talks 20 problems.

## II. METHODS

This research implemented a naturalistic qualitative research method; that the classroom activities were not orchestrated or impeded. Paton (2001) as cited in Golafshani (2003) states that qualitative research employs a naturalistic approach that investigate about understanding phenomena in context-specific settings such as 'real world setting' where the researcher does not endeavor to manipulate the phenomenon of interest. Thus, the focus is the results of the students score.

Descriptive inductive analytical approach is applied in this study. The general patterns of data analysis were a simultaneous action during the data collection stage (Maxwell, 1996). Data obtained were analyzed, compared then, then, conclusions could be drawn.

## III. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This research aims at seeking answers for the following questions:

- 1) *identifying vocational school students' prior listening English competence*
- 2) *analysing the effects of Listening Training Program to students' score achievement of The Listening Part of the TOEIC*

### A. *Research Subjects and Research Site*

The respondents of this research are the students of Vocational High Schools grade 12 majoring in Office Administration (4 classes), Accounting (3 classes), PM 8 classes), RPL (3 classes) and TKJ (4 classes). The total number of the respondents are 688 students. In general, they have learned English since elementary level of Education. However, they have limited exposure and chance to use English.

The study utilized a set of procedures to obtain the data.

1. Administering a pre-test. This is conducted to obtain respondents prior ability of English.
2. A set of training on tips and tricks in doing TOEIC test comprising the Listening and Reading Parts.
3. The post-test is administered after they have completed the training program.

This community service takes three days to accomplish. Day 1 is pre-test. The training is conducted on day 2. Finally, the post-test in administered on day 3.

The research site is in Wahidin Private Vocational High School in Cirebon, West Java.

*B. Data Collection*

In order to find out the effect of giving Listening Training program to the scores of TOEIC achieved by the respondents, a pre-test is administered. The pre-test scores will be compared to the post-test scores after the training.

*C. Limitation of the Research*

As mentioned earlier, The TOEIC test comprises the listening and the Reading parts. This research will focus on the Listening Part of TOEIC test. Therefore, it is only the scores of the listening part that are analyzed.

#### **IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

##### TOEIC test Coverage

##### Part I: Identifying Pictures

In this part students are required to look at a series of photographs that depict real life situations e.g. four people are having a meeting and the student will hear four statements. Upon hearing the statements, the students will be required to identify the correct choice related to the picture that they see.

##### Part II: Question-Response

This part of the test is made up of 30 different questions and students will hear a short statement such as: *hand me over that stapler, will you?*

Upon hearing it, the students will then hear a series of three questions e.g. *A. Here you are. B. It's in the other hand. C. It's over there in the drawer.* The students are then required to select which the most appropriate response in accordance to the initial statement is.

##### Part III: Conversation

This section is slightly longer than the previous two sections and requires the students to listen to ten different daily conversations and then answer multiple choice-based questions based on the scenario. This section requests more work and focus as it requires more concentration and it's not uncommon for students to be feeling slightly tired by this point of the exam.

##### Part IV Short Talks

Part four requires the exam takers to listen to three short talks relating to different scenarios. There are three questions per talk and the student is required to answer the best answer that fits the situation best.

##### ***Pre-Test Score Results***

##### Part I: Identifying Pictures

In this part, the respondents, 688 students, are able to make an average of 43,3% corrects answers. Respondents get their highest percentage of the correct answers in listening part. Thus, they are able to make 9 correct answers out of 20 problems.

##### Part II: Question-Response

In the Questions-Response type of test, the respondents perform less better than Part I Identifying Pictures. Out of 30 pictures displayed in the test booklets, they achieve 35,6% of the correct answers. It can be concluded that they make of 10 correct answers for this part.

##### Part III: Conversation

Respondents reach 32% correct answers out of 30 problems tested. It means this part is the third best achievement out of four parts of the listening of the TOEIC test. Averagely, each student is able to answer 10 problems for this part of the test.

##### Part IV Short Talks

The respondents do not perform well in this part of listening. They are able to answer 8% correct answers. This means that they are able to answer 1,6 numbers of the problems. Below is the Table of the respondents pre-test score:

No	Skills	Average Correct Answers	Percentage %
Part I	Identifying Pictures	9	43,3
Part II	Questions-Response	10	35,6
Part III	Conversation	10	32
Part IV	Short Talks	2	8

Table 1. Pre-test results

### ***The training of Listening TOIEC test***

#### ***D. Photographs***

In the first part of the TOEIC listening section, the respondents will see photographs and then be asked to select a sentence which best describes the pictures. The key to doing well is to read each of the four options carefully. It is important to share them that The three incorrect answers may have:

- words that sounds similar but are in fact different
- the right words used inaccurately
- the right words used in a confusing manner
- answers that are only partially true
- words that refer to a context other than the one shown in the picture
- words related to, but not in the picture

They are asked to use strategy that best way to approach these questions is to scan the picture completely and identify what's happening, just like a journalist or a spy. Ask yourself: *who, what, where, why?* Listen for any words that are stressed, as they may hold a clue.

#### ***E. Question - Response***

In this part of the TOEIC listening section, the students are asked to listen to a question and its best response. The trick here is to watch out for:

- words that sound similar but have different meanings
- wh- questions - who what, when, where, why, what - that need logical answers
- questions with question tags
- yes / no questions which may have no direct yes / no answers

To do well, keep the question clearly in mind as they have to scan the possible answers. Choose the one that makes the greatest sense. If in doubt, they can guess.

*F. Short Conversations*

In the third part, the respondents are equipped with the strategies, that is, they need to use their short-term memory well.

The best strategies are to beware of:

- similar-sounding words
- inaccurate words
- confused word order
- words that change the meaning
- negative words (hardly, not, etc.)
- words associated with time (always, never, etc.)

It will help if they can read the question, and possibly even the answers, before they hear the dialogue. Check all the options and don't choose too quickly. Try and picture the speakers and where they are.

*G. Short Talk*

In the fourth part of the listening section, the students will hear a monologue and then be asked a question about it. The same precautions should be exercised as in the earlier sections, but they will need to concentrate more carefully to remember the details. Pay close attention to the context. Try to read the questions beforehand if they have time, and listen to the entire talk before choosing an answer. Use their time wisely or else guess at an answer. Don't get left behind or lose important information related to the next question.

After the training program, the respondents take the post-test.

***Post-Test Score Results***

**Part I: Identifying Pictures**

In this part, the respondents are able to make an average of 61,3% correct answers. They obtain their highest percentage of the correct answers in this part. This means, they are able to make 12 correct answers out of 20 problems.

**Part II: Question-Response**

In the Questions-Response type of test, the respondents perform less better than Part I Identifying Pictures. Out of 30 pictures displayed in the test booklets, they achieve 49% of the correct answers. It can be concluded that they make of 15 correct answers for this part.

**Part III: Conversation**

Respondents reach 47% correct answers out of 30 problems tested. It means this part is the third best achievement out of four parts of the listening of the TOEIC test. Averagely, each student is able to answer 14 problems for this part of the test.

**Part IV Short Talks**

The respondents show little improvement in this part of listening. They are able to answer 20% correct answers. This means that they are able to answer 4 numbers of the problems.

Following is the table of students' score achievement for the post-test:

No	Skills	Average Correct Answers	Percentage %
Part	Identifying	12	61,3

I	Pictures		
Part II	Questions-Response	15	49
Part III	Conversation	14	47
Part IV	Short Talks	4	20

Table 1. Post-test results

## V. CONCLUSIONS

To summarize, there is a positive effect on the implementation of Listening TOEIC Training Program to the score achieved by the students. An increase occurs in from their scores of the pre-test to the post-test. There is an 18% increase in part I, a 13,4% increase in Part II, a 15% increase in Part III and a 12% increase in Part IV. It is suggested that the respondents take part in a longer training program for more improvement of their scores.

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