

Original Article

Implementation of TOEFL Listening Strategies and Practice Test for Grade XI IPA 3 Students of SMA Swasta HKBP 1 Pematangsiantar

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ABSTRACT: *Many senior high school students have limited exposure to TOEFL, particularly the Listening Comprehension section, which often presents challenges due to unfamiliar vocabulary, rapid speech delivery, and various question types. Therefore, this community service program aimed to introduce TOEFL Listening strategies and provide students with practical experience through guided listening activities and a practice test. The program was conducted at SMA Swasta HKBP 1 Pematangsiantar and involved 31 students from Grade XI IPA 3. The activities were implemented through three phases: preparation, implementation, and evaluation. During the implementation phase, students participated in a TOEFL Listening socialization session covering the definition of TOEFL, its benefits, types of TOEFL, test sections, listening question types, common listening difficulties, and listening strategies. The students also took part in guided listening practice activities before completing a TOEFL Listening practice test consisting of ten multiple-choice questions based on three listening strategies: Focus on the Second Line, Choose Answers with Synonyms, and Avoid Similar Sounds. The results showed that students demonstrated varying levels of listening comprehension ability. The highest score was 8, the lowest score was 0, and the mean score was 3.87. Based on the score distribution, 35.48% of students were categorized as poor, 32.26% as fair, 29.03% as good, and 3.23% as excellent. The program provided students with a better understanding of TOEFL Listening and opportunities to apply listening strategies through guided practice and testing activities. Continuous exposure to English listening materials and regular TOEFL practice are needed to further develop students' listening comprehension skills.*

KEYWORDS: TOEFL Listening, Listening Strategies, Socialization, Practice Test, Senior High School Students.

1. INTRODUCTION

English has become one of the most widely used languages in international communication, education, business, and technology. As stated by Crystal (2003), English functions as a global language because it is used across countries as a medium for communication among people with different linguistic backgrounds. Consequently, the ability to communicate in English is increasingly needed by students, particularly those who plan to pursue higher education, apply for scholarships, or prepare for future careers. In many academic and professional settings, English proficiency is often considered an important requirement, making the mastery of English skills a valuable asset for students.

Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) is the metric for it. Phillips (2001) defines TOEFL as a standard test whose purpose is to prepare individuals who are non-native speakers of English in English. It is an internationally recognized test accepted by educational institutions and organizations worldwide. Many universities require TOEFL scores along with their applications for admission, scholarship application documents, as well as academic exchange and employment opportunities. Hence, we can bring the TOEFL to senior high school students so they could be acquainted with the test format in preparation for their future studies.

TOEFL test has multiple sections which check different language skills. In the paper-based TOEFL, Reading Comprehension, Listening Comprehension and Structure and Written Expression were among its sections (Phillips 2001; Marbun et al.2026). Among the sections here, listening is perhaps one of the most difficult areas for learners. Students were trained on activities that engage more with reading practices and need to be able to process spoken information immediately, as there is no time for students to go back through what they heard or review the exercise. They need to find key information, follow the meaning (body language) and word heritage in a limited time.

Difficulties with listening comprehension have been described in some studies. According to Hanim (2023), it is common for students to encounter issues during their listening and comprehension due to vocabulary obstacles, the rapidity of speech delivery, as well as less exposure to authentic English conversations. Similarly, Wulandari et al. Many students have difficulty recognizing the answers in TOEFL Listening because they do not recognize synonyms (Napitupulu et al., 2026), implied

meaning and distractors that look like what is heard on audio. These results suggest that listening comprehension is not only about knowledge of the language, but also involves test-taking skills.

Herman et al. (2023) found that some challenges for university students in the TOEFL included limited vocabulary, a lack of listening practice, and not being accustomed to it (2023). This indicates that training students with TOEFL strategies prior to the test can familiarize them with how to answer listening questions much more effectively.

Listening is an active process of constructing meaning from spoken input (Richards, 2008), whereby learners bring together linguistic knowledge and background knowledge along with listening strategies. As a result, guidance is needed to implement the best strategies for answering TOEFL Listening questions. Understanding typical types of questions and listening essentials will enable the examinee to tune into relevant information while avoiding frequent traps. Many TOEFL preparation resources offer pragmatic tips such as honing in on the second line of a dialogue, finding synonymous phrases and eliminating choices with similar-sounding words that convey different meanings (Phillips 2001). These strategies should be very helpful to beginner exam takers who are seeing TOEFL Listening questions for the first time

Many community service programs have shown that introducing TOEFL strategies to secondary school students is also a best practice. Pangaribuan et al. Students adapted quickly to common question patterns and had practical techniques for answering listening questions by participating in TOEFL Listening socialization activities (2025). Likewise, Damanik et al. TOEFL socialization programs are conducted to raise awareness among students that English proficiency is significant and prepare them for future academic requirements (2025). The two studies indicate that TOEFL preparation at the high school level could be a prerequisite to increasing students' confidence and preparing their brains for English proficiency assessments.

Likewise, Herman et al. (2025) found that using structured listening comprehension activities implemented via community service programs was an effective means to help learners enhance their understanding of spoken English while also boosting their confidence level when responding to a variety of types of listening tasks. It provides further evidence for the need to give systematic practice of listening before taking an English proficiency test.

Although the relevance of TOEFL is increasing, many senior high school students have not studied this test and its sections. Through the initial observations at SMA Swasta HKBP 1 Pematangsiantar, it is found that most students do not know about the TOEFL test structure, especially the Listening Comprehension section. The majority of the sample reported no formal training in any TOEFL listening strategies and had very little experience answering TOEFL-like questions. Consequently, they frequently resorted to guessing rather than using targeted techniques for finding the correct answers.

Based on these conditions, a socialization program about listening strategies for the TOEFL is carried out for the students of grade XI IPA 3 at SMA Swasta HKBP 1 Pematangsiantar. The purpose of this program was to introduce the TOEFL test, discuss why listening in English is important, review and practice the Listening Comprehension section and discuss strategies for how to listen. After the socialization, students took a TOEFL Listening practice comprised of adapted questions from needed listening materials in their academic institutions, matching those done on an actual test, which was taken based on the official requested description section PDF file for 40000-01 /Toefl Preparation Course made by English Language Teaching Center (ELTC), Office International Affairs(OIA) Nommensen HKBP University. In this activity, students would learn more about the TOEFL Listening question types and feel more prepared to answer a listening task.

This approach also mirrors the socialization component of the TOEFL model conducted by Herman et al. (2025), which integrated theory with practice, more effectively preparing students for future English proficiency assessments.

2. METHOD

The implementation of this community service was conducted by the SMA Swasta HKBP 1 Pematangsiantar on two days in a row. On Monday, 18 May 2026, I conducted TOEFL Listening (socialization), and on Tuesday, 19 May 2026, I followed the TOEFL Listening practice test. The subjects in this study were 31 Grade XI IPA3 students. This class was chosen as the research population in accordance with the objectives and scope of this service program, that is, socializing TOEFL Listening material practice specifically to students at Grade XI IPA 3. The program was planned to be conducted in three phases—preparation, implementation and evaluation.

The overall structure of each phase was meant to methodically meet the goals of the program. The preparation stage consisted of planning the activities, preparing instructional materials and scheduling lab facilities. The implementation phase included the TOEFL Listening socialization session, experimental listening practiced on sample practice questions administered by experimenters and a TOEFL Listening practice test. Finally, the evaluation phase focused on analyzing students' performance based on the practice test results and evaluating the implementation of the overall program.

The implementation procedures of this community service program are presented in Figure 1.

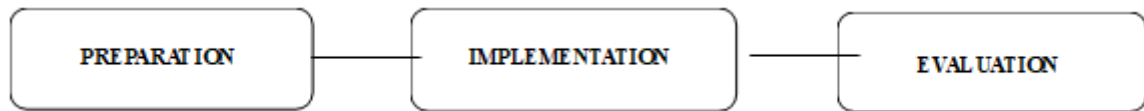


FIGURE 1 Procedures of the Community Service Program

2.1. PHASE 1: PREPARATION

The preparation phase was conducted to ensure that all activities could be implemented effectively and achieve the intended objectives. Before the implementation of the program, several preparations were carried out related to coordination, material development, test preparation, and technical arrangements.

2.1.1. COORDINATION WITH THE SCHOOL

Then, the community service team collaborated with SMA Swasta HKBP 1 Pematangsiantar to implement or hold this program. Dialogues were held to agree on who would participate, how frequently and where the activities would take place, as well as what infrastructure would support such initiatives. A shared consensus was collectively established on the program and methods of implementation for both the school and team development.



FIGURE 2 Coordination And Initial Introduction With The English Teacher And Students Of Grade XI IPA 3

2.1.2. PREPARATION OF LEARNING MATERIALS

The team drafted the teaching materials that would be presented during TOEFL socialization. The materials were compiled into PowerPoint presentations to provide students with an overview of the basic elements of TOEFL. This presentation includes some topics like the definition of TOEFL, why we have to learn about it, types of TOEFL and what is in each part (The sections structure), then an explanation for Listening Comprehension section, common listening question types you encounter at this level above or more difficult than that, and problems faced by learners during their learning journey on a daily basis followed up with effective tips and tricks to answer those questions. The materials are organized systematically from the wide to the narrow way of TOEFL concepts (Listening Comprehension) for learners.

2.1.3. PREPARATION OF GUIDED PRACTICE AND TEST MATERIALS

Along with preparing the presentation materials, they also selected listening exercises and test questions that were going to be part of those activities. You prepared sample listening questions for the guided listening practice session and ten multiple-choice questions that you selected from the TOEFL Listening Practice test. These questions were adapted from the TOEFL Preparation Course and three listening strategic focuses: Focus on the Second Line, Choose Answers with Synonyms, Avoid Same Sound. We also prepared audio recordings that corresponded to the questions so students could listen to fully representative activities like those found in real TOEFL Listening tasks.

2.1.4. PREPARATION OF EQUIPMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE DOCUMENTS

First, the team prepared all supportive equipment also needed for carrying out the program, like laptops, projectors and speakers to play listening audio files. It was already prepared beforehand, including administrative documents such as a list of participants and an answer sheet. This was aimed at streamlining the implementation and technical troubleshooting in conjunction with socialization & testing sessions.

2.2. PHASE 2: IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation phase consisted of three interconnected activities, namely TOEFL Listening socialization, guided listening practice, and a TOEFL Listening practice test. These activities were designed to provide students with both theoretical understanding and practical experience in answering TOEFL Listening questions.

2.2.1. TOEFL LISTENING SOCIALIZATION

The other activities were presented in a PowerPoint and interactive discussions: introduction to the TOEFL. The students got an introduction to the concept and reason behind TOEFL, which stands for Test of English as a Foreign Language, one of the widely used tests or exams all over the world. The facilitator elaborated on the importance of TOEFL in terms of academic and professional requirements for students who plan to go abroad for higher studies or apply through scholarship/exchange programs.

The socializing period also provided wisdom to the students regarding types of TOEFL, and then they learned about which sections are poorly represented in a test. Especially the Listening Comprehension section held a special place since this was later focused on in their program. Students were introduced to the features of listening questions, difficulties faced by English learners and strategies that should help students answer such kind of question better.

In addition, students were introduced to many writing questions commonly found in the TOEFL Listening. The facilitator spoke of listening problems we can have (ie., not knowing vocabulary, fast-speed delivery, etc.) and gave examples of similar words causing confusion or how to listen for key information in a message. These points were covered using examples to make existing strategies more practical for the students, assisting them through these challenges.



FIGURE 3 TOEFL Listening Socialization Session for Grade XI IPA 3 Students of SMA Swasta HKBP 1 Pematangsiantar

2.2.2. GUIDED LISTENING PRACTICE

After socialisation, students received a guided listening practice exercise. This activity was a bridge between the theoretical explanation and actual practice test. Guided practice is a chance to help students get used to the types of questions they will find in TOEFL Listening as well as give them opportunities for practicing application of new strategies introduced during socialization.

Then in this task, the facilitator chose some example TOEFL Listening questions and played each audio through speakers. The students then paid close attention to each dialogue and picked the answers they thought were right. The facilitator led a discussion on each item with students after they had answered the questions, sharing insights into why you'd expect what response would be correct. The session was centered around finding important information, similar sentences and good answers from distractors.

While listening, the instructor guided students through this practice and encouraged them to ask questions on different parts of a recording they struggled with. This interactive process allowed students to correct misguided assumptions and refine their knowledge of listening strategies, which both developed clarity in thinking as well as confidence prior to the practice test.



FIGURE 4 Guided TOEFL Listening Practice Using Sample Questions

2.2.3. TOEFL LISTENING PRACTICE TEST

The students then went on to practice the TOEFL Listening test with ten multiple-choice questions. This test measured the students' understanding and comprehension of listening strategies, which were introduced in the socialization and guided practice.

There were three strategy types in the test. Focus on the Second Line: Students were asked to determine important information within what was said by the second speaker in Questions 1–3. Collectively, Questions 4–6 were based on chosen answers with synonyms. Questions 7–10 referred to Avoid Similar Sounds, thus training students against the distractors with words that appear to have sounds similar to what they've heard in their recording but have a different meaning.

During the testing session, students heard several audio recordings over speakers and on each question replied individually. This activity gave students a chance to practice the listening strategies they had learnt in an authentic simulated TOEFL Listening test setting.



FIGURE 5 Students Completing the TOEFL Listening Practice Test

2.3. PHASE 3: EVALUATION

The evaluation phase was conducted after the completion of the socialization session, guided listening practice, and TOEFL Listening practice test. This phase aimed to examine students' understanding of TOEFL Listening concepts and identify areas that still required improvement.

2.3.1. EVALUATION OF THE SOCIALIZATION SESSION

Students' participation during the socialization session was observed to determine their level of engagement and understanding. Particular attention was given to students' responses during discussions and question-and-answer activities. Their participation indicated the extent to which the materials were understood and accepted by the participants.

2.3.2. EVALUATION OF THE GUIDED LISTENING PRACTICE ACTIVITY

The guided listening practice activity was evaluated by observing students' ability to apply the listening strategies during the discussion of sample questions. Students' responses and questions provided useful information regarding the aspects of listening that they found challenging and the strategies that required further explanation.

2.3.3. EVALUATION OF THE TOEFL LISTENING PRACTICE TEST

The students' answer sheets were collected and analyzed after the completion of the practice test. The analysis focused on identifying students' performance across the three listening strategies and determining which types of questions were answered correctly more frequently. This evaluation also provided information regarding common errors and difficulties experienced by students during the test.

2.3.4. REFLECTION ON STUDENTS' LISTENING PERFORMANCE

The results of the practice test were used as the basis for reflecting on students' listening performance. The findings helped identify strengths and weaknesses in students' listening comprehension and provided recommendations for future TOEFL preparation activities. The reflection also served as an important source of information for designing similar programs aimed at improving students' familiarity with TOEFL Listening tasks.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The community service program entitled "*Socialization of TOEFL Listening Strategies and Practice Test for Grade XI IPA 3 Students of SMA Swasta HKBP 1 Pematangsiantar*" was conducted successfully and involved 31 students as participants. The activities were implemented through three phases, namely preparation, implementation, and evaluation. Throughout the program, students were introduced to TOEFL Listening concepts and strategies, participated in guided listening practice activities, and completed a TOEFL Listening practice test. The findings obtained from these activities provide insights into students' understanding of TOEFL Listening and the challenges they encountered during the learning process.

3.1. PHASE 1: PREPARATION

3.1.1. COORDINATION WITH THE SCHOOL

Preparation started with the coordination of the community service team and SMA Swasta HKBP 1 Pematangsiantar. What is more, this coordination allowed us to reach agreements on the timeline, venue and participants of events, as well as direct support needed for competence development under the given programme. It ensured that all planned activities were going to be executed appropriately and that the school was on the same page as far as understanding what we would want to accomplish through this program.

3.1.2. PREPARATION OF LEARNING MATERIALS

They created content to learn specific learning materials on TOEFL Listening. All of the materials were put in a structured manner so that students would learn more and more complex phased concepts on TOEFL. The topics covered the meaning of TOEFL, the role of TOEFL in the academic and Career field, Formats/types/ sections IELTS test and listening section question types with listening problem-solving tips. The preparation of these materials was intended to provide students with sufficient background knowledge before participating in listening activities.

3.1.3. PREPARATION OF GUIDED PRACTICE AND TEST MATERIALS

Listening exercises and test materials were selected from the *TOEFL Preparation Course* developed by ELTC. The questions represented three important listening strategies frequently found in TOEFL Listening tests. These materials were chosen to introduce students to authentic TOEFL-style questions and help them become familiar with common listening challenges.

3.1.4. PREPARATION OF EQUIPMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE DOCUMENTS

The team also prepared technical equipment such as laptops, speakers, projectors, attendance lists, and answer sheets. Proper preparation of equipment contributed to the smooth implementation of the socialization session, guided practice activities, and listening test.

3.2. PHASE 2: IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation phase consisted of three main activities: TOEFL Listening socialization, guided listening practice, and TOEFL Listening practice testing.

3.2.1. TOEFL LISTENING SOCIALIZATION

The purpose of the socialization session was to broaden students' knowledge and insight into TOEFL Listening. The students were introduced to the need for TOEFL, why to take those tests, and how it would be useful in higher education or career work after completion of High school, along with details on the structure of the system. The Listening Comprehension section received the most attention, as so few students had a lot of experience with TOEFL-style listening tasks.

Various common listening question types and challenges were also introduced to students. A lot of participants mentioned that it is common for them to find spoken English difficult, as native speakers do speak very fast with little known vocabulary. These results align with Richards (2008), who states that listening comprehension necessitates learners to quickly interpret information while simultaneously focusing on the most important elements and meanings.

The session of socialization was participatory. The questions from students included TOEFL requirements for admission, listening comprehension problems and effective ways to improve. The dialogue revealed that many students were interested in TOEFL but had limited exposure to activities specific to preparing them for the exam.

3.2.2. GUIDED LISTENING PRACTICE

As part of a guided listening practice exercise after the socialization session, students were involved in performing. Some sample TOEFL Listening questions were read out loud to test takers using an audio recording played via speakers. Students listened attentively and made their decisions on the answers alone, which were then discussed with the facilitator.

The students were led through a discussion framework identifying keywords, inferred meanings, and differentiating correct answers from distractors. A special focus was placed on identifying synonyms and avoiding answer choices that merely sounded like words heard in the recording.

Students were able to implement the strategies that had been exposed to them in the socialization session with this activity. After receiving explanations for the rationale of each answer, a lot more students entered with greater confidence. Listening Strategies to Help Learners Develop their Effectiveness as Listeners. By using listening strategies, learners will focus on important information and be less confused during tasks in the process of new learning (Hanim, 2023).

3.2.3. TOEFL LISTENING PRACTICE TEST

Following the guided practice activity, students completed a TOEFL Listening practice test consisting of ten multiple-choice questions. The test measured students' ability to apply three listening strategies: *Focus on the Second Line*, *Choose Answers with Synonyms*, and *Avoid Similar Sounds*.

The implementation of the test revealed that students generally performed better on questions requiring direct understanding of information than on questions involving synonyms and distractors. Several students were able to identify key information successfully; however, others still experienced difficulty when answer choices contained words with similar sounds or when the correct answer was expressed through paraphrased language.

These findings support Phillips (2001), who states that successful TOEFL Listening performance depends not only on vocabulary knowledge but also on the ability to recognize paraphrases, implied meanings, and misleading answer choices.

3.3. PHASE 3: EVALUATION

3.3.1. STUDENTS' TOEFL LISTENING TEST RESULTS

After carrying out the TOEFL Listening socialization and guided listening practice, a sample of 31 students from Grade XI IPA 3 was given the practice test. The test had 10 multiple-choice questions representing three listening strategies: *Focus on the Second Line*, *Choose Answers with Synonyms*, and *Avoid Similar Sounds*. To supplement the observation of students and analyze their listening comprehension, responses on open-ended questions were collected to determine areas that caused them the greatest difficulties while taking a TOEFL Listening practice test.

TABLE 1 Descriptive Statistics of Students' TOEFL Listening Practice Test Scores

Indicator	Result
Total Participants	31
Highest Score	8
Lowest Score	0
Total Correct Answers	120
Mean Score	3.87

As shown in Table 1, students achieved a maximum score of 8 and a minimum one of zero on the test. The average score for the class was 3.87 out of ten; some students still struggled with answering TOEFL Listening questions. Despite a prior socialization to TOEFL Listening and generally guided listening practices before attempting the test, many of these participants had relatively little experience with the kind of task common in 'TOEFL-like' norms—they struggled to precisely identify key information. These findings indicate that additional listening practice and continuous exposure to English listening materials are still needed to improve students' listening comprehension skills.

3.3.2. DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE CATEGORIES

To obtain a clearer picture of students' listening performance, the scores were grouped into four categories: excellent, good, fair, and poor.

TABLE 2 Students' Performance on Each TOEFL Listening Question

Question	Correct	Incorrect	Correct (%)
Q1	17	14	54.84
Q2	21	10	67.74
Q3	5	26	16.13
Q4	15	16	48.39
Q5	7	24	22.58
Q6	9	22	29.03
Q7	19	12	61.29
Q8	11	20	35.48
Q9	14	17	45.16
Q10	2	29	6.45

In Table 2, we examine students' responses to each of the TOEFL Listening questions further. Students had different performance across the ten questions. The highest percentage of correct answers was obtained for question 2 (67.74%), followed by question 7 (61.29%) and then question 1 (54.84%). The results suggest that the students were able to respond positively to questions asking them to identify specific information from short dialogues. In comparison, Questions 3 and 5, for example, resulted in significantly lower proportions of correct answers, as did Question 10, which yielded only a total of valid responses (6.45%). These results lead to the conclusion that a substantial portion of students faced continued challenges such as unclear meaning detection, recognizing synonymous phrases or words and distinguishing similarly sounding expressions.

TABLE 3 Students' TOEFL Listening Performance Categories

Category	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent	8–10	1	3.23%
Good	6–7	9	29.03%
Fair	4–5	10	32.26%
Poor	0–3	11	35.48%
Total		31	100%

The highest percentage was categorized as poor (35.48%), followed by fair (32.26%) and good category students; the main data is shown in Table 3. One student (3.23%) was in the excellent category. The results of the study show that although quite a few students performed adequately in terms of listening, many students were still unable to answer TOEFL Listening questions correctly. Therefore, the nature of the distribution as a whole indicates that students need more intensive practice and exposure to understand English listening materials.

TABLE 4 Students' Performance Based on TOEFL Listening Strategies

Listening Strategy	Questions	Correct (%)
Focus on the Second Line	1–3	46.24
Choose Answers with Synonyms	4–6	33.33
Avoid Similar Sounds	7–10	37.10

Table 4 shows the die score of students based on three TOEFL Listening strategies in the practice test. The focus on the Second Line strategy resulted in obtaining the most correct answers (46.24%), which shows that students were better at selecting information from what was said by the second speaker they heard in each conversation scenario. In contrast, the Choose Answers with Synonyms strategy scored lowest (33.33%), indicating that identifying synonymous expressions was still difficult for many subjects. The Avoid Similar Sounds strategy scored 37.10%, which means students still faced problems distinguishing words and expressions that sounded similar during the listening process.

The finding was aligned with Wulandari et al. (2025), stating that students face problems when answering TOEFL Listening questions that are related to synonymous expressions, identification of the implied meaning and similar-sounding words.

Implications: The indications are that students need to practice these strategies in order to further enhance their listening skills and therefore become more proficient listeners.

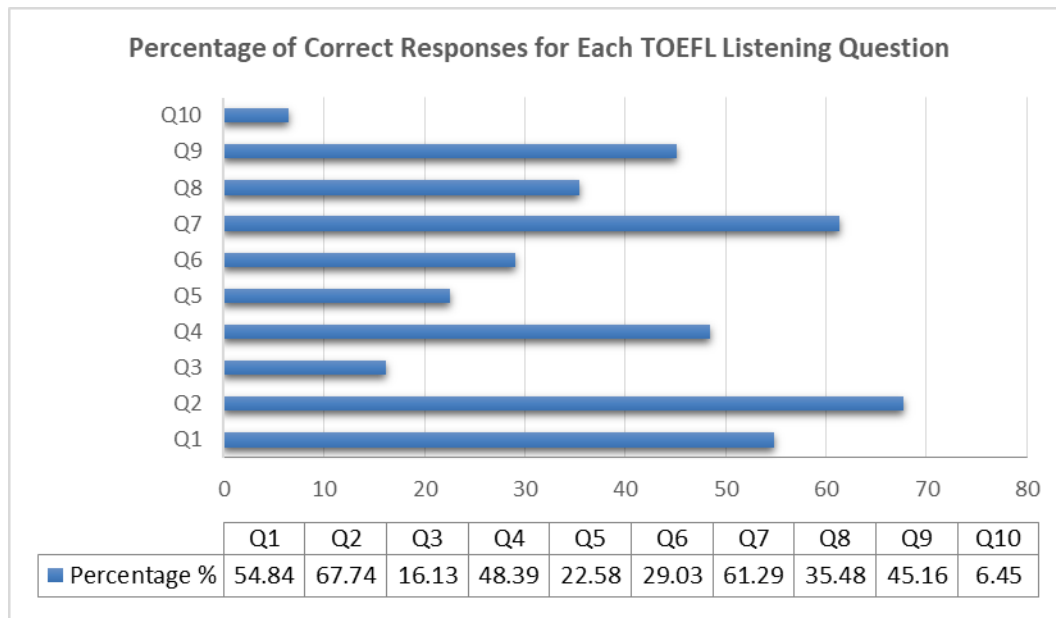


FIGURE 6 Percentage of Correct Responses for Each TOEFL Listening Question

These results are presented in Table 2 and Figure 5. The majority of students were classified under the poor category, at 35.48%. As for 32.26% of the students were in the fair group and only 29.03% of the students were in the good group based on these two criteria simultaneously with each other. One student (3.23%) fell into the excellent category. The results of this study indicate that multiple students still lack sufficient opportunities to practice listening in order to comprehend spoken English and respond correctly on a TOEFL Listening question.

The results support Richards (2008), who states that listening comprehension requires listeners to organize information as they listen because in normal speech, language is presented at such a high speed and students must hear important details while determining their meaning simultaneously. Students who are not accustomed to English conversations face problems when they have to comprehend something in small time span.

In addition, Phillips (2001) indicates that TOEFL Listening questions often ask students to identify inferences and synonyms or find the distractor. Consequently, the headway of TOEFL Listening is dependent on not only knowing vocabulary but also being equipped to use fitting pairing tactics.

3.4. CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTING READ ALONG

The implementation of the program faced multiple challenges. Students were used to fewer examples of TOEFL Listening tasks, which represents one difficulty. As mentioned previously, the majority of participants had acquired some amount of English in class but rarely practiced with TOEFL-similar tasks. As such, the use of animations confused some students as they were not familiar with the question format and audio recordings played very fast.

A second challenge concerned vocabulary knowledge. Many of the students experienced words and expressions they found new to them in discussions. Sometimes students focused on particular words to the exclusion of the context for all those phrases, missing out on what we were trying to talk about.

Students also had problems answering questions based on synonymous phrases and sounds. Some of the participants corrected distractors for having familiar words in lieu of those that conveyed meaning accurately according to the context of discussion.

3.5. STEPS TO OVERCOME THE CHALLENGES

Thus, the challenges observed during the program reveal that consistent practice of TOEFL Listening is necessary. Students should listen to English materials on a regular basis, such as conversations, podcasts, educational videos and TOEFL listening exercises. Students will learn about English phonetics and automatic fluency delivery by listening to a lot of spoken English.

Additionally, listening strategies instruction should continue to be implemented in an explicit manner. Students must have opportunities to practice identifying the important information, finding synonymous expressions and implied meanings, as well as avoiding distractors. Where students practice, make mistakes and receive feedback, they close the gap between what is challenging for them to understand in a listening context.

Future TOEFL preparation programs should also retain this guided listening practice activity in the program. This activity II connected theory with practical applications and provided instant feedback to the students before taking the actual practice test. Students were thus better trained on how to tackle TOEFL Listening tasks.



FIGURE 7 Documentation of the Closing Session with Grade XI IPA 3 Students

4. CONCLUSION

Implementation of the community service program titled "The Socialization of TOEFL Listening Strategies Training and Practice Test for Students Ta 3 IPA Grade XI SMA Swasta HKBP; Pematangsiantar" can give students an understanding of what a TOEFL is, especially on or related to the Listening Comprehension Section. During the socialization session, students got to know the objective of TOEFL tests, its test structure, as well as examples of listening challenges and strategies that they can use when answering questions. The final activity was the practice of guided listening, which allowed students to see how these strategies could assist in real TOEFL Listening items.

Listening practice test results show that students achieved varying levels of listening comprehension ability. Although quite a number of students got the correct answers to questions, there were still many applicants who struggled with listening comprehension tasks as well as differentiation between synonymous expressions and identification of similar-sounding words. This is reflected in the distribution of students' scores; a significant portion were classified as having fair or poor performance.

Activities employed in this program clarify TOEFL Listening to students more explicitly, and they also served as an introduction to how it feels responding a question that mimics the way questions are structured on TOEFL. It is presumed that more exposure to English listening input and regular practice regarding reading strategies will help learners become accustomed to TOEFL Listening tasks, which can contribute a lot in developing their skills of understanding spoken paragraphs in subsequent learning phases.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors would like to express their sincere appreciation to the Principal, English teacher, and students of Grade XI IPA 3 of SMA Swasta HKBP 1 Pematangsiantar for their cooperation, participation, and support during the implementation of this community service program. Their enthusiasm and active involvement contributed positively to the achievement of the program objectives.

The authors also extend their gratitude to the lecturer of the TOEFL course, Prof. Dr. Herman, S.Pd., M.Pd. and to the university, Universitas HKBP Nommensen Pematangsiantar, for the guidance and valuable suggestions throughout the planning and implementation stages of this activity. Appreciation is also addressed to all team members whose collaboration and commitment made this program possible.

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