

**UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES**



**THE AWARENESS OF READING AND LISTENING PROFICIENCY THROUGH
A TOEFL PRACTICE TO MEASURE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES IN THE
RECEPTIVE SKILLS IN THIRD YEAR STUDENTS OF THE MODERN
LANGUAGES MAJOR AT THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES,
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FRENCH AND ENGLISH**

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INTRODUCTION

Standardized tests help students to measure their real proficiency. Based on this, the following research main objective is to reveal how the implementation of standardized test could help students and teachers to have a reliable system to know students' English academic proficiency. In addition, this research looks for demonstrating how the lack of standardized test implementation in Modern Languages Major impedes the students to know their real English proficiency level in their receptive skills.

Modern Languages is a major whose purpose is to make students learn other languages and use them with expertise. Consequently, it is really important for the students to know their proficiency and improvement when learning a foreign language, since nowadays; it is required to have a certificate to show one's performance and work as a teacher or in other professional areas. In the course of this research, skills were evaluated through the standard test TOEFL and the use of The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines in order to help students to know their real English proficiency and subsequently they could decide the best strategies to improve in their weak areas and continue strengthening their successes.

Standardized tests are not being put into practice in most English foreign language majors; therefore, the importance of this work is to show out how important it is to implement this kind of standardized test to help students to not only know and be aware about their real English skills but also to prepare them for their professional life. Implementing this type of test will address students into their strengths and weaknesses in the receptive English skills and based on this knowledge, they will have the opportunity to make decisions about their learning process. Finally, this research also sought to verify if the lack of a standardized test impeded the students' knowledge of their English proficiency. This work helped the researchers to know how interested students were to get informed about their English proficiency, strengths and weaknesses in their receptive skills.

CHAPTER I: Statement of the Problem

1A. Presentation of the problem

It is frequent that when a person is learning a foreign language, he or she wants to know his/her proficiency. In the case of the Modern Languages Major in the Foreign Languages Department (University of El Salvador), students do not know their proficiency at present, they just have ideas, opinions and perceptions about it but they are not certain. This was reflected in a research carried out in a Seminar course in which the researchers discovered that there was not an agreement between students' perceptions and their real proficiency. The researchers administered a survey in which the answers, gathered in questions related to their proficiency, did not match with the results obtained in the TOEFL practice. For instance, students answered that their most developed skill was reading, but when comparing these answers with the scores gotten in the practice, the researchers discovered that it was the other way around.

Another important point to remark in the same research is that the majority of the students who answered the questionnaire said they had not ever taken a standardized test. Even so, half of the total students considered they were prepared to do it. Additionally, it was discovered that most of the students did not have too much knowledge about the generalities of TOEFL since they were asked questions such as if they knew the number of formats or number of sections included in most cases, but the majority of them answered that they did not know.

Students also considered, at the moment of taking the survey, it was necessary to have a standardized test like TOEFL in the Modern Languages major that could allow them to know their proficiency in the English skills. This prevents

them to be aware of their strengths and also their weaknesses; consequently, this lack of knowledge does not allow them to make decisions about what they can do to overcome their weaknesses. They expressed that if they had a standardized test, it would help them to become better professionals because it measures proficiency English skills and this could give them an idea about their level in the target language. They expressed this could also make them feel more self-confident when looking for a job.

1B. Statement of the problem

To study a foreign language is a process that requires developing many skills such as reading, writing, listening and speaking. To do so, the students of English as a Foreign Language, must be aware of their proficiency because in that way they are able to identify their weaknesses and strengths. After this, they can find a strategy to improve weaknesses.

As the researchers referred before about a project made with Modern Languages seminar students at the Foreign Languages Department in the University of El Salvador, it showed that fifth year students were neither aware of their English proficiency nor their weaknesses. Those students had wrong perceptions of the TOEFL for not having experiences of taking it throughout the career; also, the lack of a reliable instrument to measure the English proficiency has impeded all the students of the Foreign Languages Department to have an objective way to know their strengths and weaknesses. As a standardized instrument is not administered at an appropriate time, the students will continue being unaware until the end of the major and if they never identify their weaknesses they will continue making the same mistakes. That is why there should be a way to measure student's proficiency at the end of the development area, after finishing the intensive English courses, in order to make them be aware of the level of achievement in each English skill, which can give them the opportunity to pay more attention to those weak areas and of course improve them. Besides, at the end of the Modern Languages Major, students do not have any prove that shows their English proficiency because it is not the same to assure an advanced level of English that to have a certification which shows the English proficiency.

In response to this problem, this study proposes to research about the awareness of English proficiency in third year Modern Languages students by

administering a TOEFL practice, which is a standardized test that measures the academic level of English and will help, after the test, to make students be aware about their proficiency because the researchers will inform the results to the students. In this way, the students could make decisions about their learning process. In other words, by taking regular practices of standardized tests, students and teachers could measure their progress, know their strengths and weaknesses and their achievements and failures and find a way to improve. This research is also intended to make people of the Foreign Languages Department realize how important is to implement a standardized test. This will help teachers to measure and reorient the teaching process, have a standard English level for students before graduating and the University of El Salvador will offer more outstanding and qualified professionals.

1C. Objectives

General objective:

- ✓ To find out the real proficiency of reading and listening English skills, through a TOEFL practice, in third year students of the Modern Languages Major at the Department of Foreign Languages, University of El Salvador year 2015.

Specific objectives:

- ✓ To measure the proficiency of the receptive skills: listening and reading through a TOEFL practice.
- ✓ To compare the students' perceptions about their proficiency in reading and listening skills with the grades obtained in the TOEFL practice.
- ✓ To inform students about their real proficiency level in the receptive English skills by giving them the results obtained in the TOEFL practice.

1D. Research questions

- ✓ How aware are third year students at the FLD of their reading and listening proficiency level?
- ✓ What is the level of academic proficiency in the receptive skills in third year students of the Foreign Languages Department?
- ✓ What is the students' perception about the level of academic proficiency in reading and listening skills?
- ✓ How interested are the students in getting informed about their real level of academic proficiency in the receptive English skills?

1E. Justification

The main purpose of this research was to make the students of third year of the Modern Languages Major be aware of their real proficiency in their reading and listening skills through a TOEFL practice. This project looked for helping students to know their strengths and weaknesses in their receptive skills so they could make decisions about what and how to improve their English skills. Some reasons which supported the research were: The motivation acquired by the researchers in the seminar course about the topic, the convenience of researching on students of third year, the theoretical value for teachers and students of the Modern Languages Major, the methodological usefulness of using a TOEFL practice at the Foreign Languages Department, and some practical implications for the researchers.

The researchers wanted to explore this topic because a recent research project about the hindrance of not administrating standards English test which included students of fifth year from Modern Languages Major at the University of El Salvador¹, showed that students did not know their real proficiency in their English skills. Based on a questionnaire applied in the research project, the students thought they had their reading skill as the most developed one, but when comparing these perceptions with the grades obtained in a TOEFL practice, the research revealed that it was not true. On the contrary, of what the students expected, their lowest grades were in the reading exercises. Centered on this relevant finding, this study expected to find out if students of third year of the Modern Languages Major knew their real proficiency in the receptive skills in order to measure their strengths and weaknesses.

1. Research Project made in the Seminar Course of the Modern Language Major, year 2014: "The lack of administration of standards English test at Modern Languages Major from UES in order to measure students' English proficiency at the end of every school year and its corresponding hindrance of not letting students know their real English proficiency level.

An important fact about this research was that the researchers had chosen to do this project taking into account students of third year because they had just finished the courses of the skill development area, so it could be a good time to evaluate, through a standardized test, how much they had learned. Also, at this time they were just studying and practicing their receptive skills and because of that, this research included only reading and listening skills.

Another important reason was that this research would be helpful to students and teachers of the Foreign Languages Department because once students knew their real proficiency, they could work and improve their weaknesses. Besides, teachers could have a more sustainable average of the students' performance which could be useful to reorient their efforts and focus on the areas that needed more attention. The researchers believed that having a practice of TOEFL could help the entire Department of Foreign Languages because students and teachers need to have an instrument to discover the real English proficiency of the future graduated professionals from The University of El Salvador.

The researchers estimated that the use of a TOEFL practice was a very effective and reliable way to measure the English proficiency because it is a standardized test for non-native English language speakers and it is used to evaluate people's understanding, comprehension, knowledge and/or capability in English.

Some practical implications for the researchers were that the study would be oriented just on students of Modern Languages Major at The University of El Salvador because it was the specific major studied by the researchers about to graduate. The study was developed at The University of El Salvador as a way to focus all the efforts on just one place, and because the researchers consider that the Department of Foreign Languages needed to apply standardized test to measure the quality of its students.

Finally, the researchers wanted to do this research because they were certain that the Modern Languages students should be aware of their proficiency in the receptive skills. In that way, it could help the entire society since every individual student would realize what he or she needed to improve to become better professionals.

1F. Limitations

The researchers found the following limitations:

1. It took longer to pass the instruments due to the activities every teacher had to develop as part of the program of their subject.
2. Due to the different responsibilities, teachers in charge of attending the groups of Readings and Conversations I were not willing to give the researchers enough time to gather the data.
3. Students were not interested in attending the TOEFL practice due to the activities required in the other subjects.
4. Time availability of researchers and volunteers did not match.
5. The lack of information about TOEFL as tool to know the English proficiency made students not to be motivated to be volunteers in taking the practice of TOEFL.
6. The practice of TOEFL was affected due to the lack of a comfortable and suitable classroom.

CHAPTER II: Theoretical Framework

2A. Historical Background

The TOEFL is a standardized test which is a requirement to be accepted in American Universities. Although there are other standardized tests of English, the TOEFL became the most important in North America. The Educational Testing Service (ETS) of Princeton, New Jersey has been the organization that administers TOEFLs around the world since 1965.

Engineer Marta Carranza, the Education USA Director at the Centro Cultural Salvadoreño, mentioned in an interview that in the 80's people from El Salvador who wanted to take the test and apply to US Universities had to travel to Guatemala or Costa Rica because these were the nearest countries that administered TOEFL. Due to this fact, the person who was in charge of the "Student Consultancy Office" at Centro Cultural Salvadoreño CCSA at that time, had the idea to implement TOEFL in El Salvador and thanks to this idea, nowadays Salvadoran people do not have to travel abroad.

Since that time, the CCSA became the pioneer in administering TOEFL, this institution has been a model and a precursor to other institutions, but becoming an example was not so easy. In the latest 80's when started implementing TOEFL, there were not too many people who wanted to take it: The exam was scheduled every single day because there was not a big request (only three or four people wanted to take it). Another difficulty was that in that moment the only format available was the Paper based and that situation required security measures to administer it such as security cameras to monitor.

Nowadays CCSA offers pre-TOEFL courses. These courses began many years ago. This is an option to anybody who is interested in getting an idea on how to do the test, because in some cases, people obtain low scores not because they

do not know English, but because they are not trained to do a standardized test and they do not know the sequence; so, they are not used to it. According to Engineer Marta Carranza, the most difficult part is writing such is the fact that people are not used to writing about a topic taking into account specific time. The part of reading is considered boring by many people because the test includes academic readings. That is why if they are not prepared it becomes hard. Moreover, people who take the test as second time obtain better scores because in the second time they already have an idea of how it is.

In El Salvador TOEFL is not only taken into account to apply to US Universities but also some companies require it to hire people. The Ministerio de Educación MINED in 2003 established that to be an English professor it was required to obtain a score equal or superior to 520 points and this was reaffirmed by “El Diario Oficial” in 2009.

2B. Theoretical Framework

In the Foreign Languages Department of the University of El Salvador, standardized tests are not practiced. This lack of training impedes students to know their real proficiency and to be prepared to take a real standardized test.

In El Salvador people who want to work in English context are required to have at least 450 score in TOEFL-based paper or 82 points in TOEFL iBT. According to the Test and Score Data Summary for *TOEFL iBT*® Tests¹, the average score for Salvadorian people who took the standardized test TOEFL iBT between January and December of 2013 got 85 points, which is a considerable score, but an important question is if every Salvadorian who took the exam was prepared in advance, could this average get higher?.

To analyze deeply this question and its possible answer it is important to study some concepts and theories:

A **standardized test** is a test administered and scored in a standard manner. Ability/ Achievement tests are used to evaluate a student's or worker's understanding, comprehension, knowledge and/or capability in a particular area. They are used in academics, professions and many other areas. A general distinction is usually made between tests of ability/ aptitude (intelligence tests) versus tests of achievement (academic proficiency).

The following are such tests as administered across the United States.

- TOEIC - Test of English for International Communication
- TOEFL - Test of English as a Foreign Language
- IELTS - International English Language Testing System

1. www.ets.org/toefl

This research will be focused only in the TOEFL test, what means **Test of English as a Foreign Language** or **TOEFL**/ to f I/TOH-f I, is a standardized test of English language proficiency for non-native English language speakers wishing to enroll in U.S. universities. The test is accepted by many English-speaking academic and professional institutions. TOEFL is one of the two major English-language tests in the world, the other one is the IELTS.

TOEFL is a trademark of ETS (Educational Testing Service), a private non-profit organization, which designs and administers the tests. The scores are valid for two years; then they are no longer reported.

History

In 1962, a national council made up of representatives of thirty government and private organizations was formed to address the problem of ensuring English language proficiency for non-native speakers wishing to study at U.S. universities. This council recommended the development and administration of the TOEFL exam for the 1963-1964 time frame².

The test was originally developed at the Center for Applied Linguistics under the direction of Stanford University applied linguistics professor Dr. Charles A. Ferguson³.

The TOEFL test was first administered in 1964 by the Modern Languages Association financed by grants from the Ford Foundation and Danforth Foundation. In 1965, The College Board and ETS jointly assumed responsibility for the continuation of the TOEFL testing program.

2. Cf. ETS 2007 document "Test and Score Summary for TOEFL Internet Based Test: September 2005-December 2006 Test Data", p.3, section "History of the TOEFL Program"

3. Stanford University, Memorial Resolution: Charles A. Ferguson (1921–1998), May 1999

In 1973, a cooperative arrangement was made between ETS, The College Board, and the Graduate Record Examinations board of advisers to oversee and run the program. ETS was to administer the exam with the guidance of the TOEFL board.

To the present day, college admission criteria for international students who are Commonwealth of Nations, nationals are exempted from taking the TOEFL exam - nations which are part of the Anglosphere (from Commonwealth realms to former British colonies e.g. Hong Kong SAR or former protectorates of the United States) where English is the official language automatically grants a TOEFL exemption with some restrictions (e.g. residents of Quebec are required to take TOEFL while the rest of Canada is exempt).

Formats and content

Internet-based test

Since its introduction in late 2005, the TOEFL Internet-based Test (iBT) format has progressively replaced the computer-based tests (CBT) and paper-based tests (PBT), although paper-based testing is still used in select areas. The TOEFL iBT test has been introduced in phases, with the United States, Canada, France, Germany, and Italy in 2005 and the rest of the world in 2006, with test centers added regularly. The CBT was discontinued in September 2006 and these scores are no longer valid.

Initially, the demand for test seats was higher than availability, and candidates had to wait for months. It is now possible to take the test within one to four weeks in most countries⁴. The four-hour test consists of four sections, each measuring one of the basic language skills (while some tasks require integrating multiple skills), and all tasks focus on language used in an academic, higher-education environment.

4. TOEFL iBT Locations and Dates

Note-taking is allowed during the TOEFL iBT test. The test cannot be taken more than once every 12 days⁵.

1. Reading

The Reading section consists of questions on 4–6 passages, each approximately 700 words in length. The passages are on academic topics; they are the kind of material that might be found in an undergraduate university textbook. Passages require understanding of rhetorical functions such as cause-effect, compare-contrast and argumentation. Students answer questions about main ideas, details, inferences, essential information, sentence insertion, vocabulary, rhetorical purpose and overall ideas. New types of questions in the TOEFL iBT test require filling out tables or completing summaries. Prior knowledge of the subject under discussion is not necessary to come to the correct answer.

2. Listening

The Listening section consists of questions on six passages, each 3–5 minutes in length. These passages include two student conversations and four academic lectures or discussions. The conversations involve a student and either a professor or a campus service provider. The lectures are a self-contained portion of an academic lecture, which may involve student participation and does not assume specialized background knowledge in the subject area. Each conversation and lecture passage is heard only once. Test-takers may take notes while they listen and they may refer to their notes when they answer the questions. Each conversation is associated with five questions and each lecture with six. The questions are meant to measure the ability to understand main ideas, important details, implications, relationships between ideas, organization of information, speaker purpose and speaker attitude.

5. TOEFL iBT: About the Test

3. Speaking

The Speaking section consists of six tasks: two independent and four integrated. In the two independent tasks, test-takers answer opinion questions on familiar topics. They are evaluated on their ability to speak spontaneously and convey their ideas clearly and coherently. In two of the integrated tasks, test-takers read a short passage, listen to an academic course lecture or a conversation about campus life and answer a question by combining appropriate information from the text and the talk. In the two remaining integrated tasks, test-takers listen to an academic course lecture or a conversation about campus life and then respond to a question about what they heard. In the integrated tasks, test-takers are evaluated on their ability to appropriately synthesize and effectively convey information from the reading and listening material. Test-takers may take notes as they read and listen and may use their notes to help prepare their responses. Test-takers are given a short preparation time before they have to begin speaking. The responses are digitally recorded, sent to ETS's Online Scoring Network (OSN), and evaluated by three to six raters.

4. Writing

The Writing section measures a test taker's ability to write in an academic setting and consists of two tasks: one integrated and one independent. In the integrated task, test-takers read a passage on an academic topic and then listen to a speaker discuss it. The test-taker then writes a summary about the important points in the listening passage and explains how these relate to the key points of the reading passage. In the independent task, the test-taker must write an essay that states their opinion or choice, and then explain it, rather than simply listing personal preferences or choices. Responses are sent to the ETS OSN and evaluated by at least 3 different raters⁶.

6. <http://www.ets.org/Media/Research/pdf/TC-10-08.pdf>

TOEFL Taskdescriptions.

Task	Description	Approximate time
Reading	3–5 passages, each containing 12–14 questions	60–100 minutes
Listening	6–9 passages, each containing 5–6 questions	60–90 minutes
Break	Mandatory break	10 minutes
Speaking	6 tasks	20 minutes
Writing	2 tasks	50 minutes

One of the sections of the test will include extra, uncounted material. Educational Testing Service includes extra material to pilot test questions for future test forms. When test-takers are given a longer section, they should give equal effort to all of the questions because they do not know which question will count and which will be considered extra. For example, if there are four reading passages instead of three, then one of the passages will not be counted. Any of the four could be the uncounted one.

Paper-based Test

The TOEFL® paper-based Test (PBT) is available in limited areas. Scores are valid for two years after the test date, and test takers can have their scores sent to institutions or agencies during that time⁷.

1. Listening (30 – 40 minutes)

The Listening section consists of 3 parts. The first one contains 30 questions about short conversations. The second part has 8 questions about longer conversations. The last part asks 12 questions about lectures or talks.

7. "Test Of English as a Foreign Language". Retrieved 8 February 2013.

2. **Structure and Written Expression** (25 minutes)

The Structure and Written Expression section has 15 exercises of completing sentences correctly and 25 exercises of identifying errors.

3. **Reading Comprehension** (55 minutes)

The Reading Comprehension section has 50 questions about reading passages.

4. **Writing** (30 minutes)

The TOEFL PBT administrations include a writing test called the Test of Written English (TWE). This is one essay question with 250–300 words in average⁸.

Test scores

TOEFL iBT Test

- The TOEFL iBT test is scored on a scale of 0 to 120 points.
- Each of the four sections (Reading, Listening, Speaking, and Writing) receives a scaled score from 0 to 30. The scaled scores from the four sections are added together to determine the total score.
- Each speaking question is initially given a score of 0 to 4, and each writing question is initially given a score of 0 to 5. These scores are converted to scaled scores of 0 to 30.

8. TOEFL: Paper-based Test: Test Content and Structure

Paper-based Test

- The final PBT score ranges between 310 and 677 and is based on three subscores: Listening (31–68), Structure (31–68), and Reading (31–67). Unlike the CBT, the score of the Writing component (referred to as the Test of Written English, TWE) is not part of the final score; instead, it is reported separately on a scale of 0–6.
- The score test takers receive on the Listening, Structure and Reading parts of the TOEFL test is not the percentage of correct answers. The score is converted to take into account the fact that some tests are more difficult than others. The converted scores correct these differences. Therefore, the converted score is a more accurate reflection of the ability than the raw score is.

Accepted TOEFL Scores

Most colleges use TOEFL scores as only one factor in their admission process, with a college or program within a college often setting a minimum TOEFL score required. The minimum TOEFL iBT scores range from 61 (Bowling Green State University) to 100 (MIT, Columbia, Harvard). A sampling of required TOEFL admissions scores shows that a total TOEFL iBT score of 74.2 for undergraduate admissions and 82.6 for graduate admissions may be required. ETS has released tables to convert between iBT, CBT and PBT scores⁹.

TOEFL ITP Tests

TOEFL ITP tests are paper-based and use academic content to evaluate the English-language proficiency of non-native English speakers. The tests use new and previously administered TOEFL test questions and are used for placement, progress, evaluation, exit testing and other situations. The test scores, format and content of the test matches the "TOEFL PBT"¹⁰, with the exception of not including the TWE (Test of Written Expression).

9. http://www.ets.org/Media/Tests/TOEFL/pdf/TOEFL_iBT_Score_Comparison_Tables.pdf

10. "TOEFL® ITP Assessments: Test Content". Retrieved 24 January 2014.

Unlike the TOEFL iBT and PBT tests, *TOEFL ITP* tests are administered by the institution and for internal use. It should not replace the need for the TOEFL iBT test, which is administered securely and includes Speaking and Writing components. There are two levels of TOEFL ITP: Level 1 (intermediate to advanced) and Level 2 (high beginning to intermediate). *TOEFL ITP* scores are mapped to the CEFR and test takers are provided with a certificate of achievement.

TOEFL PBT Scores

Skill	Score Range
Listening Comprehension	31 to 68
Structure/ Written Expression	31 to 68
Reading Comprehension	31 to 67
Total Score	310 to 677

TOEFL®iBT Score Scales

Skill	Score Range	Level
Reading	0–30	High (22–30) Intermediate (15–21) Low (0–14)
Listening	0–30	High (22–30) Intermediate (15–21) Low (0–14)
Speaking	0–30 score scale	Good (26–30) Fair (18–25) Limited (10–17) Weak (0–9)
Writing	0–30 score scale	Good (24–30) Fair (17–23) Limited (1–16)
Total Score	0–120	

Another important aspect to be considered is the ACTFL because it measures the proficiency level as an English speaker. **The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines** are descriptions of what individuals can do with language in terms of speaking, writing, listening, and reading in real-world situations in a spontaneous and non-rehearsed context. For each skill, these guidelines identify five major levels of proficiency: Distinguished, Superior, Advanced, Intermediate, and Novice. The major levels Advanced, Intermediate, and Novice are subdivided into High, Mid, and Low sublevels. The levels of the ACTFL Guidelines describe the continuum of proficiency from that of the highly articulate, well-educated language user to a level of little or no functional ability.

These Guidelines present the levels of proficiency as ranges, and describe what an individual can and cannot do with language at each level, regardless of where, when, or how the language was acquired. Together these levels form a hierarchy in which each level subsumes all lower levels. The Guidelines are not based on any particular theory, pedagogical method, or educational curriculum. They neither describe how an individual learns a language nor prescribe how an individual should learn a language, and they should not be used for such purposes. They are an instrument for the evaluation of functional language ability.

The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines were first published in 1986 as an adaptation for the academic community of the U.S. Government's Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) Skill Level Descriptions. This third edition of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines includes the first revisions of Listening and Reading since their original publication in 1986, and a second revision of the ACTFL Speaking and Writing Guidelines, which were revised to reflect real-world assessment needs in 1999 and 2001 respectively. New for the 2012 edition are the addition of the major level of Distinguished to the Speaking and Writing Guidelines, the division of the Advanced level into the three sublevels of High, Mid, and Low for the Listening and Reading Guidelines, and the addition of a general level description at the Advanced, Intermediate, and Novice levels for all skills.

Another new feature of the 2012 Guidelines is their publication online, supported with glossed terminology and annotated, multimedia samples of performance at each level for Speaking and Writing, and examples of oral and written texts and tasks associated with each level for Reading and Listening.

The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012 – Reading describes five major levels of proficiency: Distinguished, Superior, Advanced, Intermediate, and Novice. The description of each major level is representative of a specific range of abilities. Together these levels form a hierarchy in which each level subsumes all lower levels. The major levels Advanced, Intermediate, and Novice are divided into High, Mid, and Low sublevels. The subdivision of the Advanced level is new. This makes the Reading descriptions parallel to the other skill level descriptions.

Reading is an interpretive skill. Reading comprehension is based largely on the amount of information readers can retrieve from a text, and the inferences and connections that they can make within and across texts. By describing the tasks that readers can perform with different types of texts and under different types of circumstances, the Reading Proficiency Guidelines describe how readers understand written texts. These Guidelines do not describe how reading skills develop, how one learns to read, nor the actual cognitive processes involved in the activity of reading. Rather, they are intended to describe what readers are able to understand from what they read.

These Guidelines apply to reading that is either Interpretive (books, essays, reports, etc.) or Interpersonal (instant messaging, texting, email communication, etc.).

DISTINGUISHED

At the Distinguished level, readers can understand a wide variety of texts from many genres including professional, technical, academic, and literary. These texts are characterized by one or more of the following: a high level of

abstraction, precision or uniqueness of vocabulary; density of information; cultural reference; or complexity of structure. Readers are able to comprehend implicit and inferred information, tone, and point of view and can follow highly persuasive arguments. They are able to understand unpredictable turns of thought related to sophisticated topics.

Readers at the distinguished level are able to understand writing tailored to specific audiences as well as a number of historical, regional, and colloquial variations of the language. These readers are able to appreciate the richness of written language. Distinguished-level readers understand and appreciate texts that use highly precise, low-frequency vocabulary as well as complex rhetorical structures to convey subtle or highly specialized information. Such texts are typically essay length but may be excerpts from more lengthy texts.

Distinguished-level readers comprehend language from within the cultural framework and are able to understand a writer's use of nuance and subtlety. However, they may still have difficulty fully understanding certain nonstandard varieties of the written language.

SUPERIOR

At the Superior level, readers are able to understand texts from many genres dealing with a wide range of subjects, both familiar and unfamiliar. Comprehension is no longer limited to the reader's familiarity with subject matter, but also comes from a command of the language that is supported by a broad vocabulary, an understanding of complex structures and knowledge of the target language. Readers at the Superior level can draw inferences from textual and extralinguistic clues.

Superior-level readers understand texts that use precise, often specialized vocabulary and complex grammatical structures. These texts feature argumentation, supported opinion, and hypothesis, and use abstract linguistic

formulations as encountered in academic and professional reading. Such texts are typically reasoned and/or analytic and may frequently contain cultural references.

Superior-level readers are able to understand lengthy texts of a professional, academic, or literary nature. In addition, readers at the Superior level are generally aware of the aesthetic properties of language and of its literary styles, but may not fully understand texts in which cultural references and assumptions are deeply embedded.

ADVANCED

At the Advanced level, readers can understand the main idea and supporting details of authentic narrative and descriptive texts. Readers are able to compensate for limitations in their lexical and structural knowledge by using contextual clues. Comprehension is likewise supported by knowledge of the conventions of the language (e.g., noun/adjective agreement, verb placement, etc.). When familiar with the subject matter, Advanced-level readers are also able to derive some meaning from straightforward argumentative texts (e.g., recognizing the main argument).

Advanced-level readers are able to understand texts that have a clear and predictable structure. For the most part, the prose is uncomplicated and the subject matter pertains to real-world topics of general interest.

Advanced-level readers demonstrate independence in their ability to read subject matter that is new to them. They have sufficient control of standard linguistic conventions to understand sequencing, time frames, and chronology. However, these readers are likely challenged by texts in which issues are treated abstractly.

Advanced High

At the Advanced High sublevel, readers are able to understand, fully and with ease, conventional narrative and descriptive texts of any length as well as more complex factual material. They are able to follow some of the essential points of argumentative texts in areas of special interest or knowledge. In addition, they are able to understand parts of texts that deal with unfamiliar topics or situations. These readers are able to go beyond comprehension of the facts in a text, and to begin to recognize author-intended inferences. An emerging awareness of the aesthetic properties of language and of its literary styles permits comprehension of a wide variety of texts. Misunderstandings may occur when reading texts that are structurally and/or conceptually more complex.

Advanced Mid

At the Advanced Mid sublevel, readers are able to understand conventional narrative and descriptive texts, such as expanded descriptions of persons, places, and things and narrations about past, present, and future events. These texts reflect the standard linguistic conventions of the written form of the language in such a way that readers can predict what they are going to read. Readers understand the main ideas, facts, and many supporting details. Comprehension derives not only from situational and subject-matter knowledge but also from knowledge of the language itself. Readers at this level may derive some meaning from texts that are structurally and/or conceptually more complex.

Advanced Low

At the Advanced Low sublevel, readers are able to understand conventional narrative and descriptive texts with a clear underlying structure though their comprehension may be uneven. These texts predominantly contain high-frequency vocabulary and structures. Readers understand the main ideas and some supporting details. Comprehension may often derive primarily from situational and subject-matter knowledge. Readers at this level will be challenged to comprehend more complex texts.

INTERMEDIATE

At the Intermediate level, readers can understand information conveyed in simple, predictable, loosely connected texts. Readers rely heavily on contextual clues. They can most easily understand information if the format of the text is familiar, such as in a weather report or a social announcement.

Intermediate-level readers are able to understand texts that convey basic information such as that found in announcements, notices, and online bulletin boards and forums. These texts are not complex and have a predictable pattern of presentation. The discourse is minimally connected and primarily organized in individual sentences and strings of sentences containing predominantly high-frequency vocabulary.

Intermediate-level readers are most accurate when getting meaning from simple, straightforward texts. They are able to understand messages found in highly familiar, everyday contexts. At this level, readers may not fully understand texts that are detailed or those texts in which knowledge of language structures is essential in order to understand sequencing, time frame, and chronology.

Intermediate High

At the Intermediate High sublevel, readers are able to understand fully and with ease short, non-complex texts that convey basic information and deal with personal and social topics to which the reader brings personal interest or knowledge. These readers are also able to understand some connected texts featuring description and narration although there will be occasional gaps in understanding due to a limited knowledge of the vocabulary, structures, and writing conventions of the language.

Intermediate Mid

At the Intermediate Mid sublevel, readers are able to understand short, non-complex texts that convey basic information and deal with basic personal and social topics to which the reader brings personal interest or knowledge, although some misunderstandings may occur. Readers at this level may get some meaning from short connected texts featuring description and narration, dealing with familiar topics.

Intermediate Low

At the Intermediate Low sublevel, readers are able to understand some information from the simplest connected texts dealing with a limited number of personal and social needs, although there may be frequent misunderstandings. Readers at this level will be challenged to derive meaning from connected texts of any length.

NOVICE

At the Novice level, readers can understand key words and cognates, as well as formulaic phrases that are highly contextualized.

Novice-level readers are able to get a limited amount of information from highly predictable texts in which the topic or context is very familiar, such as a hotel bill, a credit card receipt, or a weather map. Readers at the Novice level may rely heavily on their own background knowledge and extralinguistic support (such as the imagery on the weather map or the format of a credit card bill) to derive meaning.

Readers at the Novice level are best able to understand a text when they are able to anticipate the information in the text. At the Novice level, recognition of key words, cognates, and formulaic phrases makes comprehension possible.

Novice High

At the Novice High sublevel, readers can understand, fully and with relative ease, key words and cognates, as well as formulaic phrases across a range of highly contextualized texts. Where vocabulary has been learned, they can understand predictable language and messages such as those found on train schedules, roadmaps, and street signs. Readers at the Novice High sublevel are typically able to derive meaning from short, non-complex texts that convey basic information for which there is contextual or extralinguistic support.

Novice Mid

At the Novice Mid sublevel, readers are able to recognize the letters or symbols of an alphabetic or syllabic writing system or a limited number of characters in a character-based language. They can identify a number of highly contextualized words and phrases including cognates and borrowed words but rarely understand material that exceeds a single phrase. Rereading is often required.

Novice Low

At the Novice Low sublevel, readers are able to recognize a limited number of letters, symbols or characters. They are occasionally able to identify high-frequency words and/or phrases when strongly supported by context.

The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012 – Listening describe five major levels of proficiency: Distinguished, Superior, Advanced, Intermediate, and Novice. The description of each major level is representative of a specific range of abilities. Together these levels form a hierarchy in which each level subsumes all lower levels. The major levels Advanced, Intermediate, and Novice are divided into High, Mid, and Low sublevels. The subdivision of the Advanced Level into High, Mid, and Low is new. This makes the Listening descriptions parallel to the other skill-level descriptions.

Listening is an interpretive skill. Listening comprehension is based largely on the amount of information listeners can retrieve from what they hear and the inferences and connections that they can make. By describing the tasks that listeners can perform with different types of oral texts and under different types of circumstances, the Listening Proficiency Guidelines describe how listeners understand oral discourse. The Guidelines do not describe how listening skills develop, how one learns to listen, nor the actual cognitive processes involved in the activity. Rather, they are intended to describe what listeners understand from what they hear.

These Guidelines apply to listening that is either Interpretive (non-participative, overheard) or Interpersonal (participative).

The written descriptions of listening proficiency are accompanied online by authentic speech samples and the functional listening tasks associated with each major level.

DISTINGUISHED

At the Distinguished level, listeners can understand a wide variety of forms, styles, and registers of speech on highly specialized topics in language that is tailored to different audiences. Listeners at the Distinguished level can understand language such as that found in classical theater, art films, professional symposia, academic debates, public policy statements, literary readings, and most jokes and puns. They are able to comprehend implicit and inferred information, tone, and point of view, and can follow highly persuasive arguments. They are able to understand unpredictable turns of thought related to sophisticated topics. In addition, their listening ability is enhanced by a broad and deep understanding of cultural references and allusions. Listeners at the distinguished level are able to appreciate the richness of the spoken language.

Distinguished-level listeners understand speech that can be highly abstract, highly technical, or both, as well as speech that contains very precise, often low-frequency vocabulary and complex rhetorical structures. At this level, listeners comprehend oral discourse that is lengthy and dense, structurally complex, rich in cultural reference, idiomatic and colloquial. In addition, listeners at this level can understand information that is subtle or highly specialized, as well as the full cultural significance of very short texts with little or no linguistic redundancy.

Distinguished-level listeners comprehend language from within the cultural framework and are able to understand a speaker's use of nuance and subtlety. However, they may still have difficulty fully understanding certain dialects and nonstandard varieties of the language.

SUPERIOR

At the Superior level, listeners are able to understand speech in a standard dialect on a wide range of familiar and less familiar topics. They can follow linguistically complex extended discourse such as that found in academic and professional settings, lectures, speeches and reports. Comprehension is no longer limited to the listener's familiarity with subject matter, but also comes from a command of the language that is supported by a broad vocabulary, an understanding of more complex structures and linguistic experience within the target culture. Superior listeners can understand not only what is said, but sometimes what is left unsaid; that is, they can make inferences.

Superior-level listeners understand speech that typically uses precise, specialized vocabulary and complex grammatical structures. This speech often deals abstractly with topics in a way that is appropriate for academic and professional audiences. It can be reasoned and can contain cultural references.

ADVANCED

At the Advanced level, listeners can understand the main ideas and most supporting details in connected discourse on a variety of general interest topics, such as news stories, explanations, instructions, anecdotes, or travelogue descriptions. Listeners are able to compensate for limitations in their lexical and structural control of the language by using real-world knowledge and contextual clues. Listeners may also derive some meaning from oral texts at higher levels if they possess significant familiarity with the topic or context.

Advanced-level listeners understand speech that is authentic and connected. This speech is lexically and structurally uncomplicated. The discourse is straightforward and is generally organized in a clear and predictable way.

Advanced-level listeners demonstrate the ability to comprehend language on a range of topics of general interest. They have sufficient knowledge of language structure to understand basic time-frame references. Nevertheless, their understanding is most often limited to concrete, conventional discourse.

Advanced High

At the Advanced High sublevel, listeners are able to understand, with ease and confidence, conventional narrative and descriptive texts of any length as well as complex factual material such as summaries or reports. They are typically able to follow some of the essential points of more complex or argumentative speech in areas of special interest or knowledge. In addition, they are able to derive some meaning from oral texts that deal with unfamiliar topics or situations. At the Advanced High sublevel, listeners are able to comprehend the facts presented in oral discourse and are often able to recognize speaker-intended inferences. Nevertheless, there are likely to be gaps in comprehension of complex texts dealing with issues treated abstractly that are typically understood by Superior-level listeners.

Advanced Mid

At the Advanced Mid sublevel, listeners are able to understand conventional narrative and descriptive texts, such as expanded descriptions of persons, places, and things, and narrations about past, present, and future events. The speech is predominantly in familiar target-language patterns. Listeners understand the main facts and many supporting details.

Comprehension derives not only from situational and subject-matter knowledge, but also from an increasing overall facility with the language itself.

Advanced Low

At the Advanced Low sublevel, listeners are able to understand short conventional narrative and descriptive texts with a clear underlying structure though their comprehension may be uneven. The listener understands the main facts and some supporting details. Comprehension may often derive primarily from situational and subject-matter knowledge.

INTERMEDIATE

At the Intermediate level, listeners can understand information conveyed in simple, sentence-length speech on familiar or everyday topics. They are generally able to comprehend one utterance at a time while engaged in face-to-face conversations or in routine listening tasks such as understanding highly contextualized messages, straightforward announcements, or simple instructions and directions. Listeners rely heavily on redundancy, restatement, paraphrasing, and contextual clues.

Intermediate-level listeners understand speech that conveys basic information. This speech is simple, minimally connected, and contains high-frequency vocabulary.

Intermediate-level listeners are most accurate in their comprehension when getting meaning from simple, straightforward speech. They are able to comprehend messages found in highly familiar everyday contexts. Intermediate listeners require a controlled listening environment where they hear what they may expect to hear.

Intermediate High

At the Intermediate High sublevel, listeners are able to understand, with ease and confidence, simple sentence-length speech in basic personal and social contexts. They can derive substantial meaning from some connected texts typically understood by Advanced-level listeners although there often will be gaps in understanding due to a limited knowledge of the vocabulary and structures of the spoken language.

Intermediate Mid

At the Intermediate Mid sublevel, listeners are able to understand simple, sentence-length speech, one utterance at a time, in a variety of basic personal and social contexts. Comprehension is most often accurate with highly familiar and predictable topics although a few misunderstandings may occur. Intermediate Mid listeners may get some meaning from oral texts typically understood by Advanced-level listeners.

Intermediate Low

At the Intermediate Low sublevel, listeners are able to understand some information from sentence-length speech, one utterance at a time, in basic personal and social contexts, though comprehension is often uneven. At the Intermediate Low sublevel, listeners show little or no comprehension of oral texts typically understood by Advanced-level listener.

NOVICE

At the Novice level, listeners can understand key words, true aural cognates, and formulaic expressions that are highly contextualized and highly predictable, such as those found in introductions and basic courtesies.

Novice-level listeners understand words and phrases from simple questions, statements, and high-frequency commands. They typically require repetition, rephrasing, and/or a slowed rate of speech for comprehension. They rely heavily on extralinguistic support to derive meaning.

Novice-level listeners are most accurate when they are able to recognize speech that they can anticipate. In this way, these listeners tend to recognize rather than truly comprehend. Their listening is largely dependent on factors other than the message itself.

Novice High

At the Novice High sublevel, listeners are often but not always able to understand information from sentence-length speech, one utterance at a time, in basic personal and social contexts where there is contextual or extralinguistic support, though comprehension may often be very uneven. They are able to understand speech dealing with areas of practical need such as highly standardized messages, phrases, or instructions, if the vocabulary has been learned.

Novice Mid

At the Novice Mid sublevel, listeners can recognize and begin to understand a number of high-frequency, highly contextualized words and phrases including aural cognates and borrowed words. Typically, they understand little more than one phrase at a time, and repetition may be required.

Novice Low

At the Novice Low sublevel, listeners are able occasionally to recognize isolated words or very high-frequency phrases when those are strongly supported by context.

These listeners show virtually no comprehension of any kind of spoken message, not even within the most basic personal and social contexts.

The direct application of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines is for the evaluation of functional language ability. The Guidelines are intended to be used for global assessment in academic and workplace settings. However, the Guidelines do have instructional implications. The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines underlie the development of the ACTFL Performance Guidelines for K-12 Learners (1998) and are used in conjunction with the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning (1996, 1998, and 2006) to describe how well students meet content standards. For the past 25 years, the ACTFL Guidelines have had an increasingly profound impact on language teaching and learning in the United States.

By doing the practices of TOEFL and compare the results with the ACTFL Guidelines, this research expects to prove that students who have previous experiences taking some practices before the final test, will have better results and could know their real proficiency, and take decisions about it, from those students that will take only once the exam.

2C. Definitions of Key Terms

1. **Achievement test:** This is a test of developed skill or knowledge. The most common type of achievement test is a standardized test developed to measure skills and knowledge learned in a given grade level, usually through planned instruction, such as training or classroom instruction. Achievement tests are often contrasted with tests that measure aptitude, a more general and stable cognitive trait.
2. **ACTFL:** American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. Performance Descriptors for Language Learners are designed to describe language performance that is the result of explicit instruction in an instructional setting.
3. **CBT:** Computer Based Test.
4. **ETS:** Educational Testing Service. Institution in charge of administering TOEFLs around the world.
5. **iBT:** Internet Based Test.
6. **ITP:** Institutional Testing Program.
7. **Language proficiency:** Language proficiency or linguistic proficiency is the ability of an individual to speak or perform in an acquired language.
8. **OSN:** Online Scoring Network.
9. **PBT:** Paper Based Test.

10. Standardized test: Any form of test that requires all test takers to answer the same questions, or a selection of questions from common bank of questions, in the same way, and that is scored in a “standard” or consistent manner, which makes it possible to compare the relative performance of individual students or groups of students. Standardized tests are designed in such a way that the questions, conditions for administering, scoring procedures, and interpretations are consistent and are administered and scored in a predetermined, standard manner.

11. TOEFL: Test of English as Foreign Language.

12. TWE: Test of Written Expression.

CHAPTER III. Hypotheses

3A. Hypotheses

General hypothesis:

- ✓ The students of third year at the Foreign Languages Department are not aware of their reading and listening proficiency level.

Specific hypotheses:

- ✓ Taking a TOEFL practice will contribute the students of third year to know their level of academic proficiency in the receptive skills.
- ✓ The perceptions the students have about their proficiency level in reading and listening skills are different from what a standardized test can show.
- ✓ The students of third year consider it is important to get informed about their real proficiency in the receptive English skills.

3B. Conceptual Definition of Variables

1. Awareness:

It is the ability to perceive, to feel, or to be conscious of events, objects, thoughts, emotions, or sensory patterns. In this level of consciousness, sense data can be confirmed by an observer without necessarily implying understanding. More broadly, it is the state or quality of being aware of something.

2. TOEFL: *Test of English as Foreign Language.*

It is a trademark for a standardized examination in English as a Foreign Language.

CHAPTER IV. Methodology

4A. Research Approach

The quantitative approach was used in this research project. The researchers used two questionnaires as instrument to collect data; this kind of instrument was a useful way to obtain important and specific data in a fast way. It consisted on counting, classifying features and designing graphs to explain the information that was gathered. The researchers sought to find the relationships between two variables, to gather the sample's opinion and attitude before and after taking a standardized test (TOEFL practice) and to describe all the aspects of such relationship regarding the awareness of reading and listening skills.

4B. Type of Study

The type of study taken into account to this project was the exploratory; such is the fact that there are few studies in relation to “the awareness of reading and listening skills using a standardized test”. It helped to increase the degree of familiarity with this topic as to the students who were the sample as to the population in general and future researchers who might be interested in doing a more complex research at the Foreign Languages Department. Besides, this research project sought to find the relationship of two variables, as mentioned before, which are “the awareness of reading and listening” and a “TOEFL practice” to describe or to determine if taking a standardized test at certain level of the Modern Language Major could be helpful to the students and make them realize about their weaknesses and strengths in the receptive skills.

4C. Research Design

To help the researchers to answer the research questions, to achieve the objectives, and based on the fact that this research looked for measuring the proficiency of listening and reading English skills, the researchers used a non-experimental design called: *descriptive transectional design*. The reason to use this design was because the researchers observed the phenomena in its natural context: The students of third year filled a questionnaire to give their opinions about the proficiency in their receptive skills and then, they were tested with a TOEFL practice without any preparation presided by the researchers. Their opinions and the scores obtained in the TOEFL practice were not manipulated.

This research was descriptive because there was not too much previous information about this topic in the University of El Salvador and the study described the relationship of two variables: the awareness of reading and listening proficiency and a TOEFL practice. After the process to collect and analyse the data, this research sought to give the description of the phenomena. Likewise, this was a transactional design because the data was collected in a unique time during the second semester of 2015.

4D. Population and Sample

Population:

The population from which the researchers obtained the sample was all the students who took Readings and Conversation I, semester II-2015 from the Foreign Languages Department at the University of El Salvador. The total amount of the population was 134 students.

Sample:

To choose the sample, the researchers applied a non-random sampling by convenience. It meant that the researchers did not use a formula to get it; otherwise, they selected the units of analysis based on the following criteria:

- ✓ Be part of Readings and Conversation I subject
- ✓ Time availability during the afternoon shift.
- ✓ Willingness to participate on the TOEFL practice.
- ✓ To fill questionnaire 1 in order to obtain a code which was used to keep the students' names in an anonymous status.
- ✓ To participate in a small talk to receive the scores obtained and to fill questionnaire 2.

4E. Research Techniques

The technique chosen for this research was the survey. This type of technique allowed researchers to include all the students from the sample (third year students of the Modern Languages Major) due to its convenience in terms of scope since it did not need the researchers to be with every subject of study as the interview does; by consequent, this allowed researchers to get the whole sample's opinions, in that way it was possible to collect information from the sample which is the main objective of the survey. Besides, this sample was representative that is why it was an enough quantity of students from the population of interest as the research needed to include. Neither did the survey need qualified personnel to administer it because the survey was taken and answered by every subject of study who did not need the researchers to give them a big explanation to answer the questions.

4F. Research Instruments.

The researchers used a questionnaire as the instrument to gather information from the sample. A questionnaire is a series of written questions a participant answers; moreover, the questionnaire had an established structure which could not be changed or altered by the researchers once it was defined in comparison with an interview that has the possibility to change or add information.

This questionnaire was administered to the selected sample which was third year students of the Modern Languages Major in a personal way, this means that the questionnaire was delivered and received it back in person at the moment of taking it.

In addition, it is important to remark that the researchers administered two questionnaires to the sample: As it was mentioned before, the researchers carried out a TOEFL practice taking into account the selected sample. Before taking the practice, the students answered a questionnaire regarding to the awareness of their receptive skills and it tried to collect their opinions and perceptions about those skills. Finally, when taken the TOEFL practice and given the results to the students in the small talk, the researchers administered another questionnaire related to the results obtained from the practice, the new knowledge they have gotten about a standardized test and their impressions about the experience.

The type of questions that this instrument included was closed. This type of questions facilitated researchers to evaluate and consolidate the results using statistical methods.

4G. Data Gathering Plan

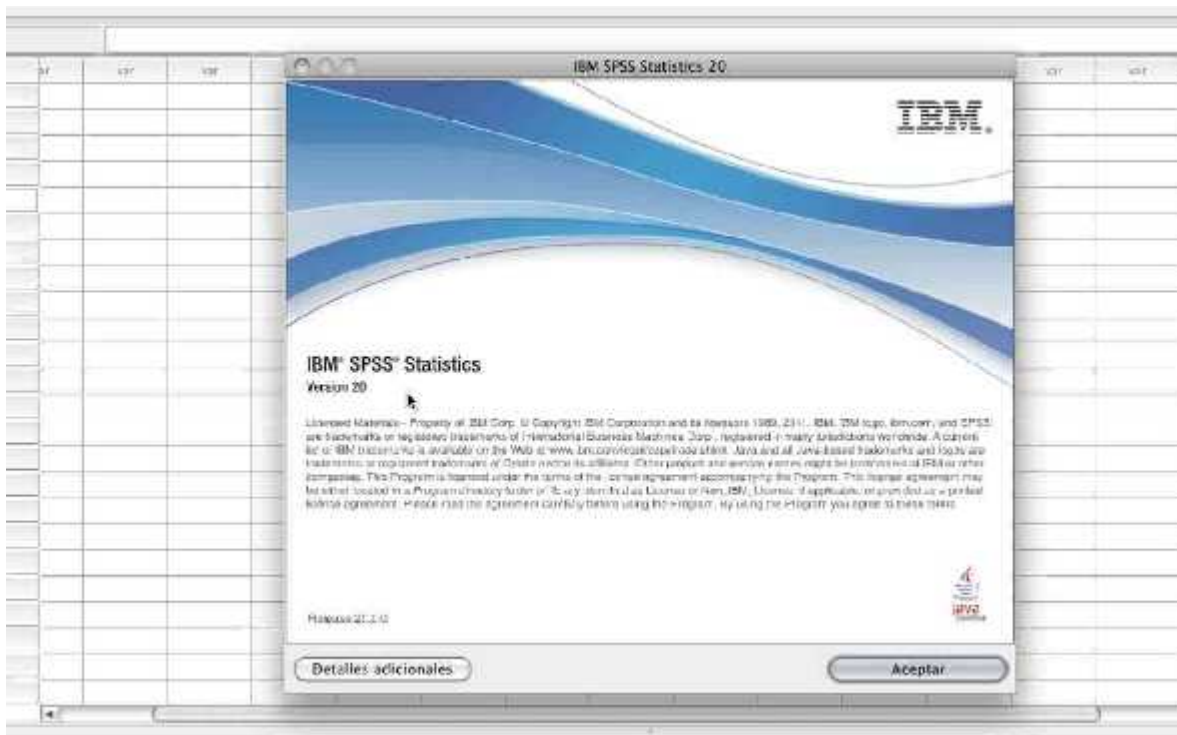
The characteristics of the participants played a great role in the outcome: The participants will be students of Readings and Conversation I in their third year from the Modern Languages at the Foreign Languages Department. The dynamic consisted in a group of volunteers who took a practice of TOEFL.

The students of Readings and Conversation I received questionnaire 1 in September in order to obtain quantitative information to explore the awareness of their receptive skills: reading and listening. They filled questions related to general information about TOEFL such as types, format and uses Also, the questionnaire 1 gathered students' opinions and perceptions about those skills. Then, this group of volunteers took a practice of TOEFL; they had 2 and a half hours practice, in a specific date. The results of this evaluation were based on the ACTFL proficiency

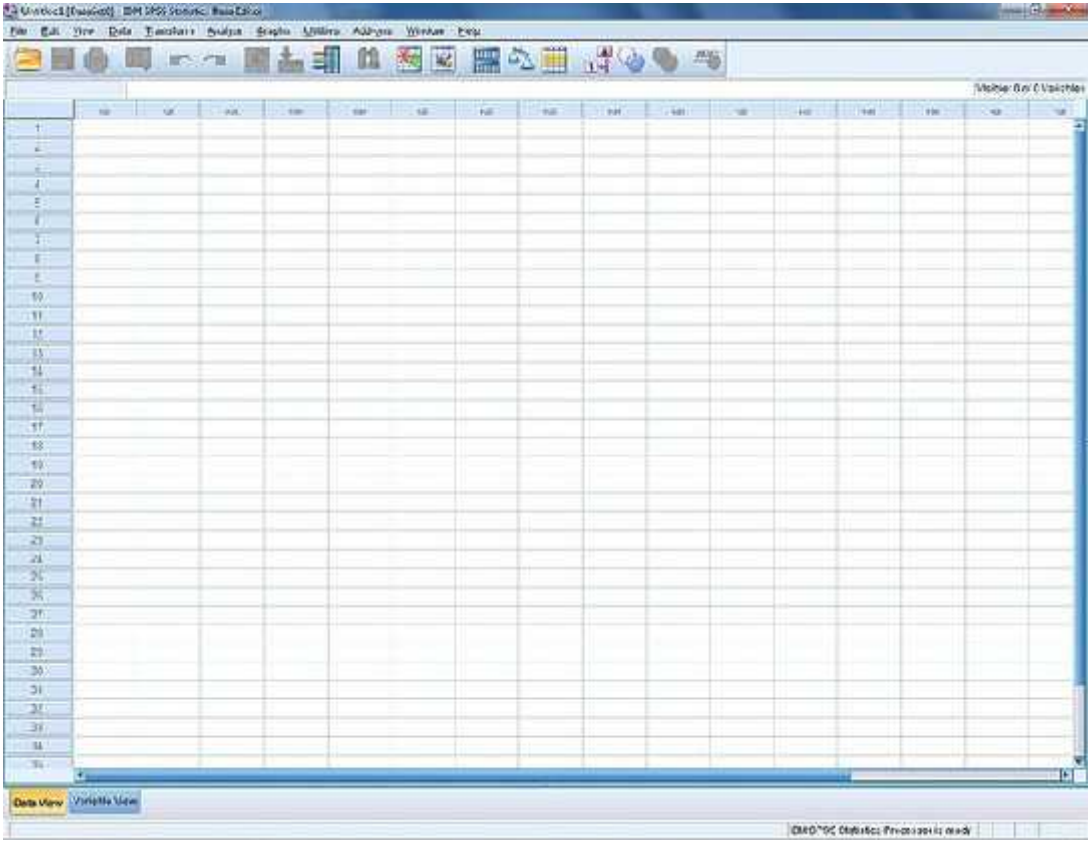
guidelines which divides the English proficiency level in; Novice, Intermediate, Advanced, Superior and Distinguished.

After this, the students participated in a small talk in which they received their scores and they filled questionnaire 2, which had the purpose of bringing to light their new opinions and perceptions about their proficiency, the importance of having a standardized test and how they felt.

At the end, the data obtained in the two questionnaires was compared, and also the scores gotten were analyzed carefully using an important tool: the SPSS program. **IBM SPSS Statistics 20.Ink** is a software package. The software name originally stood for *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* It is a widely used program for statistical analysis in social science. It is also used by market researchers, health researchers, survey companies, government, education researchers, and others.



SPSS is a global system for analyzing data. It can take data from almost any type of file and use them to generate tabulated reports, charts and plots of distributions and trends, descriptive statistics, and complex statistical analysis. SPSS makes statistical analysis more accessible for beginners and more convenient for experienced users. The menu selections and dialog boxes allow complex analyzes without typing a single line of syntax or commands. The Data Editor offers a simple and effective tool with a type of spreadsheet design, allowing entering data and reviewing the working data file.



CHAPTER V. Data Analysis.

5A. Statistical procedures

The researchers will get the information needed to prove the hypotheses from the standardized test taking and from the two questionnaires.

The results will be analyzed in the SPSS program. The results will be coded and analyzed by this program. Some statistics data like mode and medium will be measured.

5B. Data analysis plan.

To analyze properly the data, the researchers will follow the next steps:

1. The results obtained in questionnaire 1 will be entered in the SPSS program as the first step of the data base creation.
2. The TOEFL practice will be graded applying the parameters already established by Cambridge TOEFL preparation book.
3. The scores obtained in the TOEFL practice will be coded in a chart made by the SPSS program.
4. The scores will be delivered to the students in a small talk in which they will listen to an explanation about their grades and what they represent in terms of proficiency. Then in the same session the students will fill questionnaire 2 which mainly gather information about the experience they went through.
5. The results of the practice of TOEFL and the two questionnaires will be entered in the SPSS program. Then, a bivariate analysis will be carried out

comparing the perceptions showed in questionnaire 1 and the scores obtained in the TOEFL practice plus questionnaire 2. The findings will be labelled in graphics.

6. The most outstanding findings will be summarized and expressed in the Findings Chapter.

5C. Analysis and Interpretation of the Data

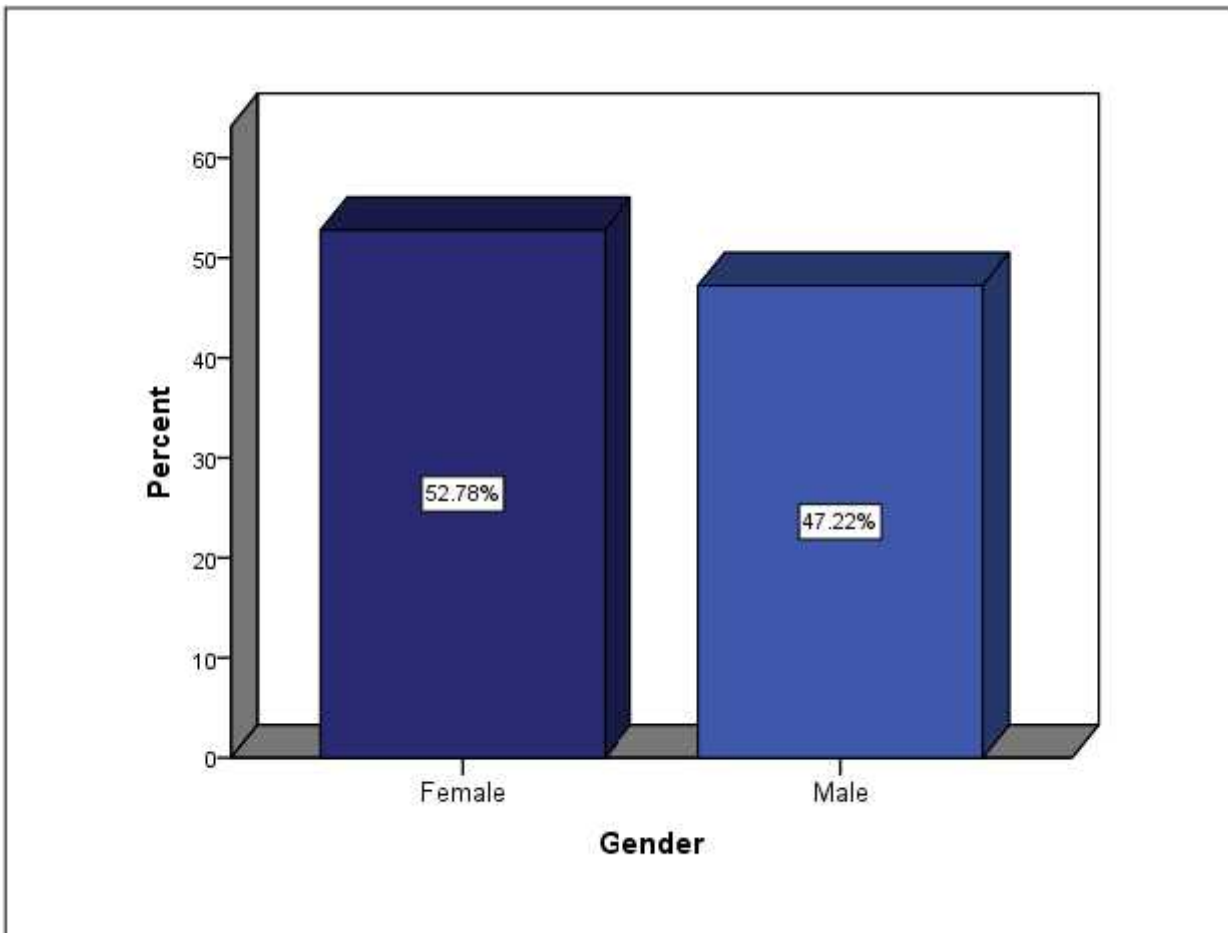
QUESTIONNAIRE 1

GRAPH 1
Gender of the students.

Statistics

N	Valid	36
	Missing	0
Mean		1.47
Mode		1

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid Female	19	52.8	52.8
Valid Male	17	47.2	47.2
Total	36	100.0	100.0



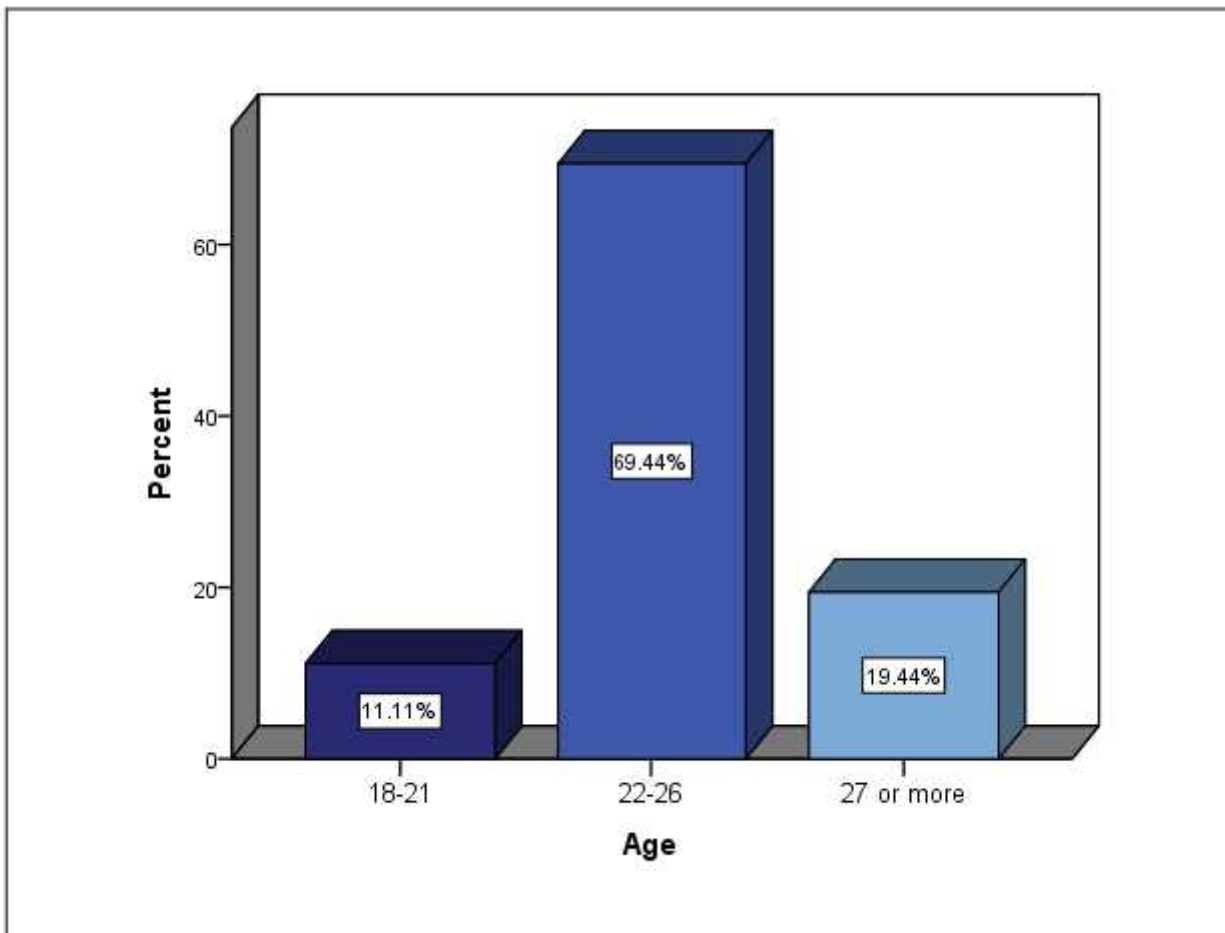
Graph 1 is related to the gender of the sample. It shows that, the 52.78% are women and the 47.22% are men. The amount of women and men are almost the same.

GRAPH 2
Age of the students.

Statistics

N	Valid	36
	Missing	0
Mean		2.08
Mode		2

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	18-21	4	11.1
	22-26	25	69.4
	27 or more	7	19.4
	Total	36	100.0

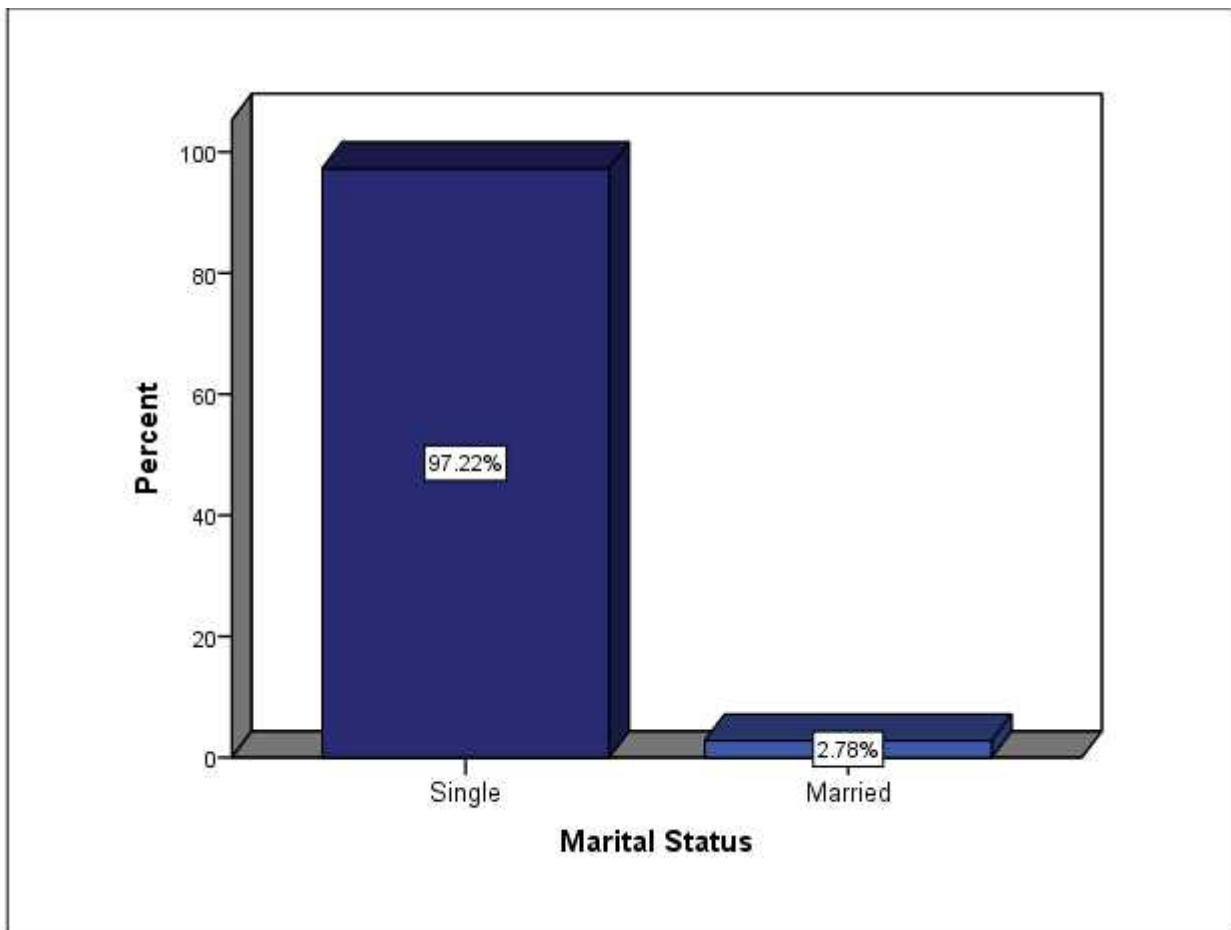


This graph represents the age range of the sample, from which a big part of the sample (69.44%) are between 22 and 26 years old. The 11.11% are between 18 and 21 years old and the last 19.44% are between 27 and more years old.

GRAPH 3
Marital Status of the students.

Statistics		
N	Valid	36
	Missing	0
Mean		1.03
Mode		1

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Single	35	97.2	97.2
Valid Married	1	2.8	2.8
Total	36	100.0	100.0



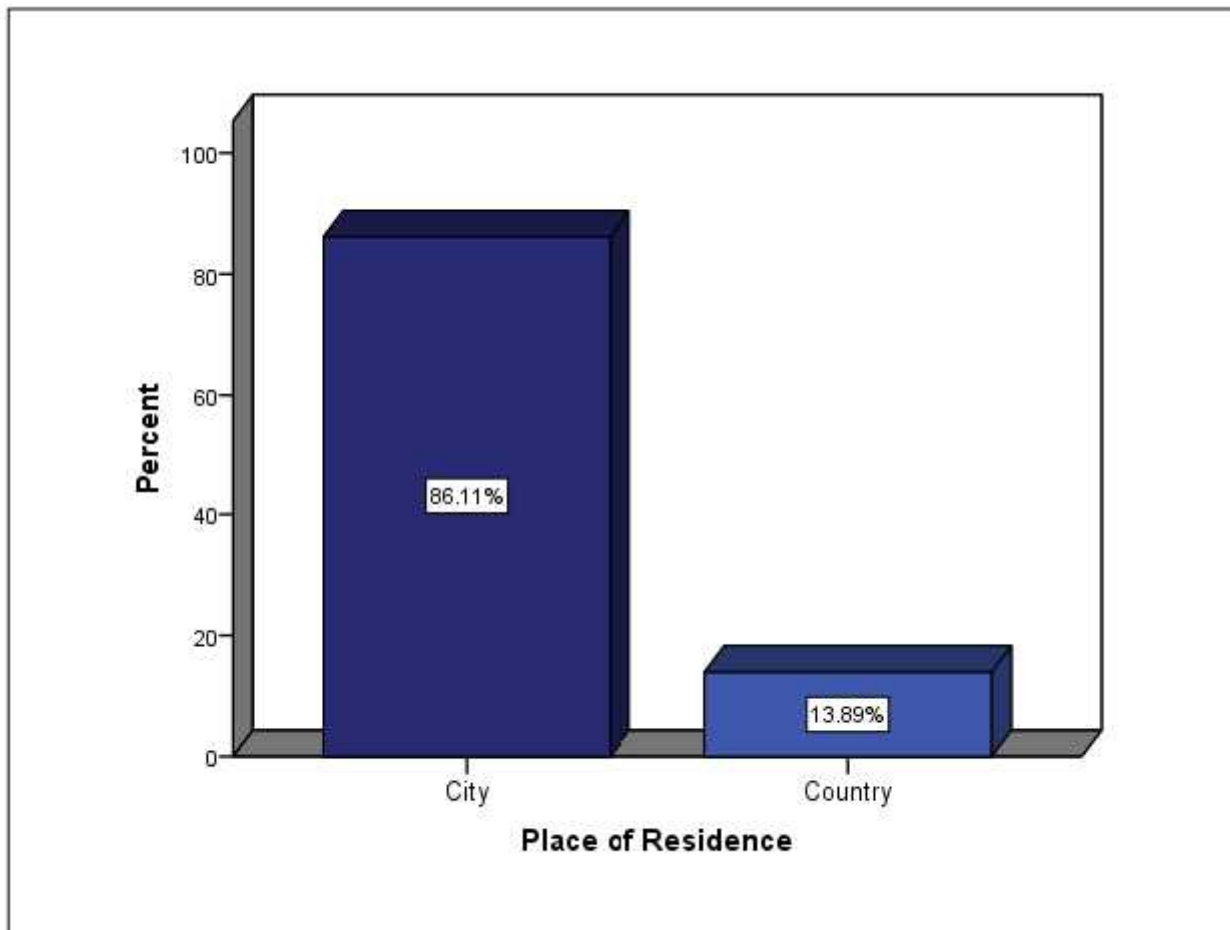
Graph 3 is about the sample's marital status. It indicates that the 97.22% of the sample are single and the 2.78% are married. It means that the majority are single.

GRAPH 4
Place of Residence of the students

Statistics

N	Valid	36
	Missing	0
Mean		1.14
Mode		1

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
City	31	86.1	86.1
Valid Country	5	13.9	13.9
Total	36	100.0	100.0



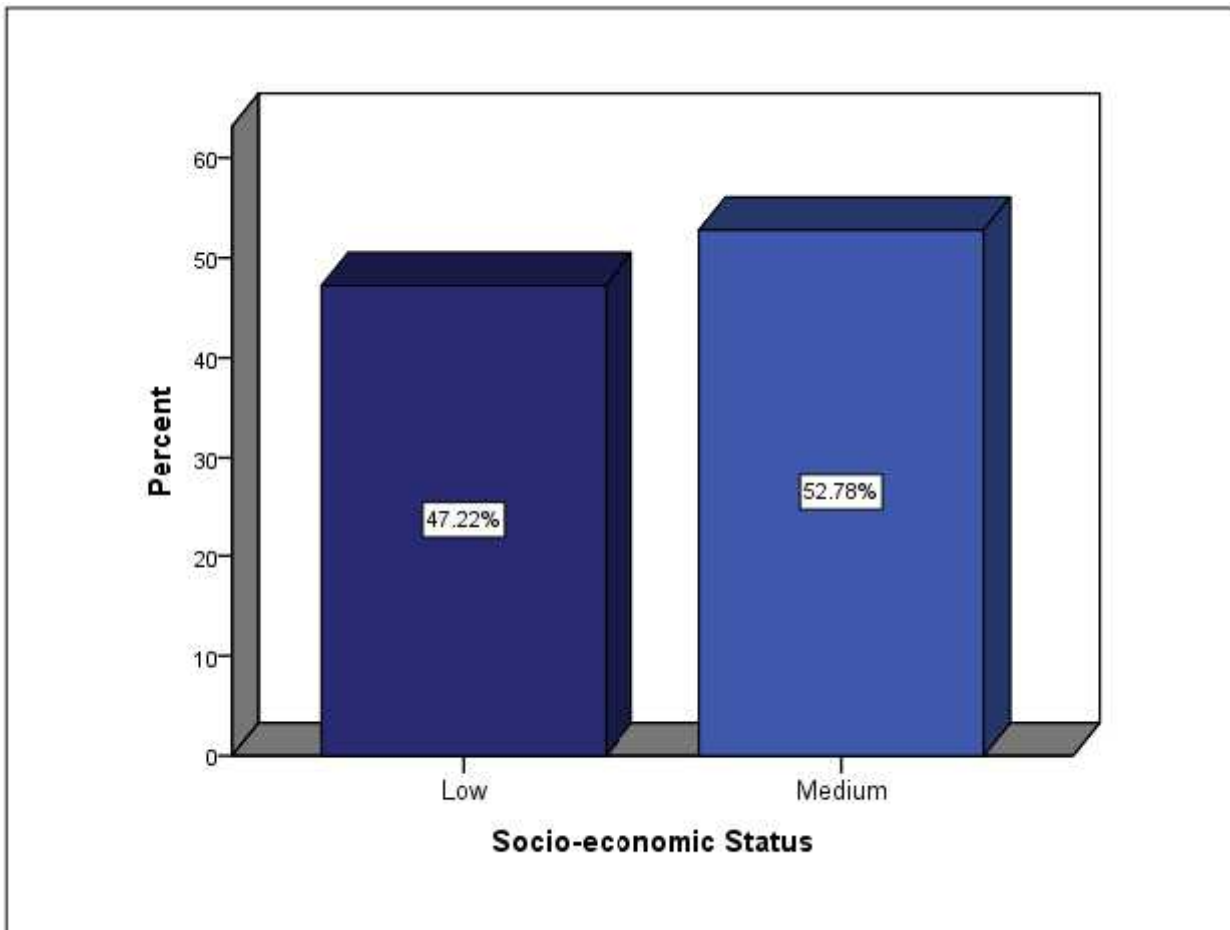
Graph 4 indicates about the sample's place of residence from which the 86.11% live in the city and the 13.89% live in the country.

GRAPH 5
Socio-economic status of the students.

Statistics

N	Valid	36
	Missing	0
Mean		1.53
Mode		2

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Low	17	47.2	47.2
Valid Medium	19	52.8	52.8
Total	36	100.0	100.0



This graph represents the sample's socio-economic status. It shows that the 47.22% of the sample have a low socio-economic status and the other 52.78% have a medium socio-economic status. Nobody chose a high socio-economic status.

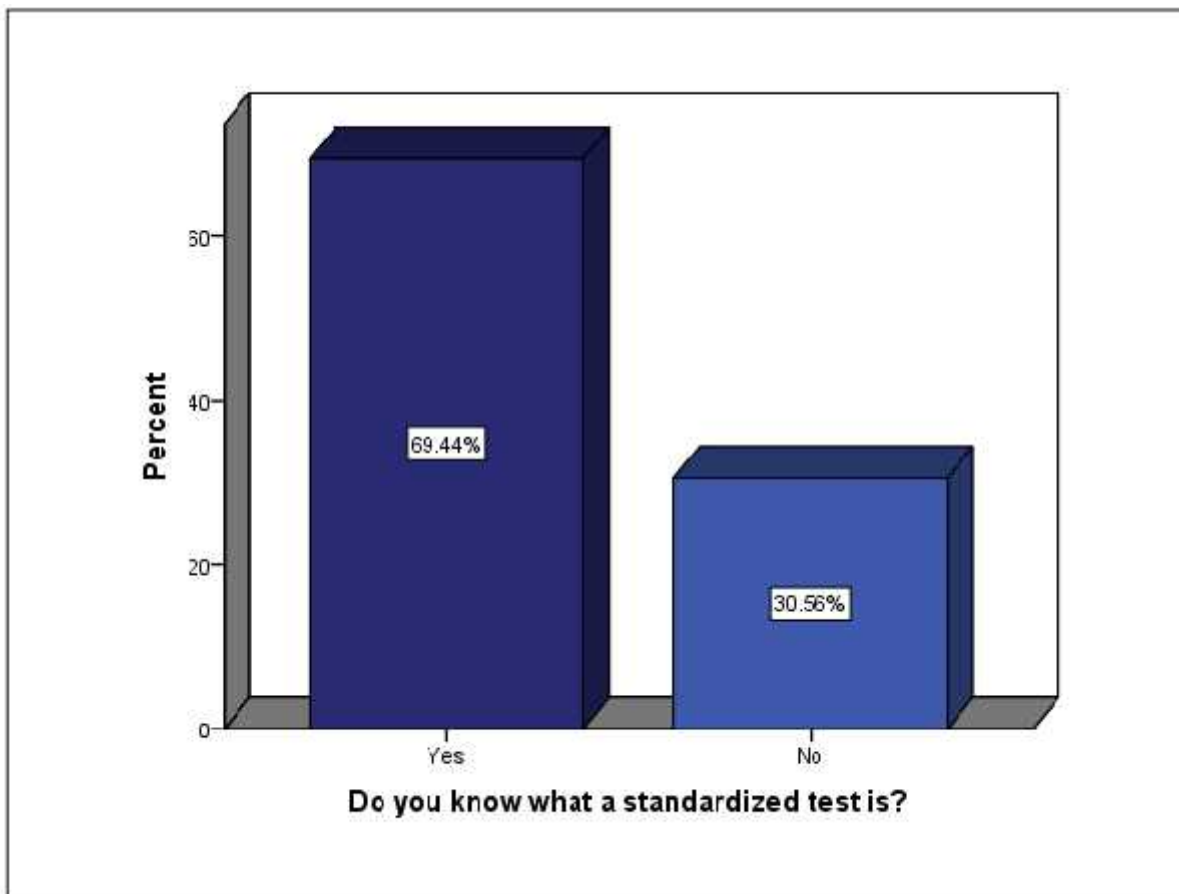
GRAPH 6

Do you know what a standardized text is?

Statistics

N	Valid	36
	Missing	0
Mean		1.31
Mode		1

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Yes	25	69.4	69.4
Valid No	11	30.6	30.6
Total	36	100.0	100.0



This graphic is about the knowledge the sample have about standardized tests, it is observed that the 69.44% answered positively and said that they know what a standardized test is, on the contrary, the 30.56% answered that they do not know what a standardized is.

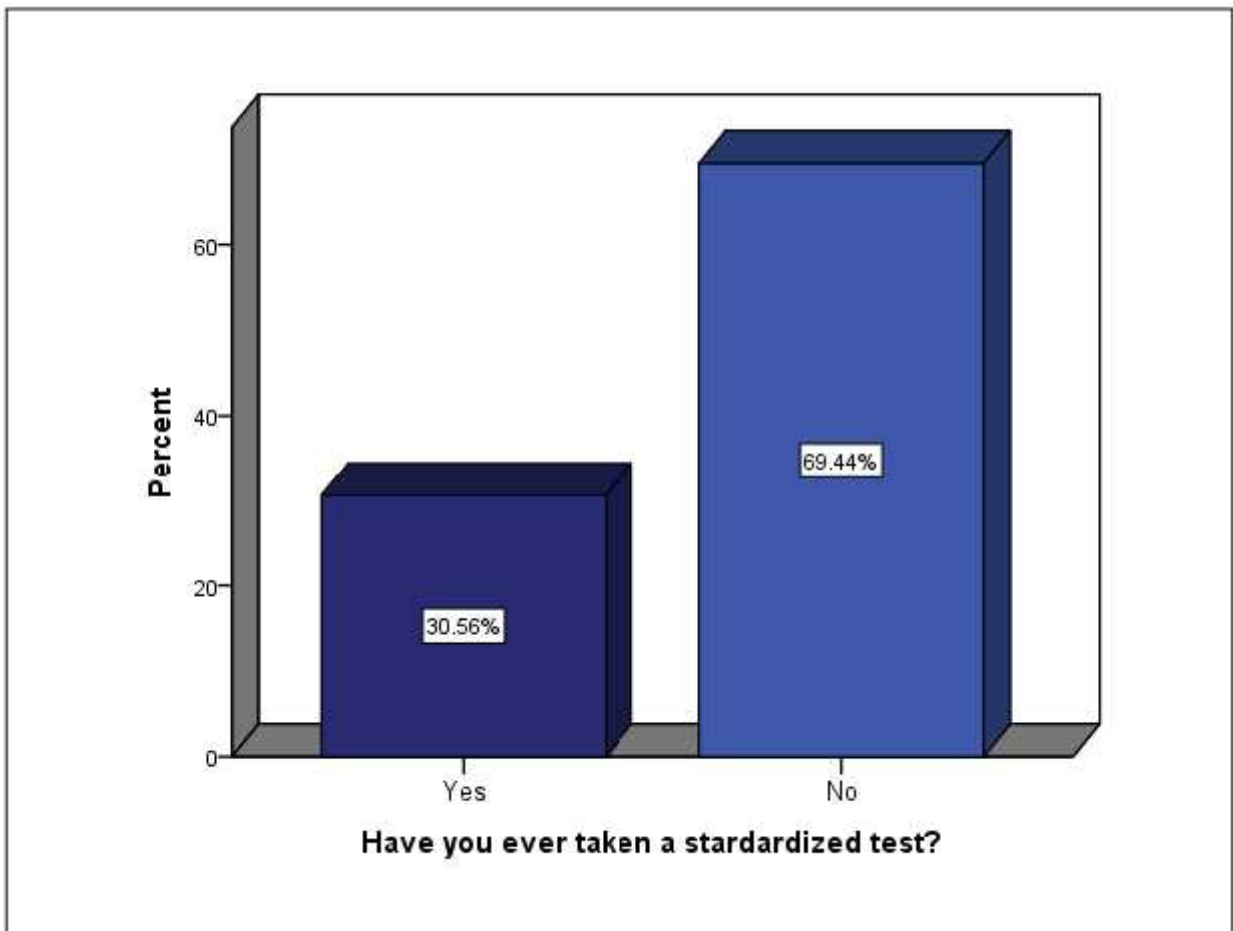
GRAPH 7

Have you ever taken a standardized text?

Statistics

N	Valid	36
	Missing	0
Mean		1.69
Mode		2

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Yes	11	30.6	30.6
Valid No	25	69.4	69.4
Total	36	100.0	100.0



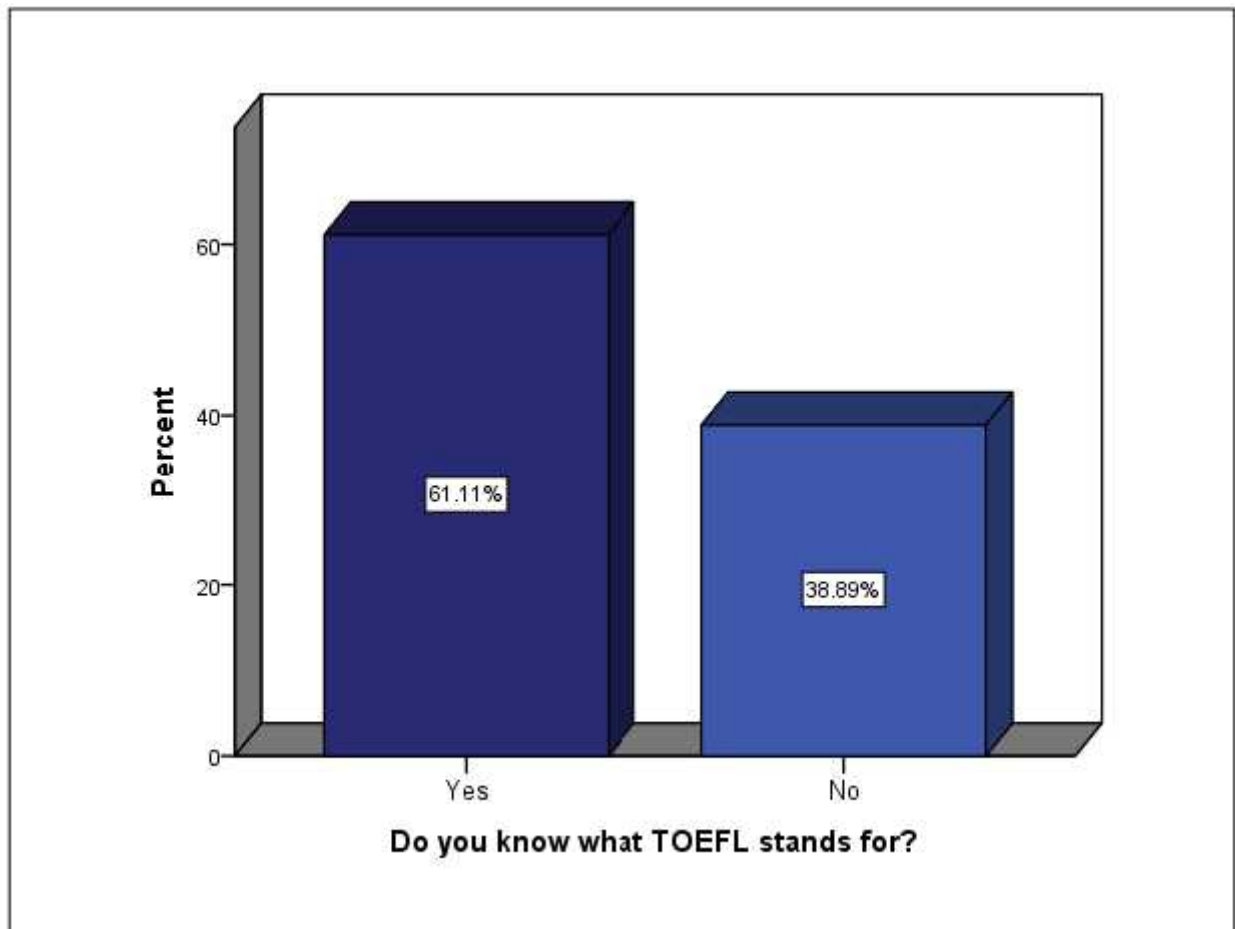
It is shown in the graph the people who have taken a standardized test. The 30.56% said they have taken a standardized test before, on the contrary, a big part of the sample which is the 69.44% said that they have never taken a standardized test.

GRAPH 8

Do you know what TOEFL stands for?

Statistics

N	Valid	36	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	
	Missing	0	Yes	22	61.1	61.1
Mean		1.39	Valid No	14	38.9	38.9
Mode		1	Total	36	100.0	100.0



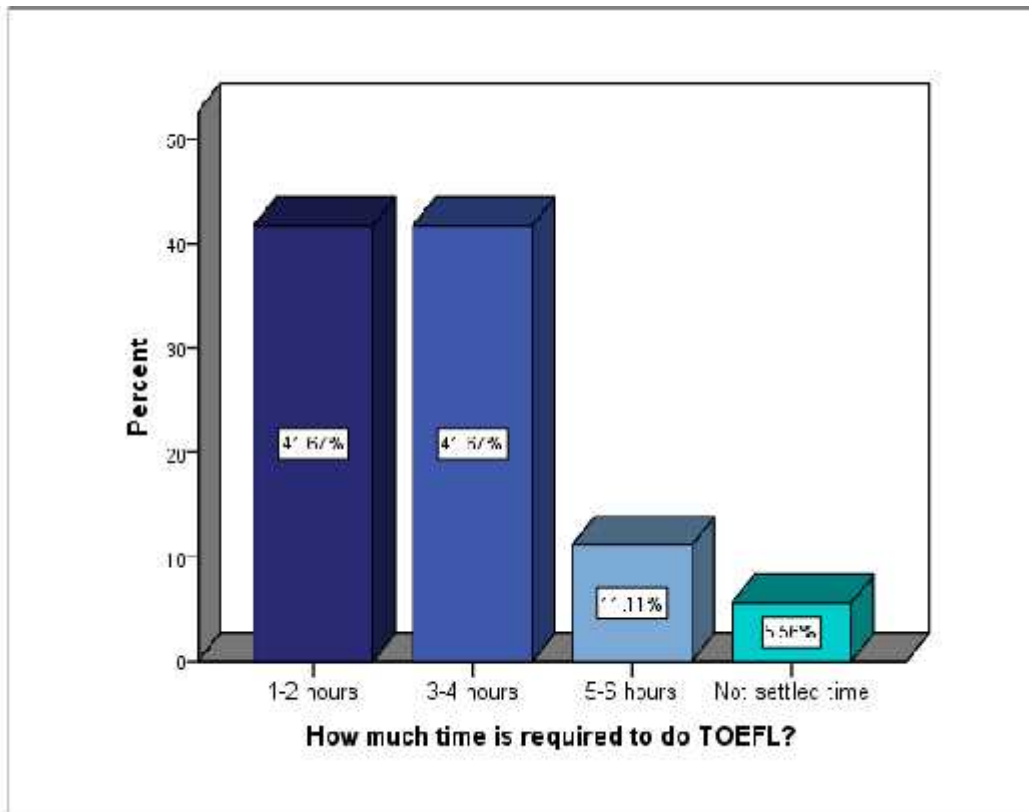
This graph shows about the knowledge the sample has about the meaning of the acronym TOEFL. From the sample the 61.11% said they know what TOEFL stands for but the 38.89% said they do not know the meaning of TOEFL.

GRAPH 9

How much time is required to do TOEFL?

Statistics

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
N	Valid	36		
	Missing	0		
Mean		1.81		
Mode		1 ^a		
	1-2 hours	15	41.7	41.7
	3-4 hours	15	41.7	41.7
Valid	5-6 hours	4	11.1	11.1
	Not settled time	2	5.6	5.6
	Total	36	100.0	100.0



As can be seen from the graph, which is about the knowledge the sample have about the time required to do TOEFL, The 41.67% said it is required 1-2 hours to do the test. The 41.67% said it is required 3-4 hours, the 11.11% said it is required 5-6 hours and the last 5.56% said there is not settled time to do the test.

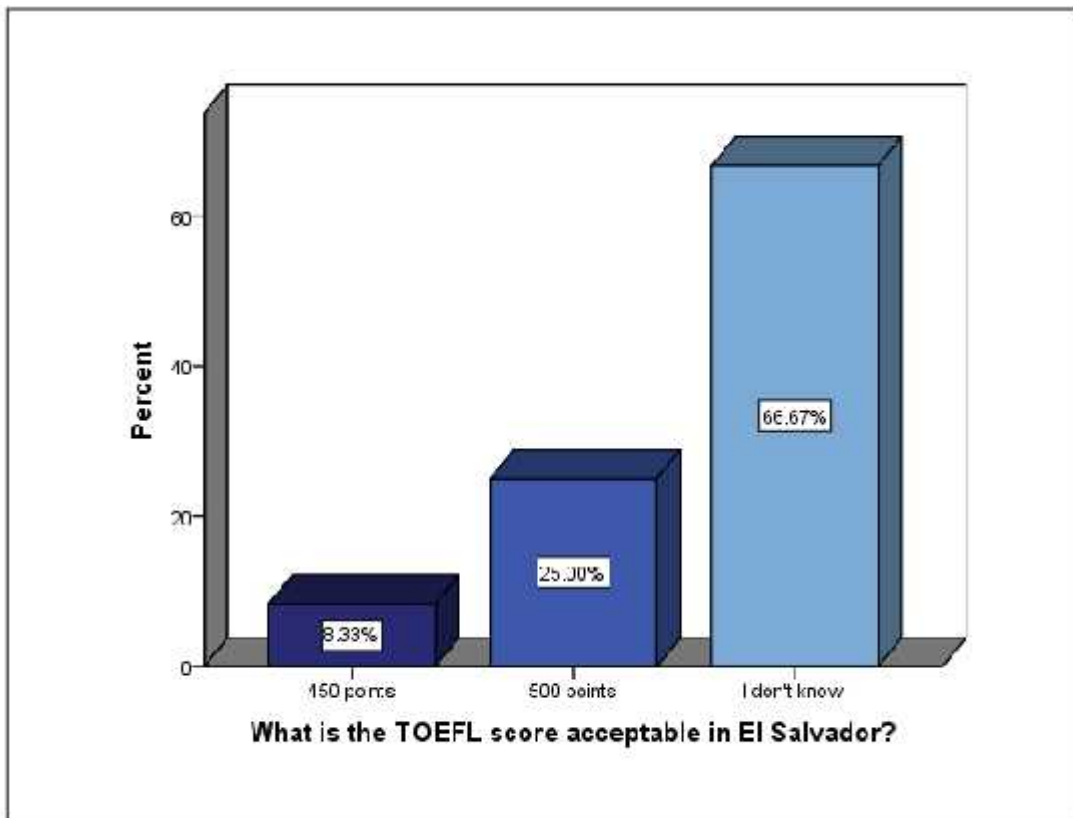
GRAPH 10

What is the TOEFL score acceptable in El Salvador?

Statistics

N	Valid	36
	Missing	0
Mean		3.58
Mode		4

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid 450 points	3	8.3	8.3
Valid 500 points	9	25.0	25.0
Valid I don't know	24	66.7	66.7
Total	36	100.0	100.0



This graph illustrates about what the sample knows about the scores acceptable to approve TOEFL in El Salvador. The 8.33% thinks 450 points are acceptable to approve, the 25.00% thinks 500 points are acceptable to approve the test and a big part of the sample which is the 66.67% does not know the score acceptable to approve TOEFL in El Salvador.

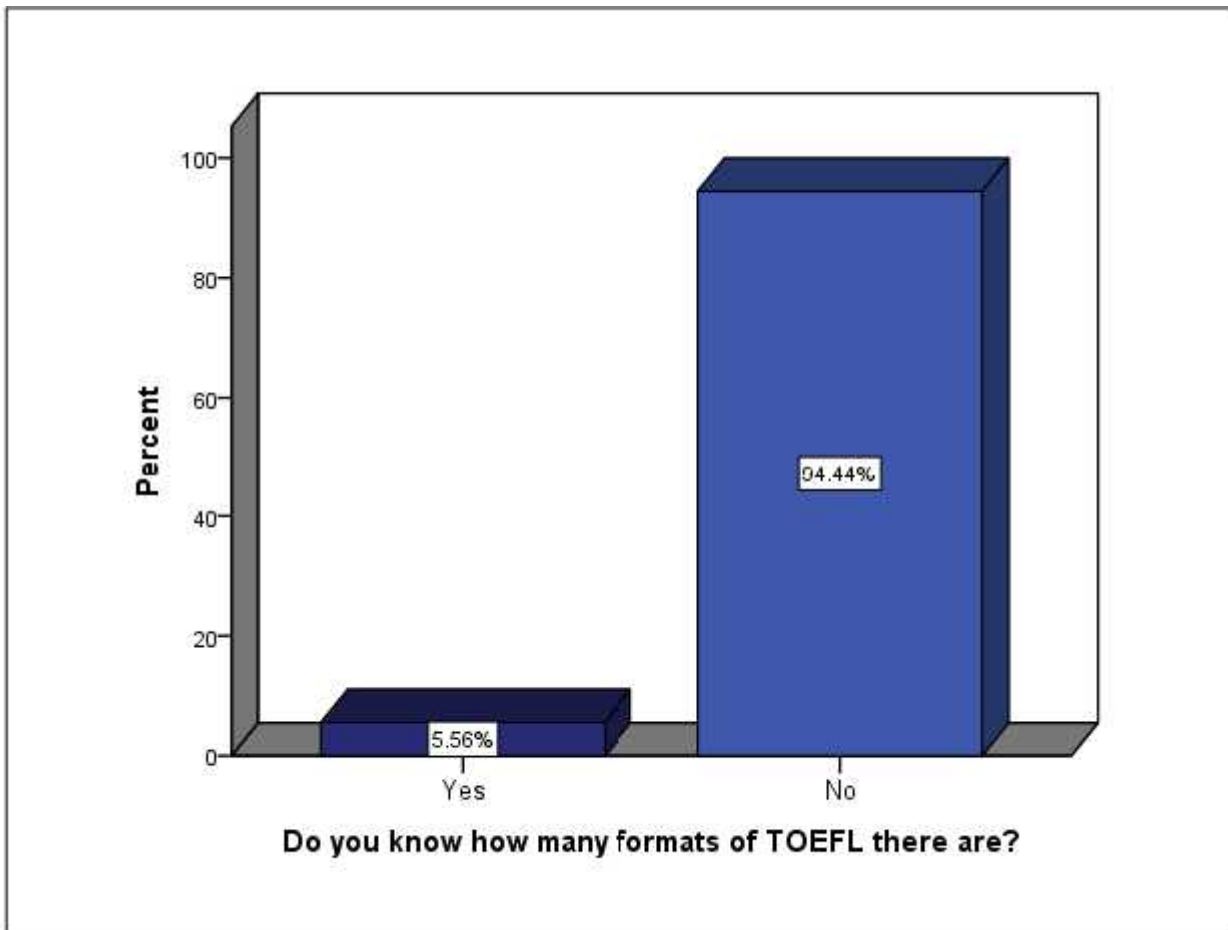
GRAPH 11

Do you know how many formats of TOEFL there are?

Statistics

N	Valid	36			
	Missing	0			
Mean		1.94			
Mode		2			

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
	Yes	2	5.6	5.6
Valid	No	34	94.4	94.4
	Total	36	100.0	100.0



As can be seen from the graph about how many formats of TOEFL there are, only the 5.56% of the sample knows the amount of TOEFL formats and the majority which is the 94.44% do not know the number of TOEFL that exists.

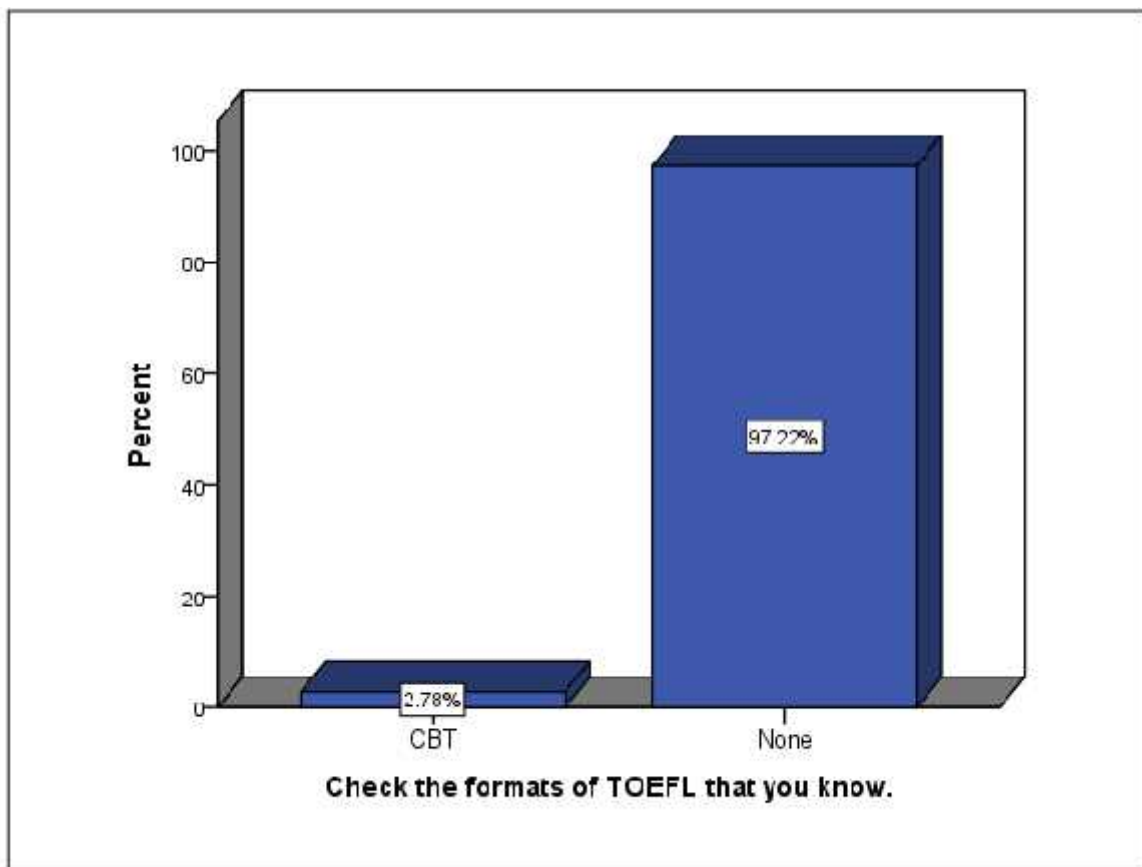
GRAPH 12

Check the formats of TOEFL that you know?

Statistics

N	Valid	36
	Missing	0
Mean		3.94
Mode		4

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
CBT	1	2.8	2.8
Valid None	35	97.2	97.2
Total	36	100.0	100.0



This graph illustrates what formats of TOEFL the sample knows. Only the 2.78% knows the CBT format and the majority of the sample, the 97.22%, does not know any TOEFL format.

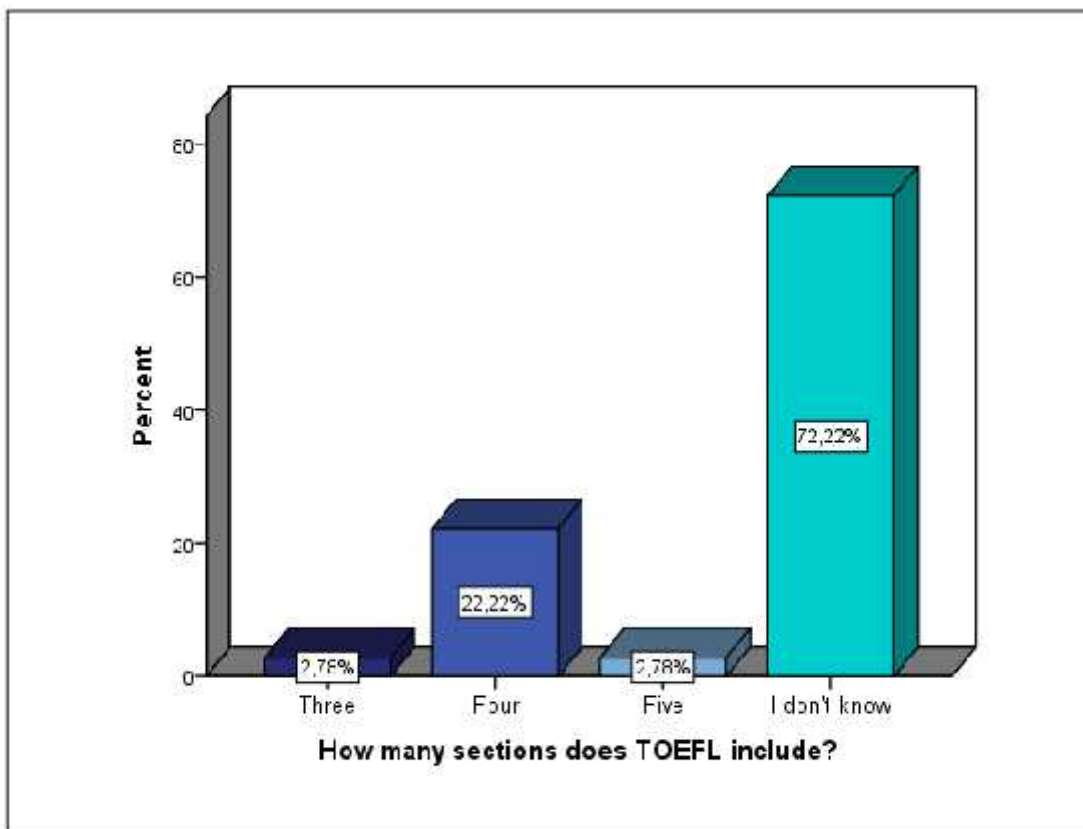
GRAPH 13

How many sections does TOEFL include?

Statistics

N	Valid	36
	Missing	0
Mean		3,44
Mode		4

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent
Three	1	2,8	2,8
Four	8	22,2	22,2
Valid Five	1	2,8	2,8
I don't know	26	72,2	72,2
Total	36	100,0	100,0



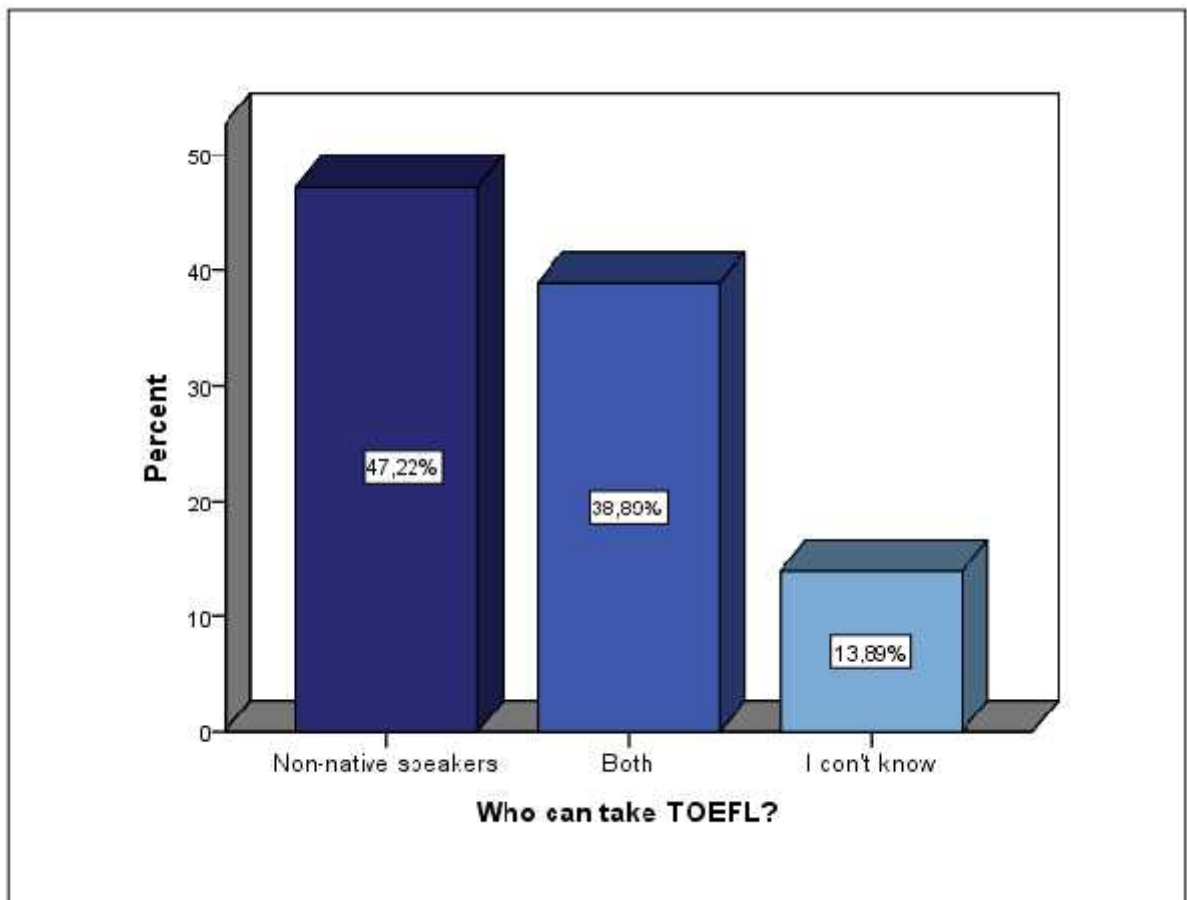
According to graph 13, 72.22% of the students, which means the majority, do not know how many sections TOEFL includes. Even so, the 22.22% of them answered that TOEFL has four sections, 2.78% of the sample answered TOEFL has three sections and 2.78% of them responded that TOEFL has five sections.

GRAPH 14
Who can take TOEFL?

Statistics

N	Valid	36
	Missing	0
Mean		2,19
Mode		1

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent
Valid Non-native speakers	17	47,2	47,2
Both	14	38,9	38,9
I don't know	5	13,9	13,9
Total	36	100,0	100,0



In graph 14, it can be observed that 47.22% of the students answered that non-native speakers can take TOEFL. 38.89% of them think TOEFL can be taken by either native or non-native speakers and 13.89% responded that they do not know who can take TOEFL.

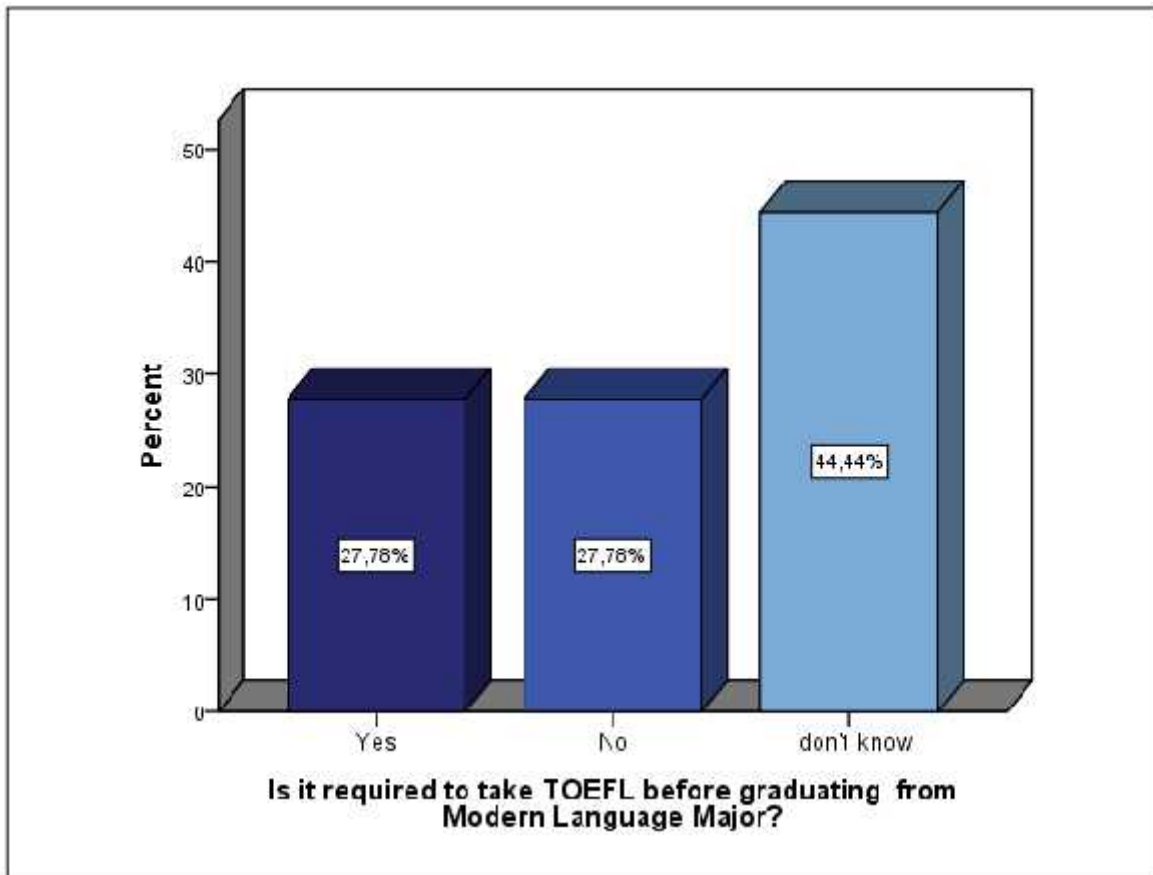
GRAPH 15

Is it required to take TOEFL before graduating from Modern Language Major?

Statistics

N	Valid	36
	Missing	0
Mean		2,17
Mode		3

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent
Valid	Yes	10	27,8
	No	10	27,8
	I don't know	16	44,4
	Total	36	100,0



It is possible to notice in graph 15 that 44.44% of the sample does not know whether taking TOEFL before graduating from Modern Language Major is a requirement. 27.78% of the students believe it is required to do it and 27.78% of them answered it is not.

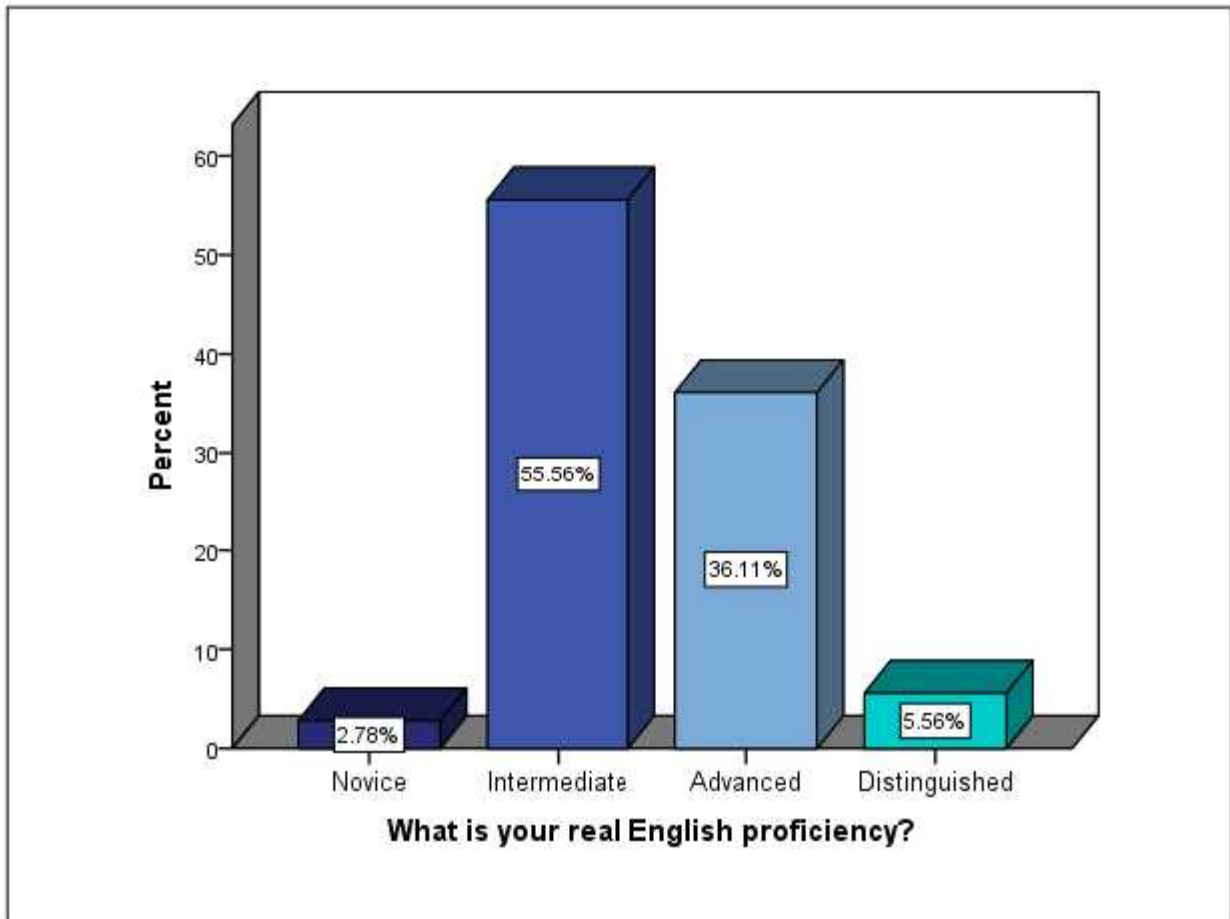
GRAPH 16

What is your real English proficiency?

Statistics

N	Valid	36
	Missing	0
Mean		2,44
Mode		2

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent
Novice	1	2,8	2,8
Intermediate	20	55,6	55,6
Advanced	13	36,1	36,1
Distinguished	2	5,6	5,6
Total	36	100,0	100,0



Graph 16 shows that only 2.78% of the sample thinks their real English proficiency is novice. Moreover, 55.56% of them consider they are in an intermediate level; 36.11% of the students consider themselves to be in an advanced level and 5.56% of them think they are in a distinguished level.

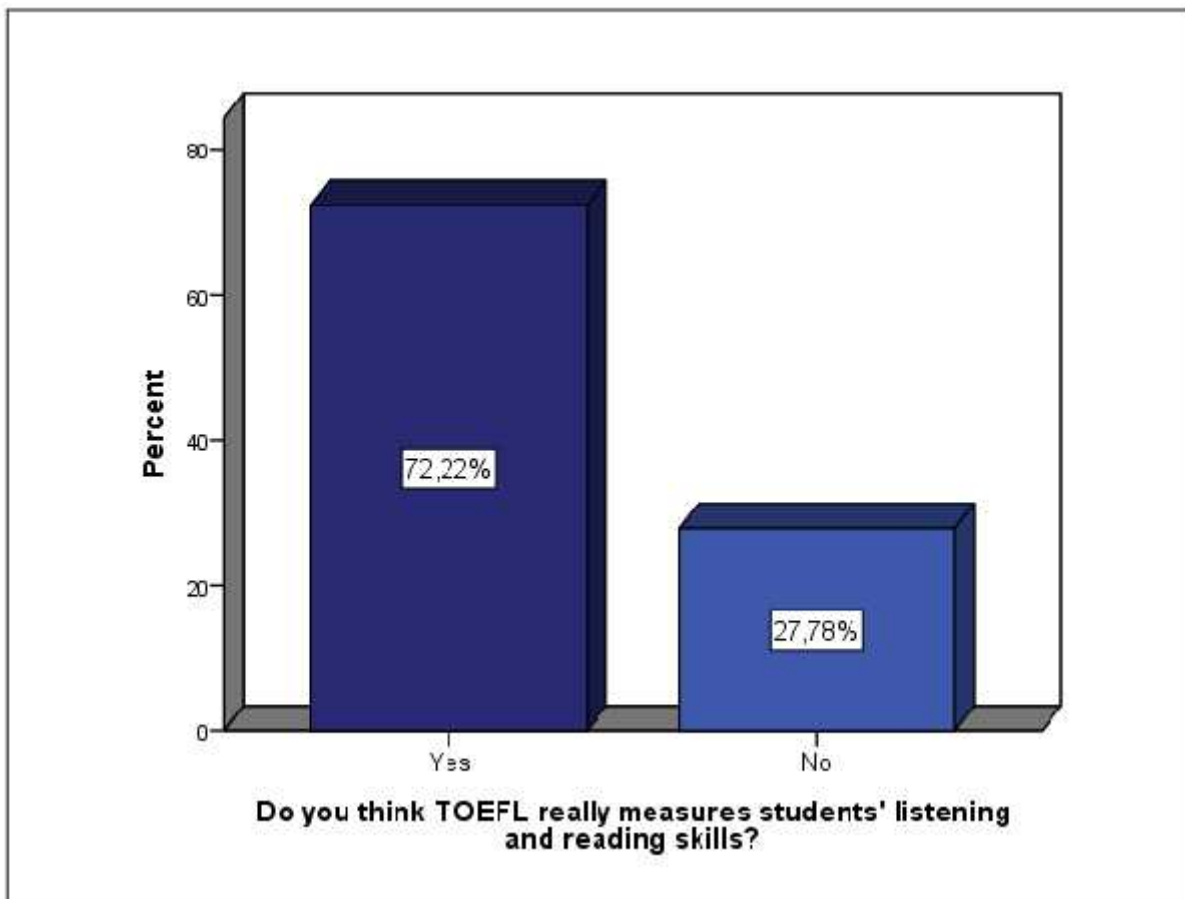
GRAPH 17

Do you think TOEFL really measures students' listening and reading skills?

Statistics

N	Valid	36
	Missing	0
Mean		1,28
Mode		1

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent
Valid Yes	26	72,2	72,2
Valid No	10	27,8	27,8
Total	36	100,0	100,0



In graph 17, it can be observed that 72.22% of the students consider that TOEFL really measures students' listening and reading skills. On the other hand, 27.48% of them think it does not.

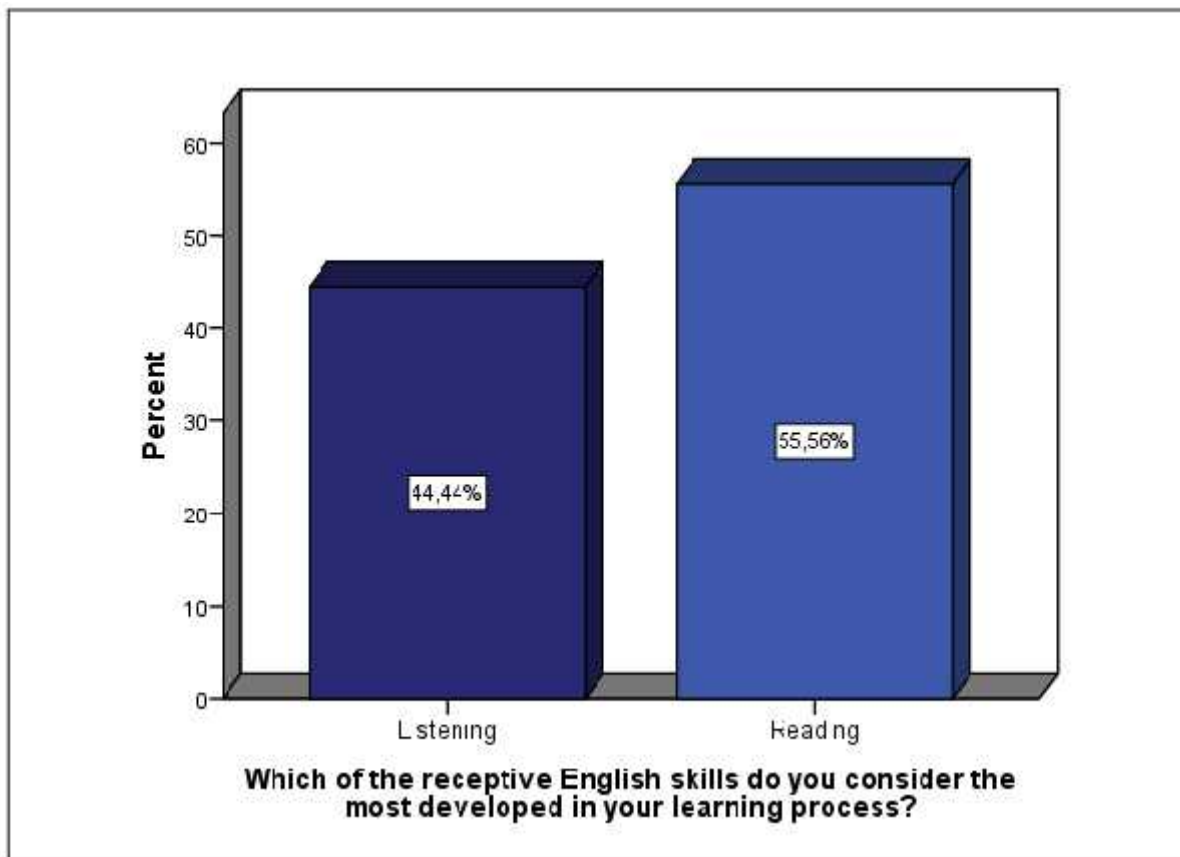
GRAPH 18

Which of the receptive English skills do you consider the most developed in your learning process?

Statistics

N	Valid	36
	Missing	0
Mean		1,56
Mode		2

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent
Listening	16	44,4	44,4
Valid Reading	20	55,6	55,6
Total	36	100,0	100,0



In graph 18, it is shown that students think they are better at reading than at listening. 55.56% of them consider that reading is their most developed skill versus 44.44% of the sample who believes that listening is their most developed skill.

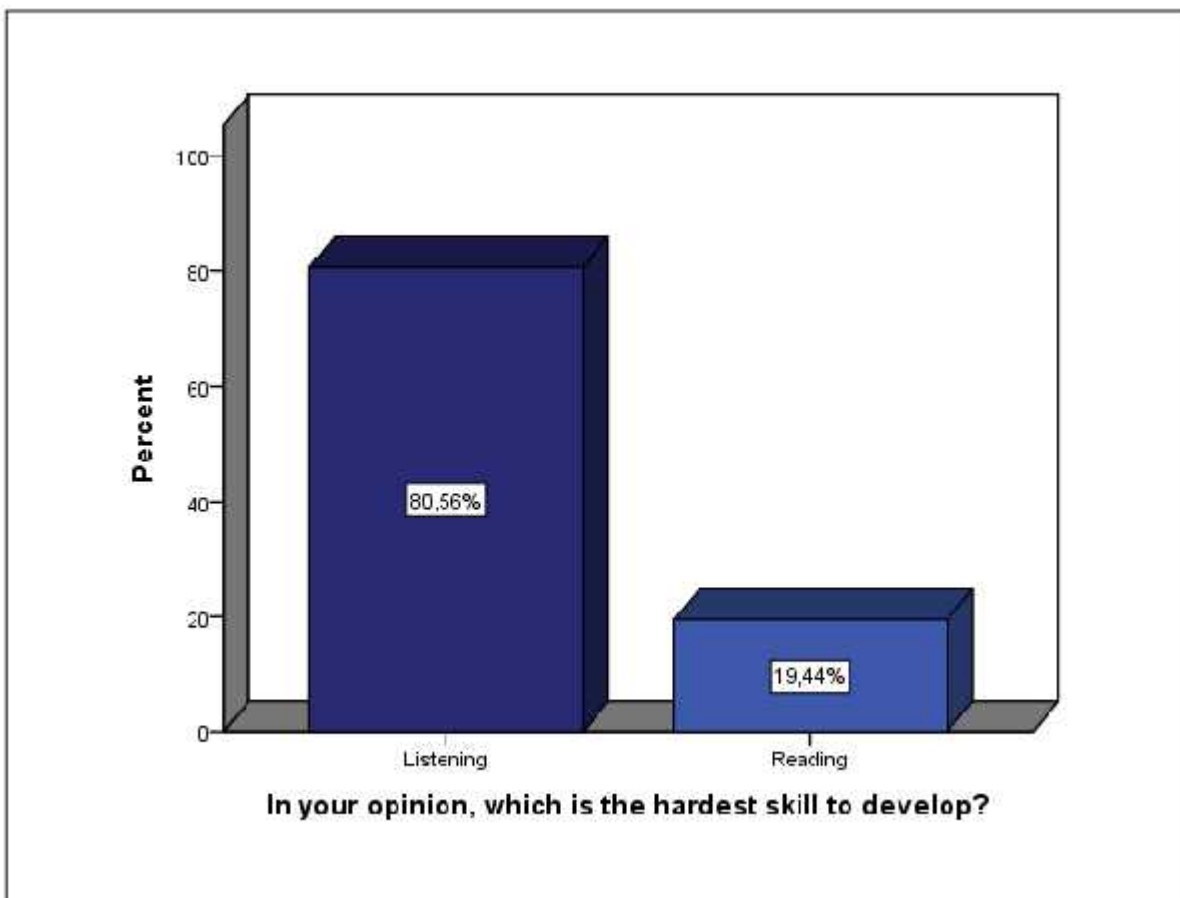
GRAPH 19

In your opinion, which is the hardest skill to develop?

Statistics

N	Valid	36
	Missing	0
Mean		1,19
Mode		1

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent
Listening	29	80,6	80,6
Valid Reading	7	19,4	19,4
Total	36	100,0	100,0



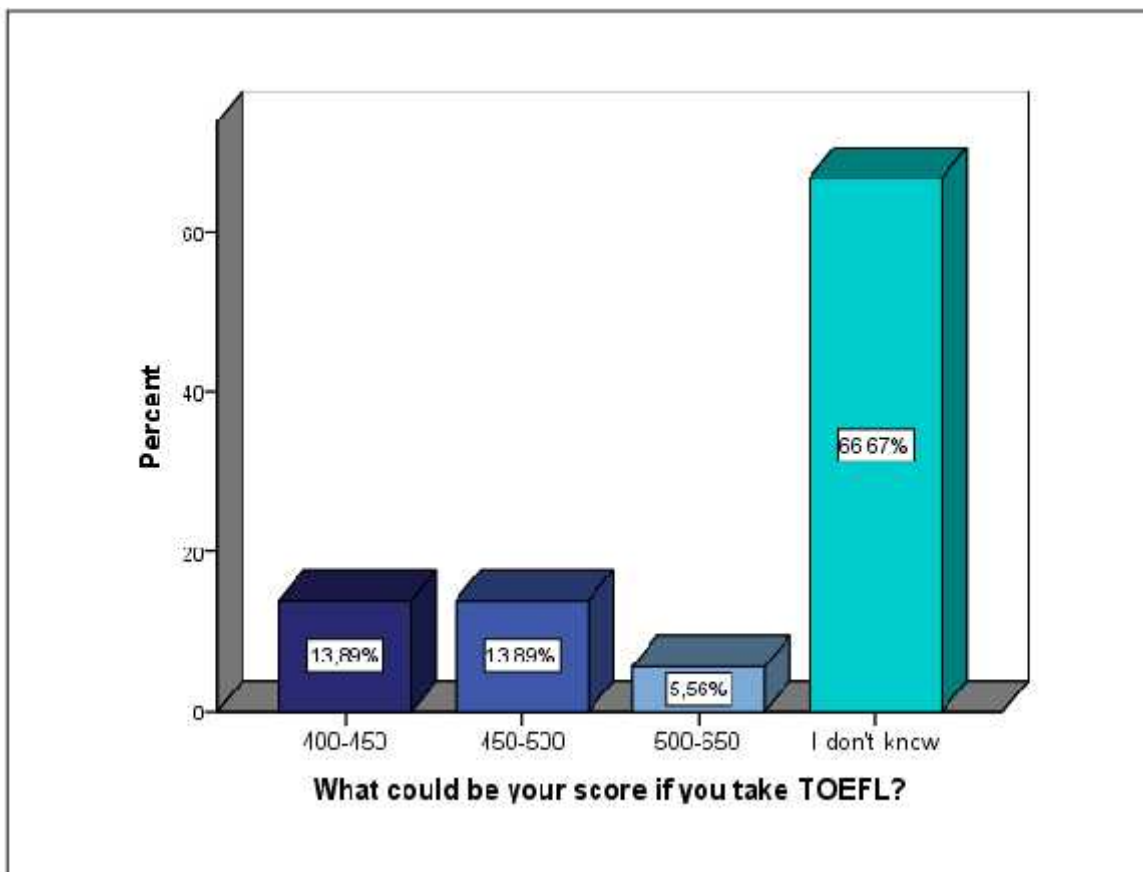
Graph 19 shows that 80.56% of the students, the majority, consider listening as the hardest skill to develop. Yet 19.44% of them think reading is the hardest skill to be developed.

GRAPH 20

What could be your score if you take TOEFL?

Statistics

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent
N	Valid	36		
	Missing	0		
Mean		3,25		
Mode		4		
	400-450	5	13,9	13,9
	450-500	5	13,9	13,9
Valid	500-650	2	5,6	5,6
	I don't know	24	66,7	66,7
	Total	36	100,0	100,0



According to graph 20, the majority of the students, 66.67% of them, do not know what could be their score if they take TOEFL. Besides, 13.89% of the sample think they could get a score between 400 and 450; 13.89% of them answered that their score could be between 450 and 500 and only 5.56% of the students consider they could get a score between 500 and 650.

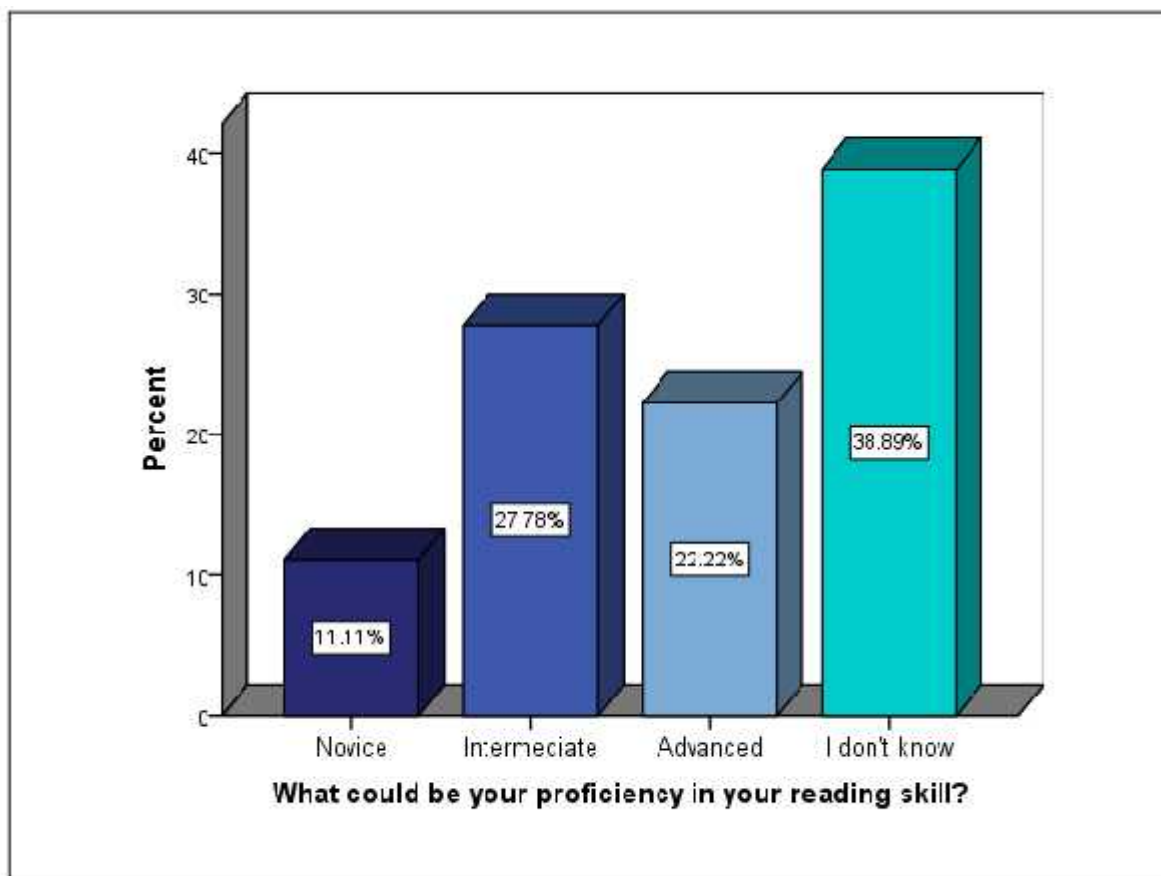
GRAPH 21

What could be your proficiency in your reading skill?

Statistics

N	Valid	36
	Missing	0
Mean		2,89
Mode		4

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent
Novice	4	11,1	11,1
Intermediate	10	27,8	27,8
Valid Advanced	8	22,2	22,2
I don't know	14	38,9	38,9
Total	36	100,0	100,0



It is possible to observe in graph 21 that 11.11% of the sample considers their proficiency in their reading skill could be between 42 and 50. Moreover, it is also observed that 27.78% of them think their proficiency could be between 51 and 59; 22.22% of the students consider their score could be between 60 and 67 and 38.89% of them answered they did not know what could be their proficiency.

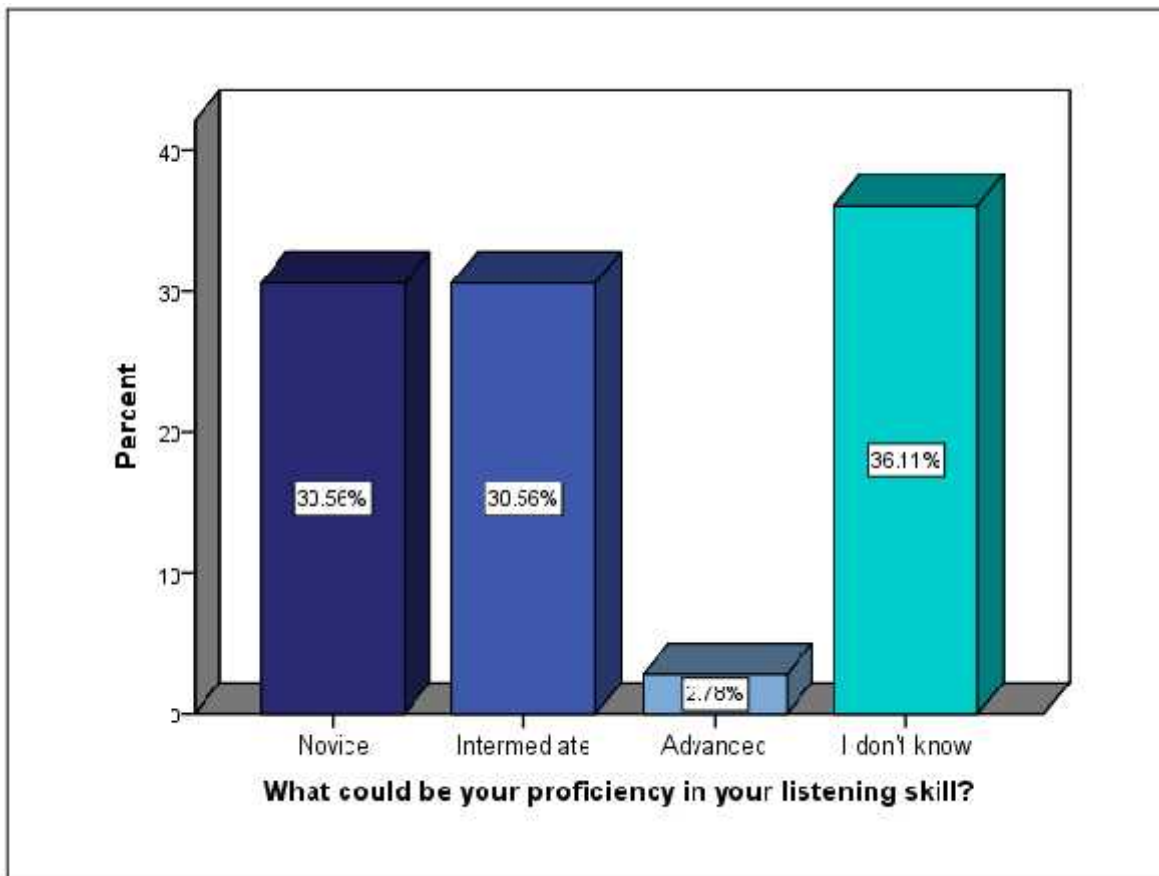
GRAPH 22

What could be your proficiency in your listening skill?

Statistics

N	Valid	36
	Missing	0
Mean		2,44
Mode		4

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent
45-52	11	30,6	30,6
53-61	11	30,6	30,6
Valid 62-68	1	2,8	2,8
I don't know	13	36,1	36,1
Total	36	100,0	100,0



In graph 22, it can be seen that 30.56% of the students considers their proficiency in their listening skill could be between 45 and 52. Besides, 30.56% of them thinks their proficiency could be between 53 and 61; only 2.78% of the sample considers their proficiency could be between 62 and 68 and 36.11% of them said they did not know what could be their proficiency in their listening skill.

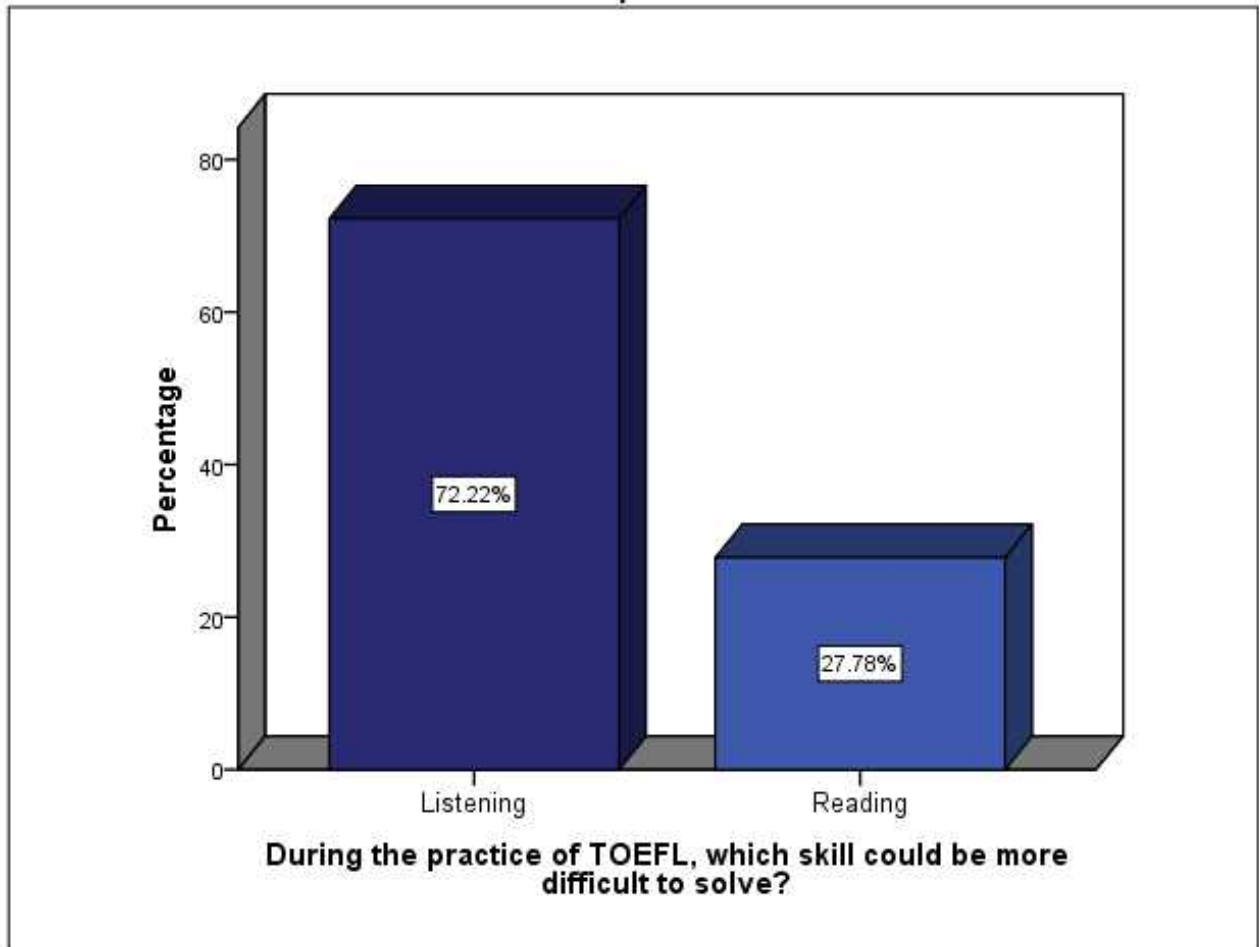
GRAPH 23

During the practice of TOEFL, which skill could be more difficult to solve?

Statistics

N	Valid	36
	Missing	0
Mean		1.28
Mode		1

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid Listening	26	72.2	72.2
Valid Reading	10	27.8	27.8
Total	36	100.0	100.0



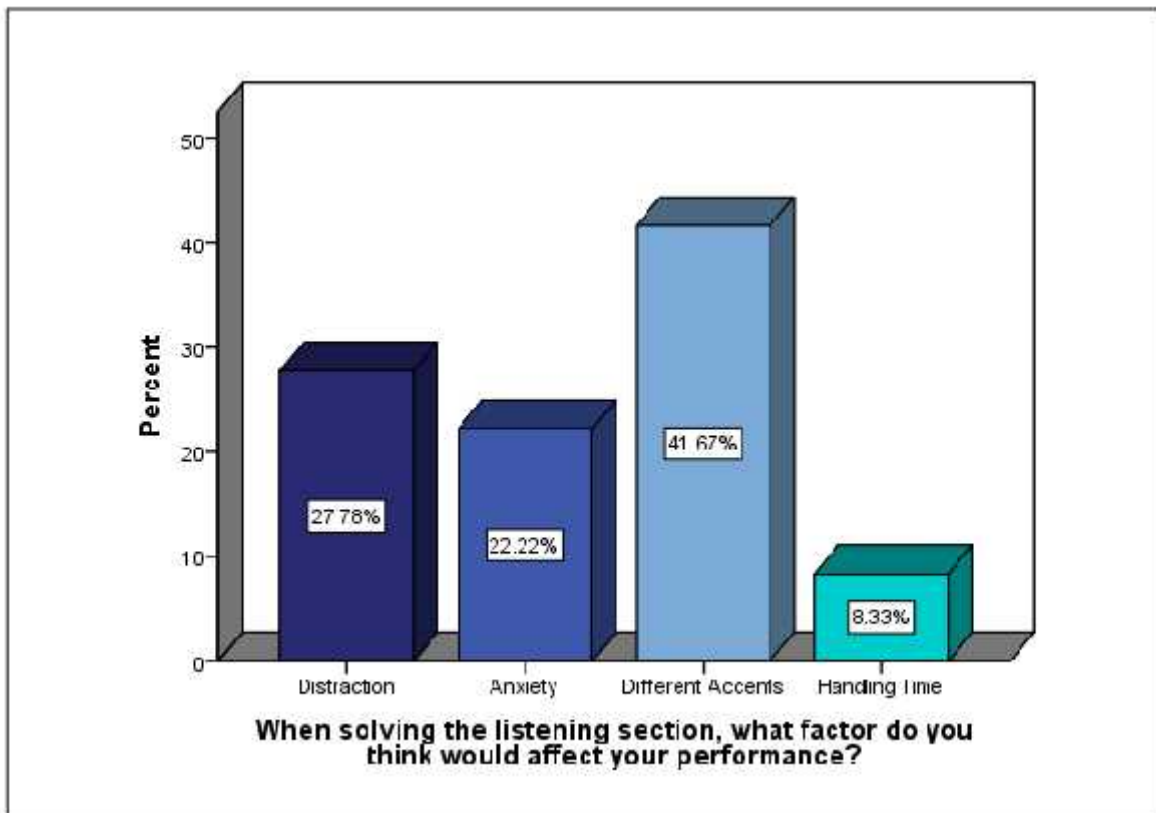
In graph 23, it is observed that the majority of students think that listening is harder to solve than reading. There are 26 students out of the 36 that consider listening is the most difficult section to solve, they represent 72.22%. On the other hand, it can be seen that 10 students (representing 27.78%) think reading is the most difficult part to solve.

GRAPH 24

When solving the listening section, what factor do you think would affect your performance?

Statistics		
N	Valid	36
	Missing	0
Media		2.31
Moda		3

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Distraction	10	27.8	27.8
Anxiety	8	22.2	22.2
Different Accents	15	41.7	41.7
Handling Time	3	8.3	8.3
Total	36	100.0	100.0



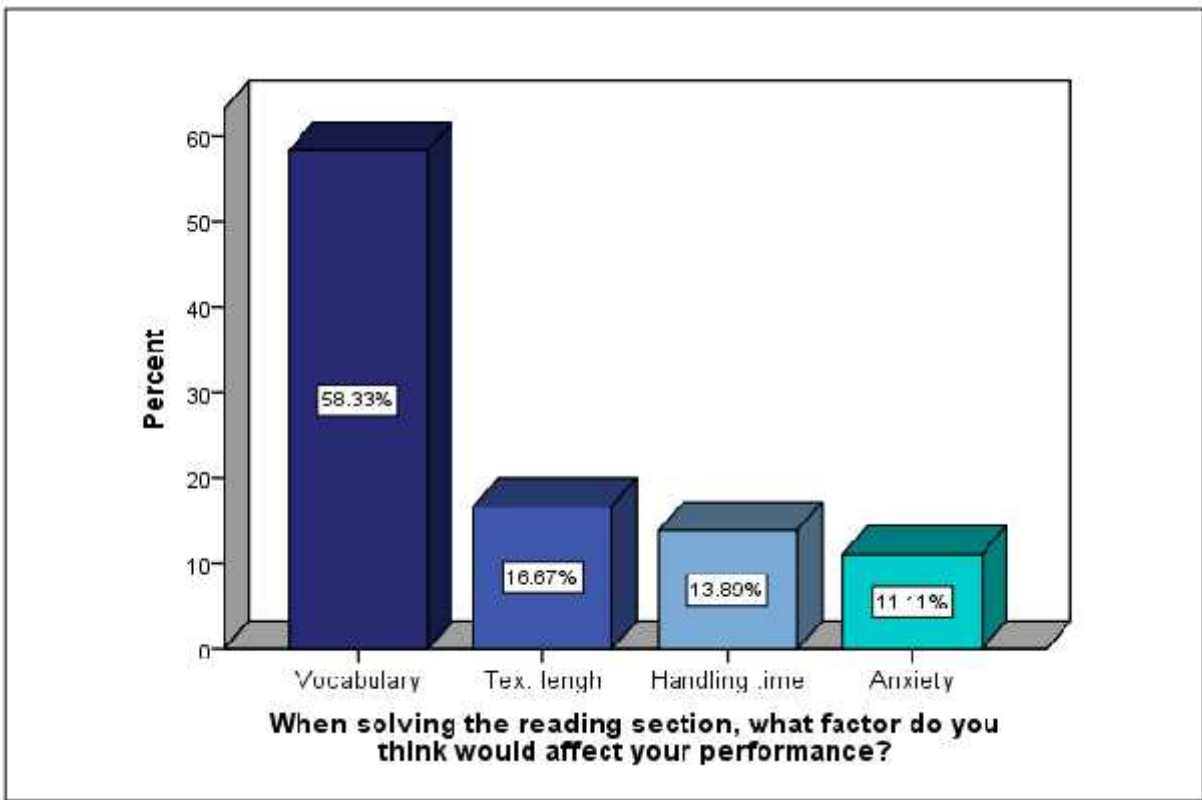
According to graph 24, 41.67% of the students consider that the factor of different accents would affect their performance when solving the listening section. It can be also observed that 27.78% of the students think distractions is the biggest factor that would affect them; 22.22% of sample answered that anxiety is the main factor affecting their performance and 8.33% of the students consider that the factor of handling time would affect their performance when solving the listening section.

GRAPH 25

When solving the reading section, what factor do you think would affect your performance?

Statistics						
N	Valid	36				
	Missing	0				
Mean		1.78				
Mode		1				

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Vocabulary	21	58.3	58.3
	Text lengh	6	16.7	16.7
	Handling time	5	13.9	13.9
	Anxiety	4	11.1	11.1
	Total	36	100.0	100.0



In graph 25, it is possible to see that 58.33% of the students think the main factor that would affect their performance in the reading section is vocabulary. The graph also shows that 16.67% of the sample considers text length is the biggest factor which would affect their performance; besides, it can be seen that 13.89% of the students think the factor of handling time would affect them and 11.11% of them consider anxiety as the main factor that would affect their performance when solving the reading section.

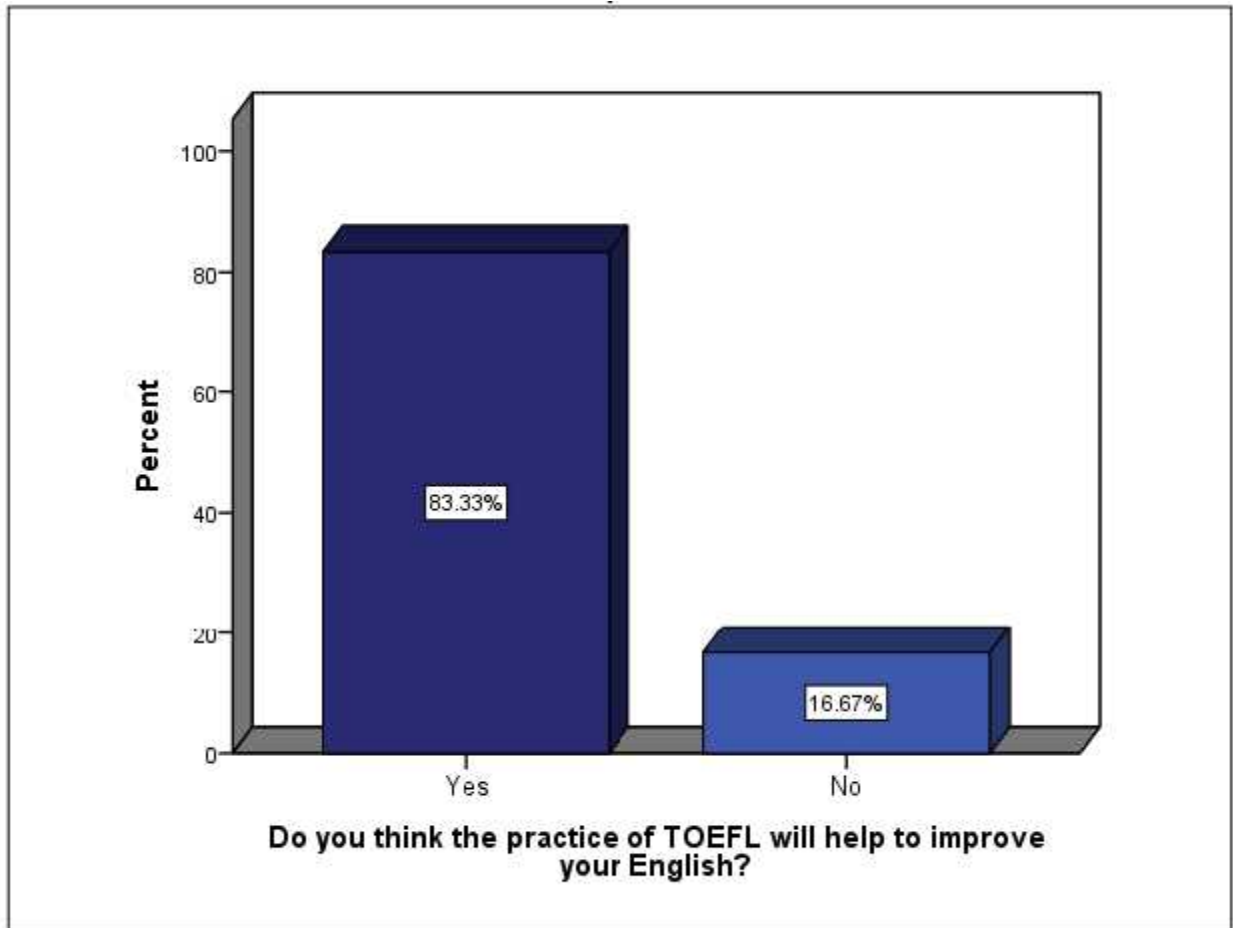
GRAPH 26

Do you think the practice of TOEFL will help to improve your English?

Statistics

N	Válidos	36
	Perdidos	0
Media		1.17
Moda		1

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid Yes	30	83.3	83.3
Valid No	6	16.7	16.7
Total	36	100.0	100.0



According to graph 26, it is seen that 83.33% of the students considers the practice of TOEFL will help to improve their English. Moreover, 16.67% of the sample thinks that this practice will not help. As a conclusion, students really believe the practice of TOEFL is a help to improve their English.

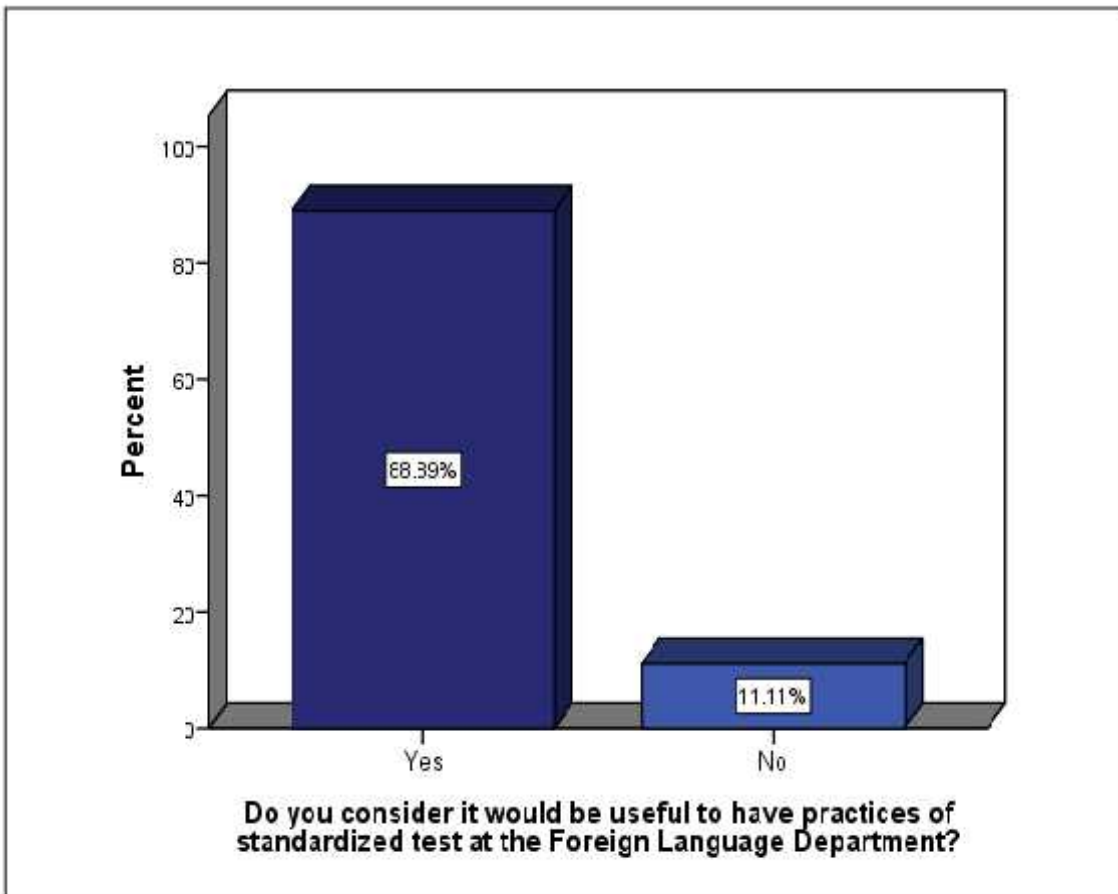
GRAPH 27

Do you consider it would be useful to have practices of standardized tests at the Foreign Language Department?

Statistics

N	Valid	36
	Missing	0
Mean		1.11
Mode		1

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Yes	32	88.9	88.9
Valid Yes	4	11.1	11.1
Total	36	100.0	100.0



Graph 27 shows a remarkable difference in the answers. Most of the students, 88.89%, consider it would be useful to have practices of standardized tests at the Foreign Language Department but 11.11% of them think it would not be.

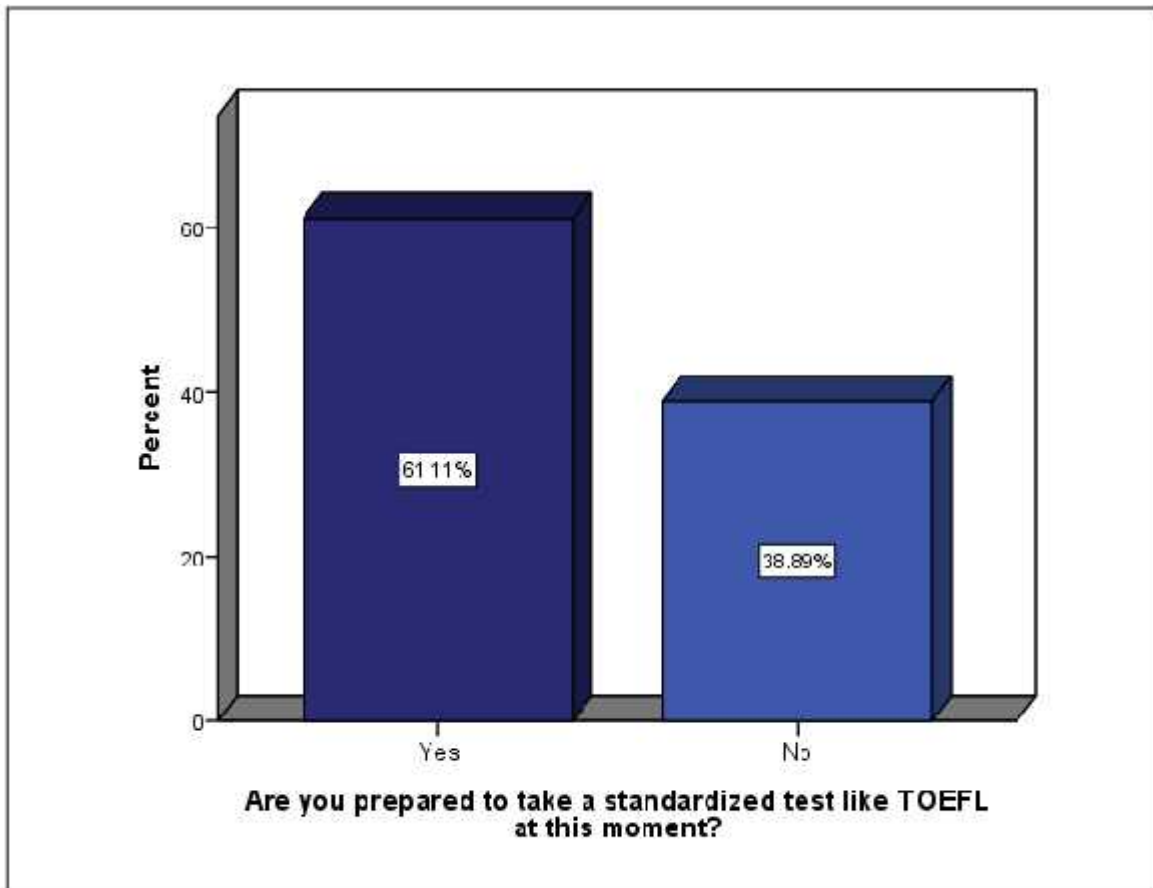
GRAPH 28

Are you prepared to take a standardized test like TOEFL at this moment?

Statistics

N	Valid	36
	Missing	0
Mean		1.39
Mode		1

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Yes	22	61.1	61.1
Valid No	14	38.9	38.9
Total	36	100.0	100.0



It is possible to notice in graph 28 that 61.11% of the students think they are prepared to take a standardized test. On the other hand, 38.89% of the sample considers they are not ready to take a standard test like TOEFL.

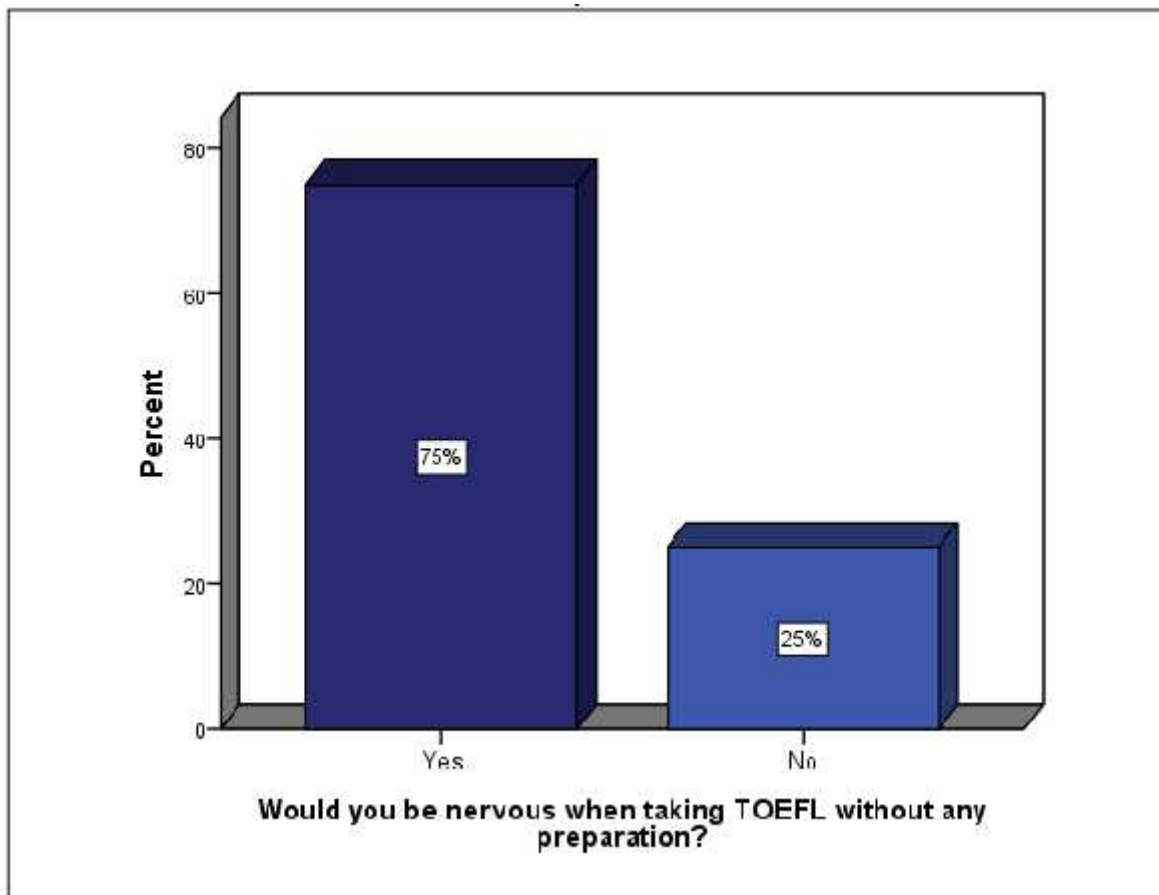
GRAPH 29

Would you be nervous when taking TOEFL without any preparation?

Statistics

N	Valid	36
	Missing	0
Mean		1.25
Mode		1

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Yes	27	75.0	75.0
Valid No	9	25.0	25.0
Total	36	100.0	100.0



According to graph 29, 75% of the students consider they would be nervous when taking TOEFL without any preparation. On the contrary, 25% answered that they would not feel nervous at the moment of taking TOEFL without any preparation.

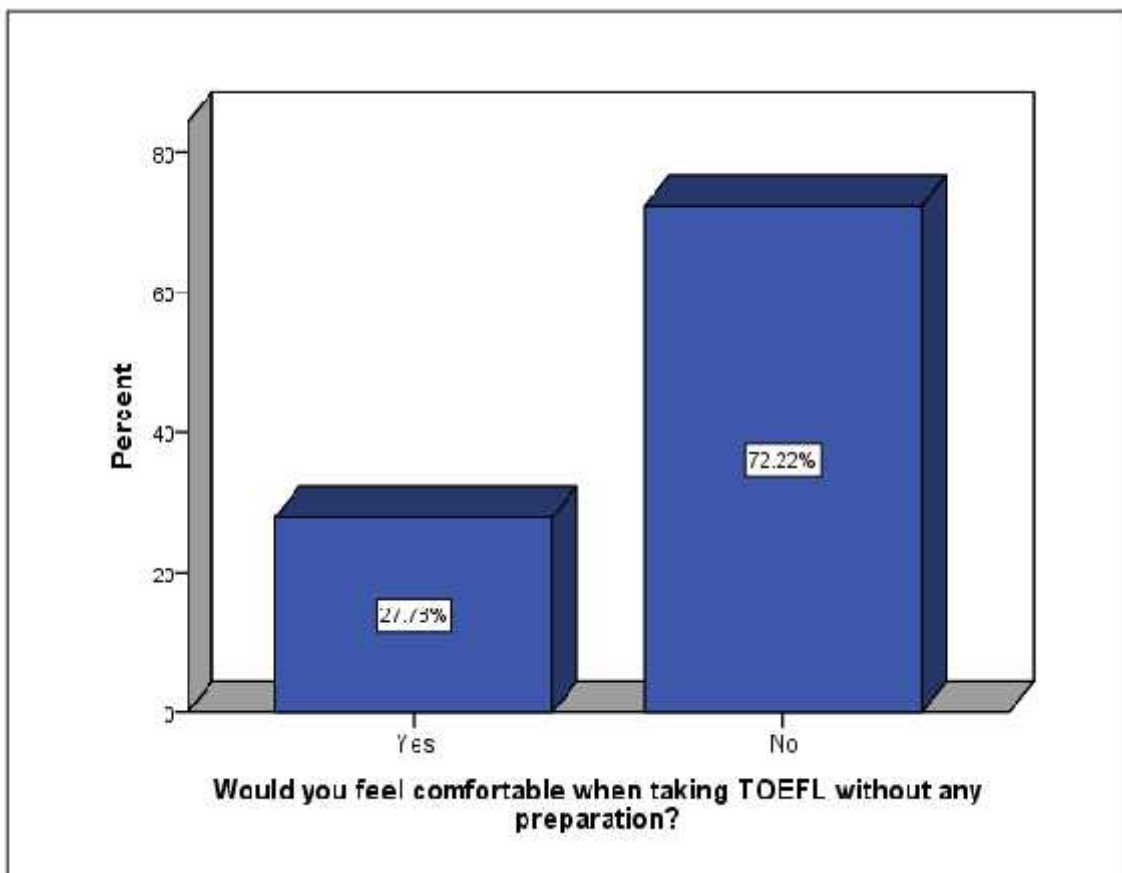
GRAPH 30

Would you feel comfortable when taking TOEFL without any preparation?

Statistics

N	Valid	36
	Missing	0
Mean		1.72
Mode		2

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Yes	10	27.8	27.8
Valid No	26	72.2	72.2
Total	36	100.0	100.0



It is observed in graph 30 that 72.22% of the students, the majority, think they would not feel comfortable when taking TOEFL without any preparation. On the other hand, it can be observed that 27.78% of the sample considers they would feel comfortable at the moment of taking TOEFL.

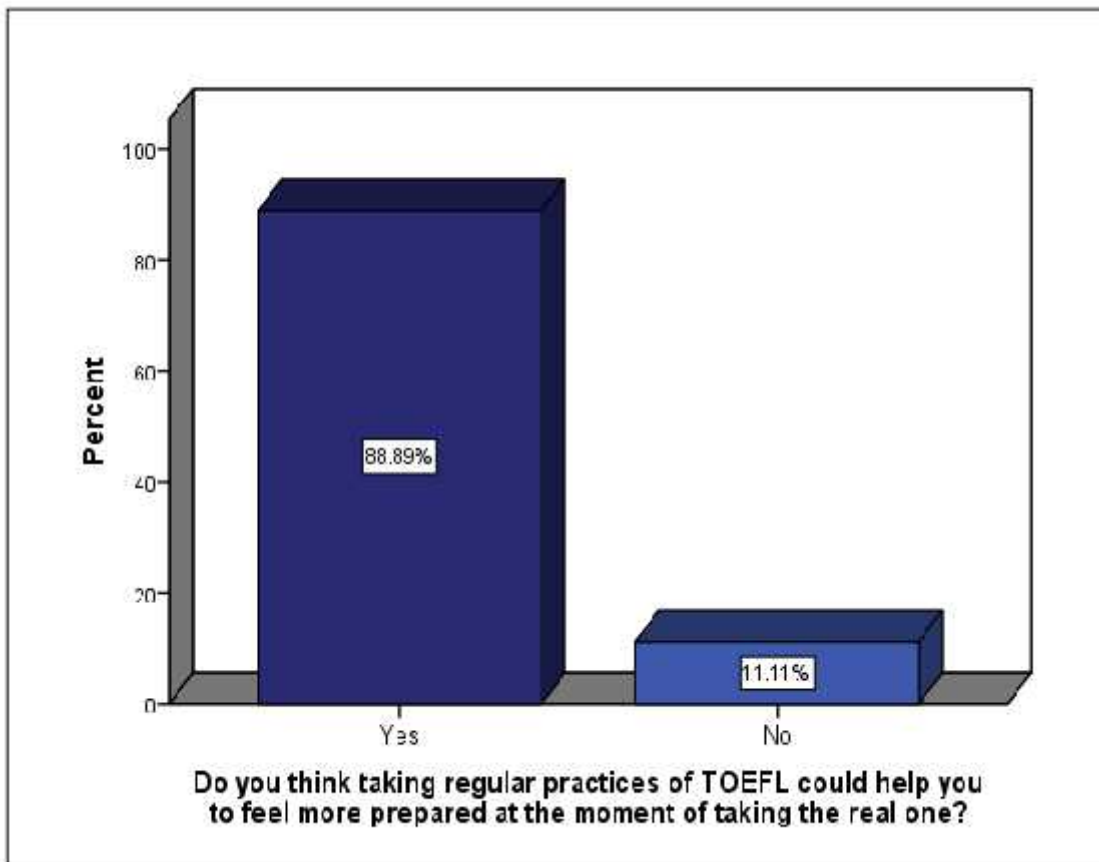
GRAPH 31

Do you think taking regular practices of TOEFL could help you to feel more prepared at the moment of taking the real one?

Statistics

N	Valid	36
	Missing	0
Mean		1.11
Mode		1

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid Yes	32	88.9	88.9
No	4	11.1	11.1
Total	36	100.0	100.0



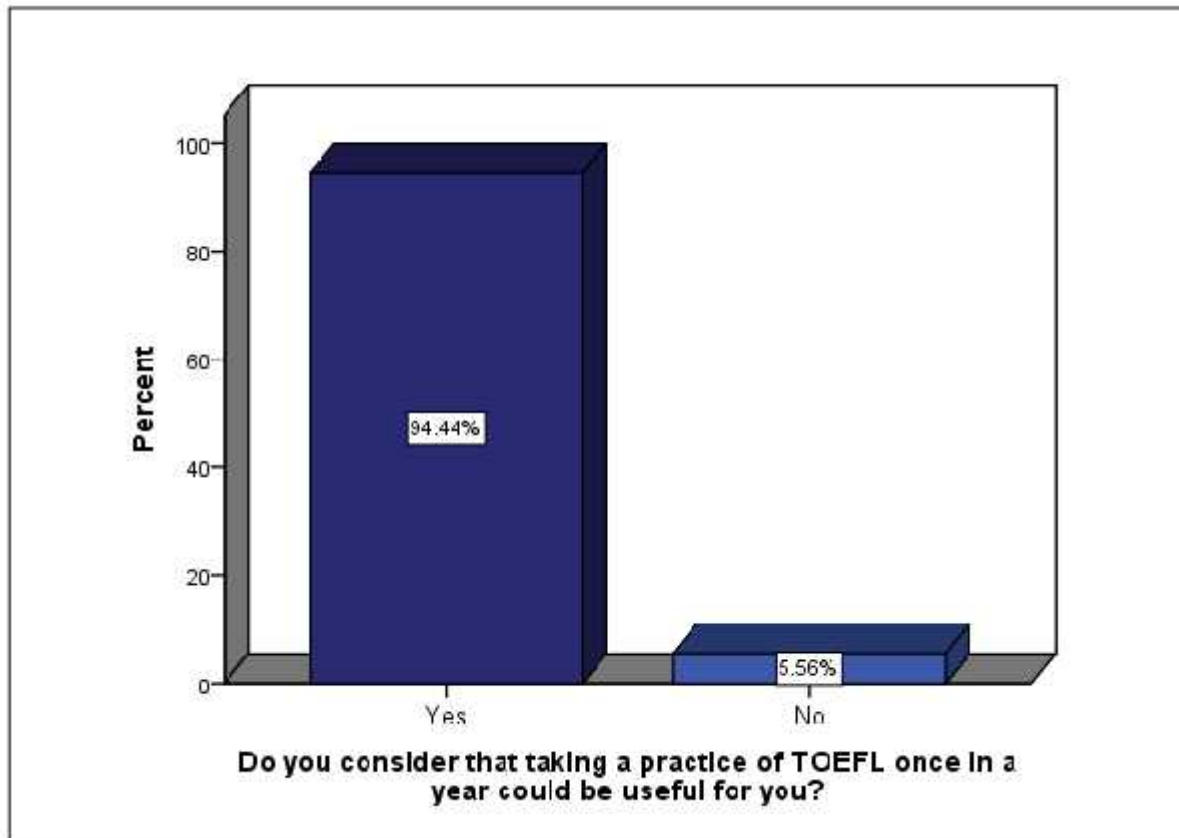
In graph 31, there is a remarkable difference in the answers. It is observed that 88.89% of the sample considers that taking regular practices of TOEFL could help them to feel more prepared when taking the real one against 11.11% of the students who think it could not help.

GRAPH 32

Do you consider that taking a practice of TOEFL once in a year could be useful for you?

statistics		
N	Valid	36
	Missing	0
Mean		1.06
Mode		1

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Yes	34	94.4	94.4
Valid No	2	5.6	5.6
Total	36	100.0	100.0



Graph 32 shows a huge difference in students' answer. According to the graph, 94.44% of the students thinks taking practices of TOEFL once in a year could be useful for them. On the contrary, 5.56% of the sample considers it could not be useful.

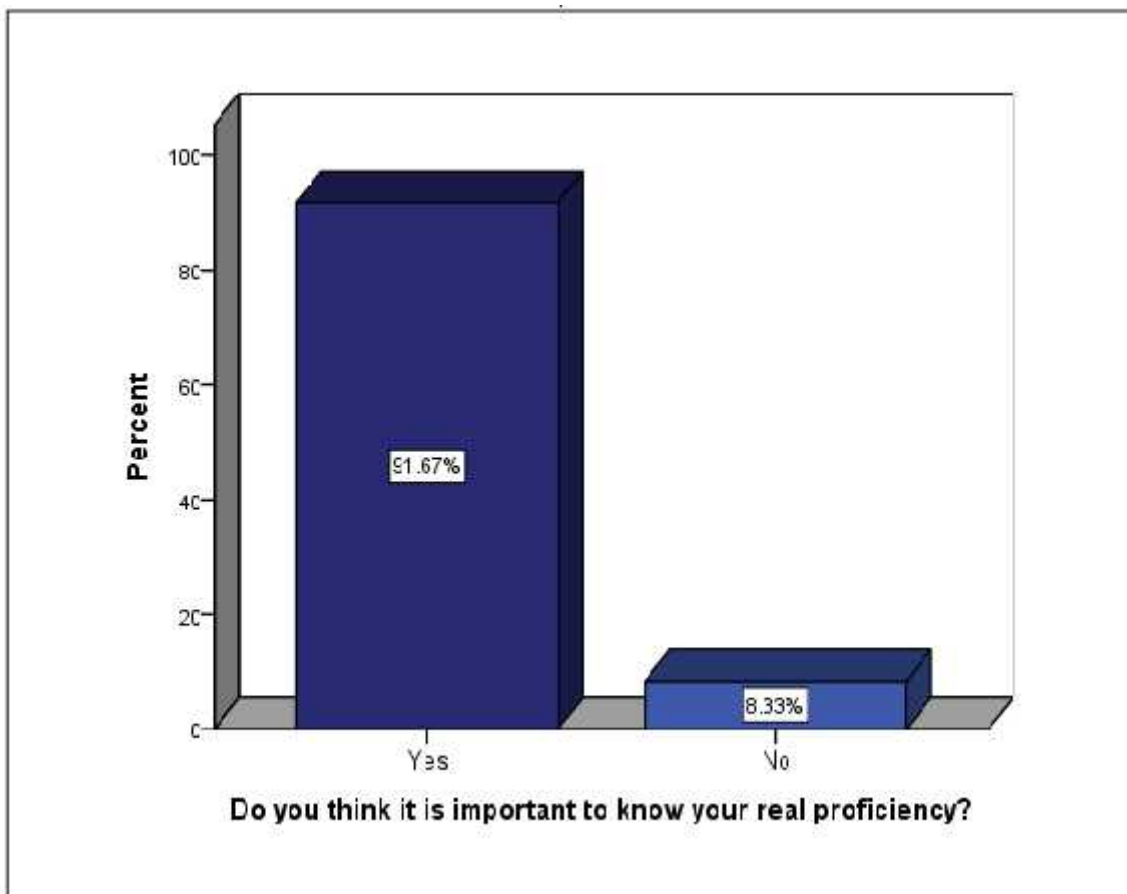
GRAPH 33

Do you think it is important to know your real proficiency?

Statistics

N	Valid	36
	Missing	0
Mean		1.06
Mode		1

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid Yes	33	91.7	91.7
Valid No	3	8.3	8.3
Total	36	100.0	100.0



Graph 33 shows that most of the students, 91.67% of them, believe it is important to know their real proficiency. On the other hand, only 8.33% of the sample considers it is not important to know it.

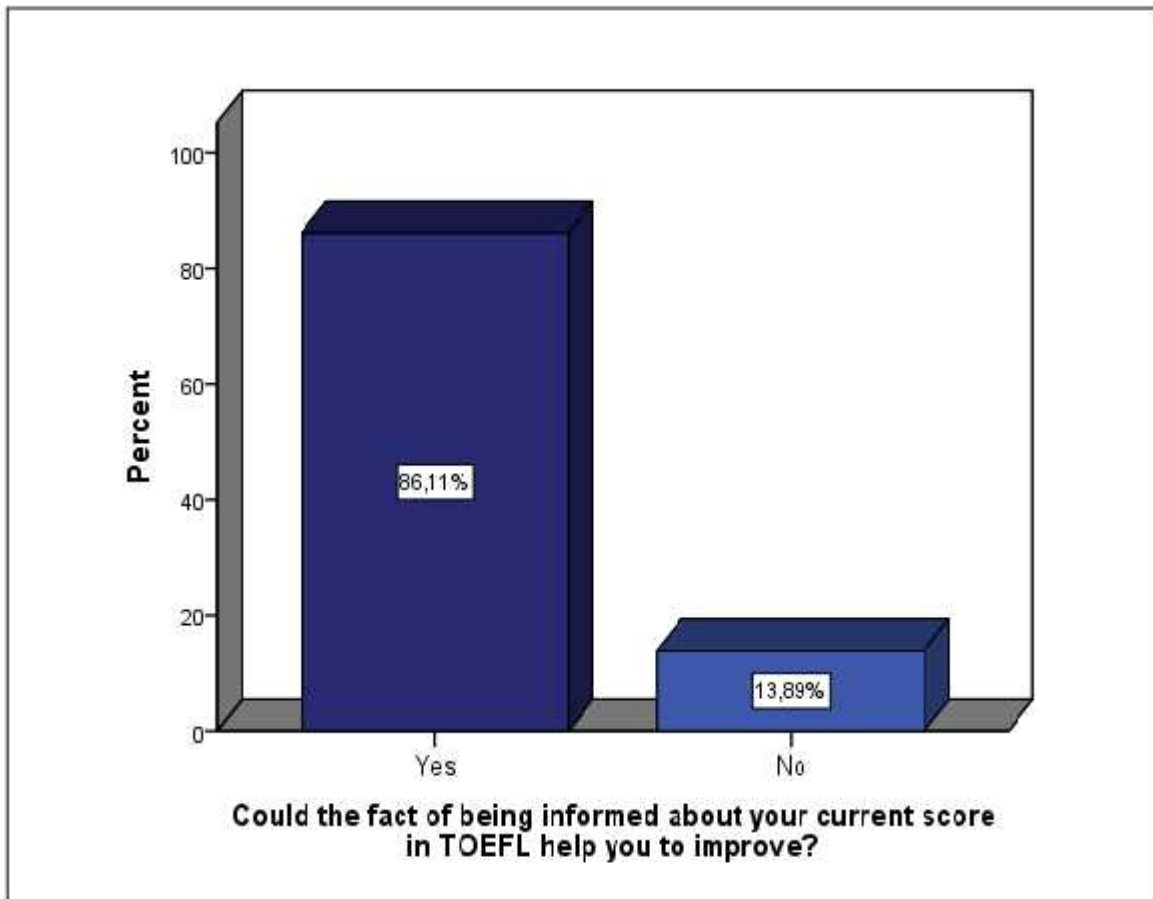
GRAPH 34

Could the fact of being informed about your current score in TOEFL help you to improve?

Statistics

N	Valid	36
	Missing	0
Mean		1,14
Mode		1

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent
Valid Yes	31	86,1	86,1
No	5	13,9	13,9
Total	36	100,0	100,0



Graph 34 shows that the majority of the students (86.11%) believe that being informed about their current score in TOEFL could help them to improve. On the other hand, 13.89% of the simple considers it could not help them.

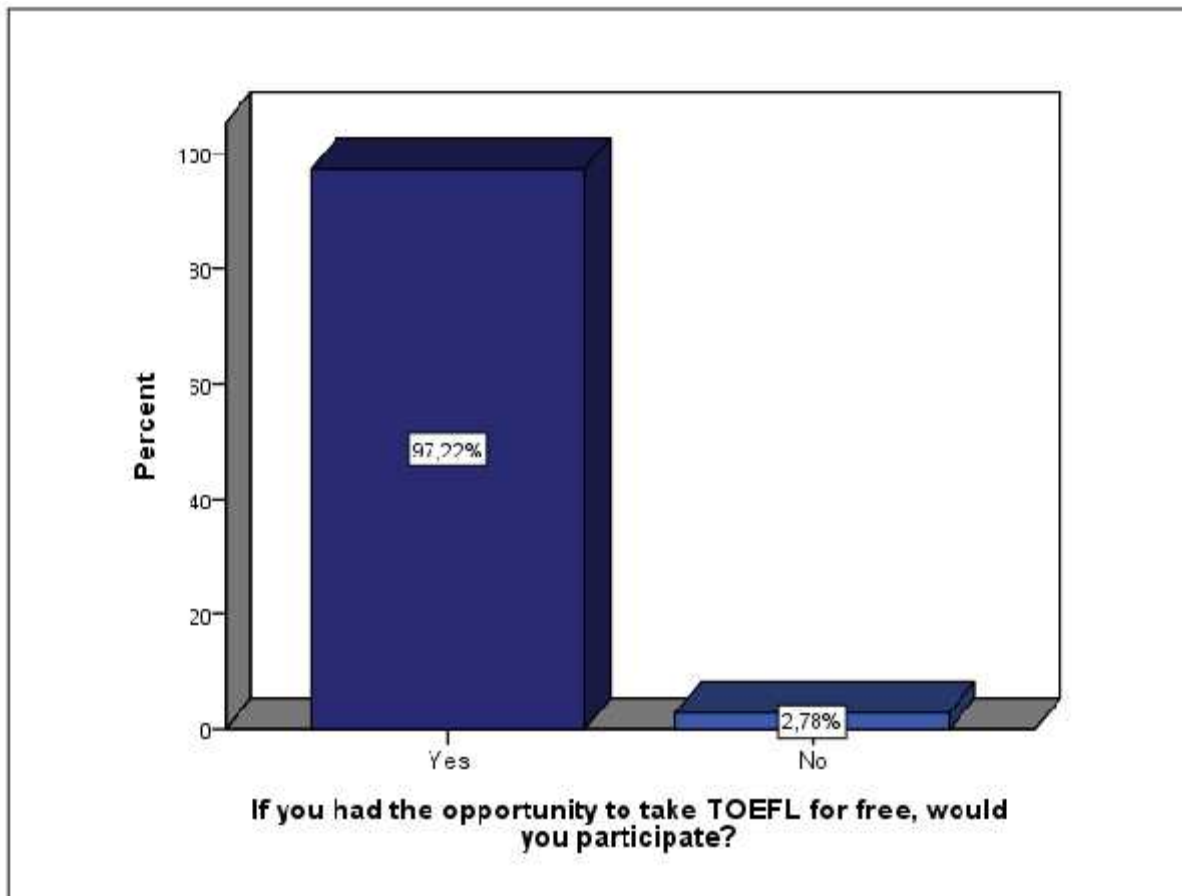
GRAPH 35

If you had the opportunity to take TOEFL for free, would you participate?

Statistics

N	Valid	36
	Missing	0
Mean		1,03
Mode		1

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent
Valid Yes	35	97,2	97,2
Valid No	1	2,8	2,8
Total	36	100,0	100,0



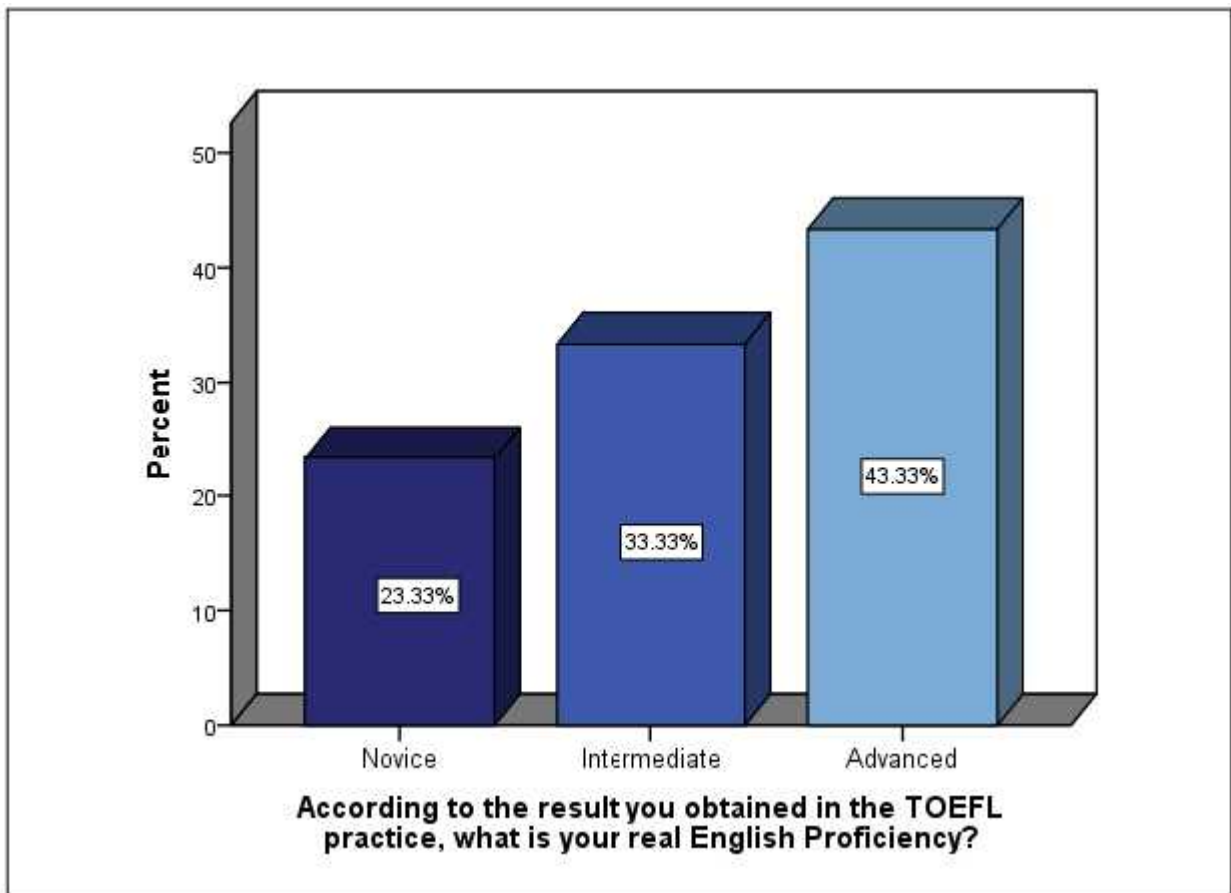
In graph 35, it can be seen that students are interested on taking TOEFL as long as it is for free. We can see that 97.22% of them answered that they would participate in taking TOEFL for free if they had the opportunity, but only 2.78 of them said they would not participate.

QUESTIONNAIRE 2

GRAPH 1

According to the results you obtained in the TOEFL practice, what is your real English Proficiency?

Statistics			Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent		
N	Valid	30	Valid	Novice	7	23.3	23.3
	Missing	0		Intermediate	10	33.3	33.3
Mean		2.20		Advanced	13	43.3	43.3
Mode		3	Total	30	100.0	100.0	



In graph 1, it is observed that 23.33% of the sample is in the novice level according to the result the obtained in the TOEFL practice. It is also observed that 33.33% of the students is in an intermediate level and 43.33% of them is in and advanced level.

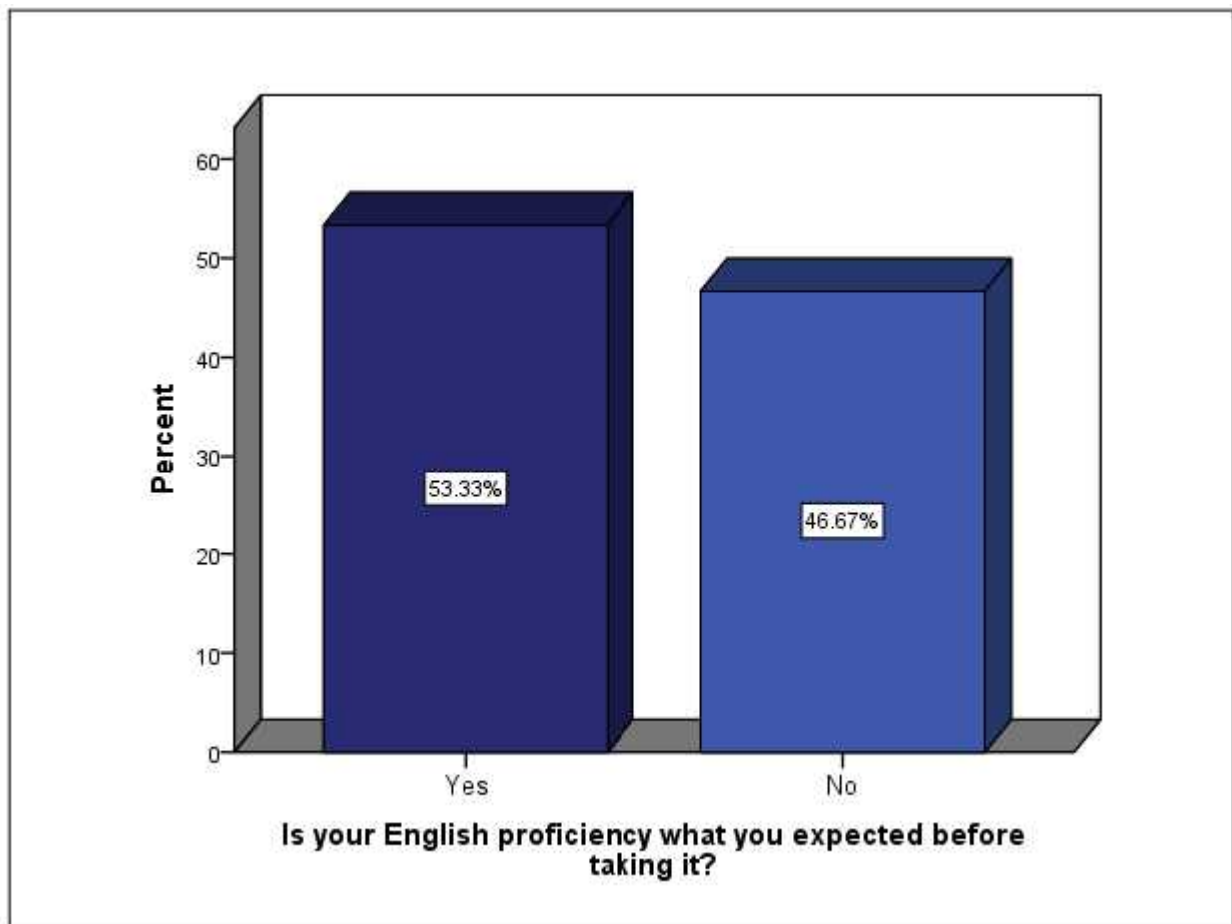
GRAPH 2

Is your English Proficiency what you expected before taking it?

Statistics

N	Valid	30
	Missing	0
Mean		1.47
Mode		1

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid Yes	16	53.3	53.3
Valid No	14	46.7	46.7
Total	30	100.0	100.0



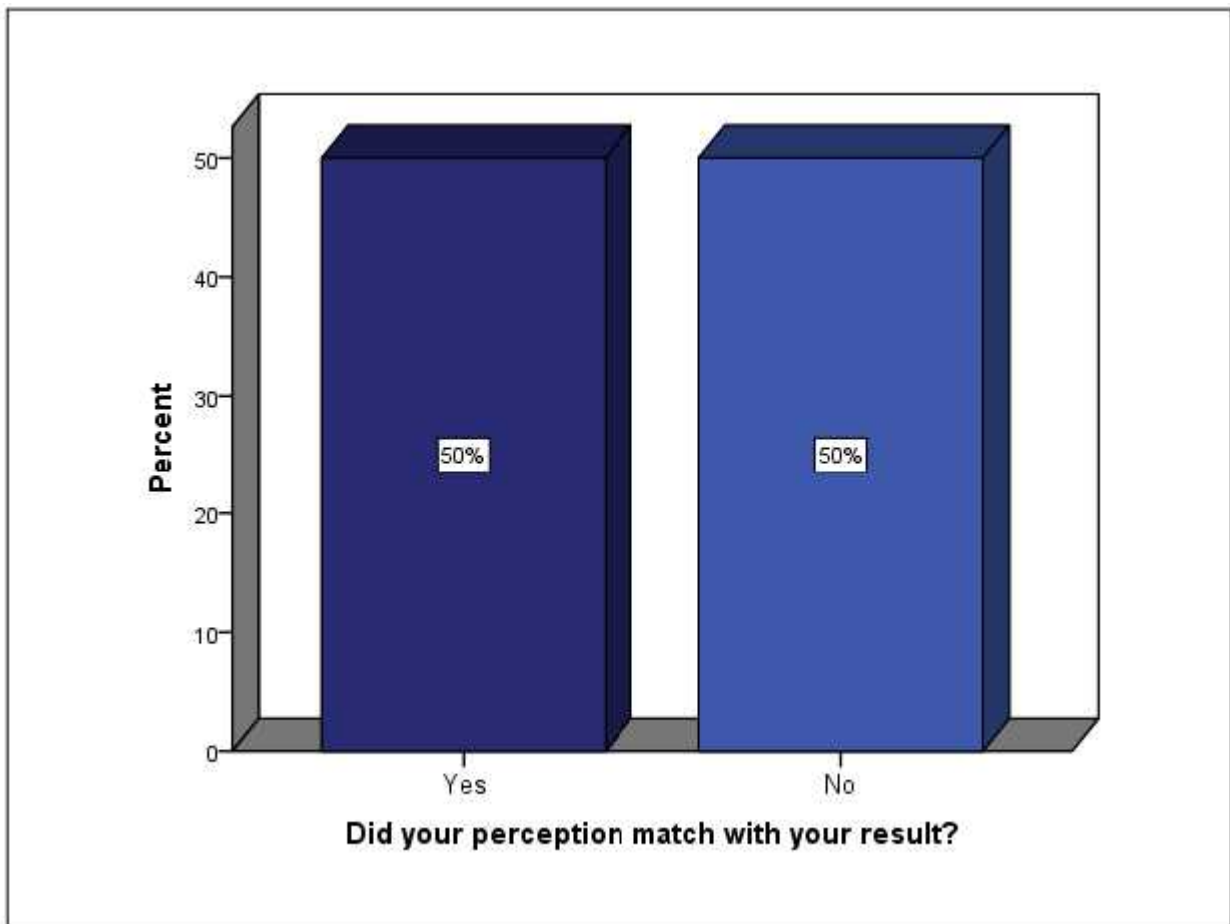
In graph 2 it is possible to notice that 53.33% of the students answered that their English Proficiency was what they expected before taking the TOEFL practice. But 46.67% of them said that it was not what they expected.

GRAPH 3

Did your perception match with your result?

Statistics		
N	Valid	30
	Missing	0
Mean		1.50
Mode		1 ^a

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Yes	15	50.0	50.0
	No	15	50.0	50.0
	Total	30	100.0	100.0



According to graph 3, 50% of the sample answered that their perceptions matched with their result. On the other hand, it can be seen that 50% of them said their perceptions did not match with their result.

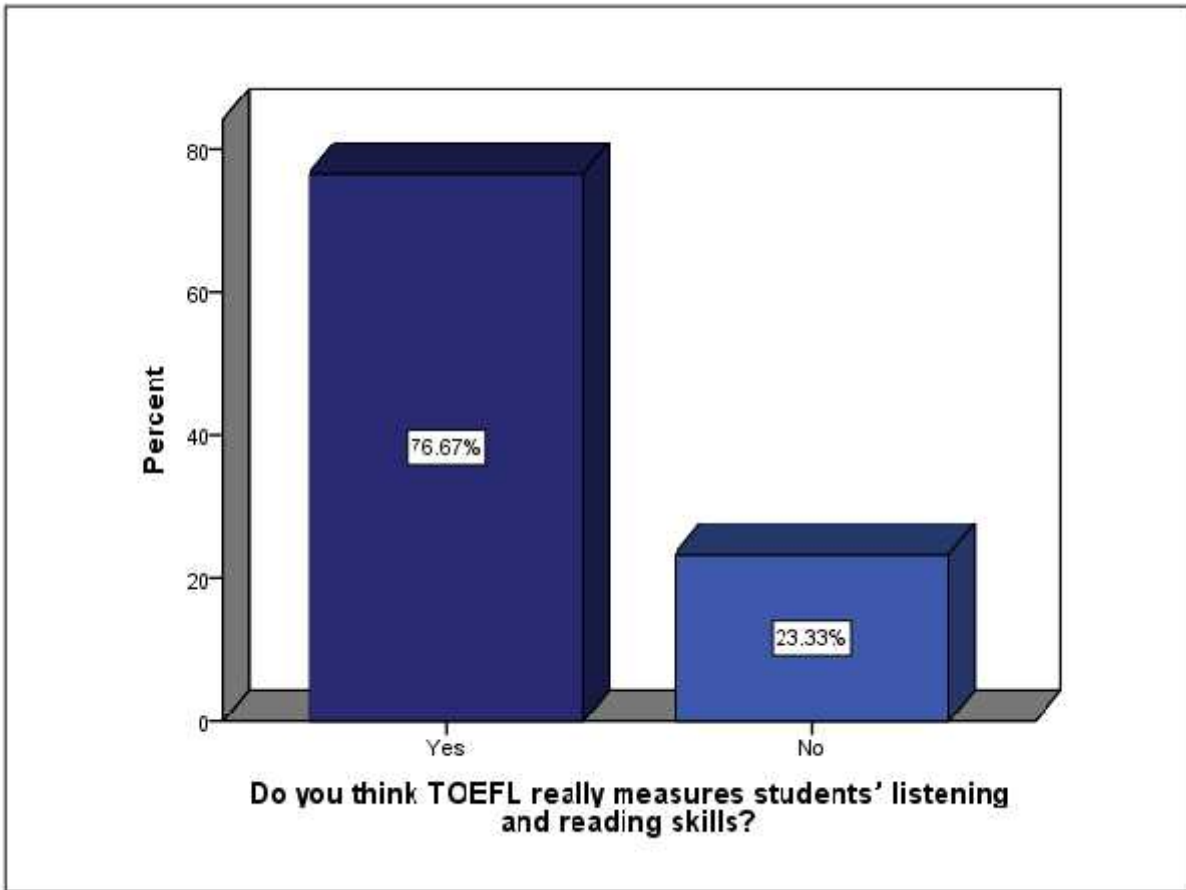
GRAPH 4

Do you think TOEFL really measures students' listening and Reading skills?

Statistics

N	Valid	30
	Missing	0
Mean		1.23
Mode		1

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Yes	23	76.7	76.7
Valid No	7	23.3	23.3
Total	30	100.0	100.0



Graph 4 shows that majority of the students (76.67%) believes that TOEFL really measures students' listening and reading skills. Yet, 23.33% of them think it does not really measure.

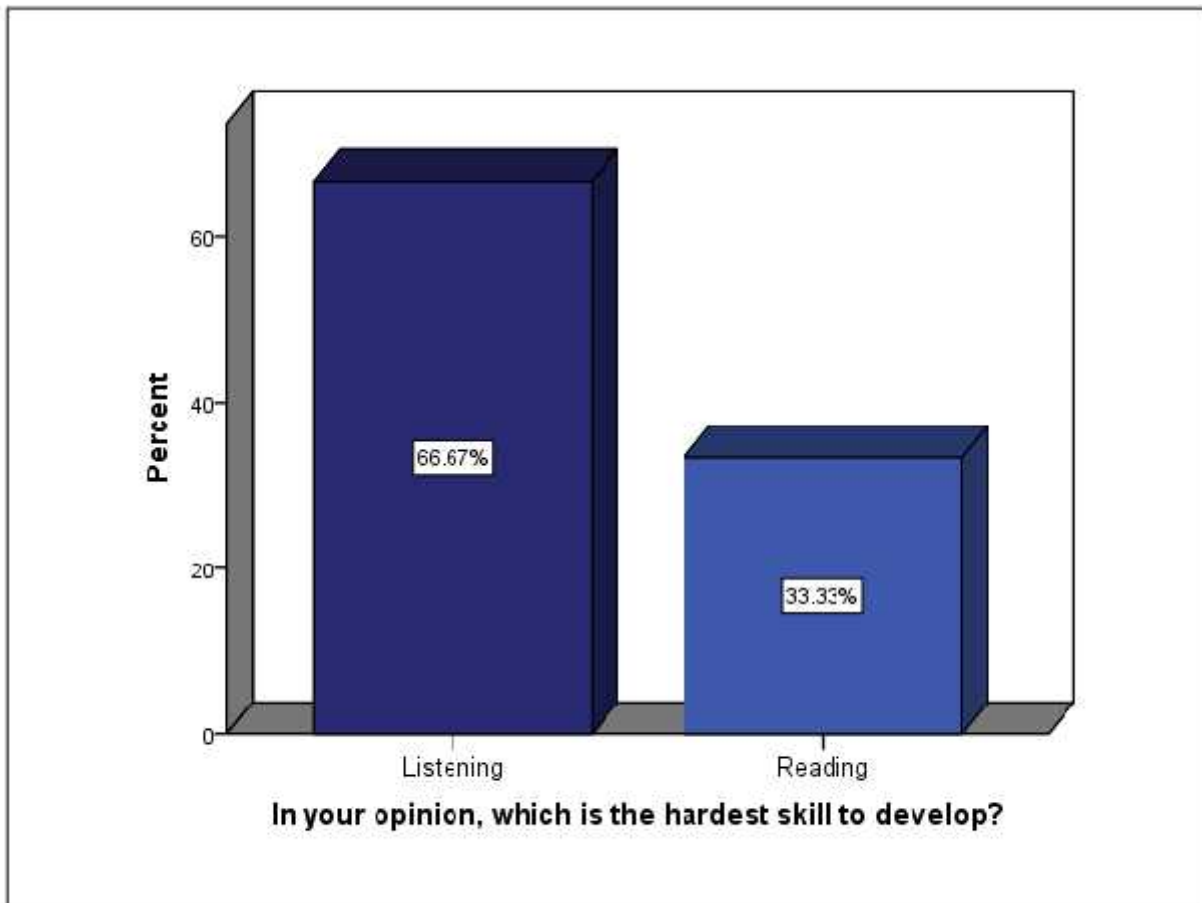
GRAPH 5

In your opinion, which is the hardest skill to develop?

Statistics

N	Valid	30
	Missing	0
Mean		1.33
Mode		1

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid Listening	20	66.7	66.7
Valid Reading	10	33.3	33.3
Total	30	100.0	100.0



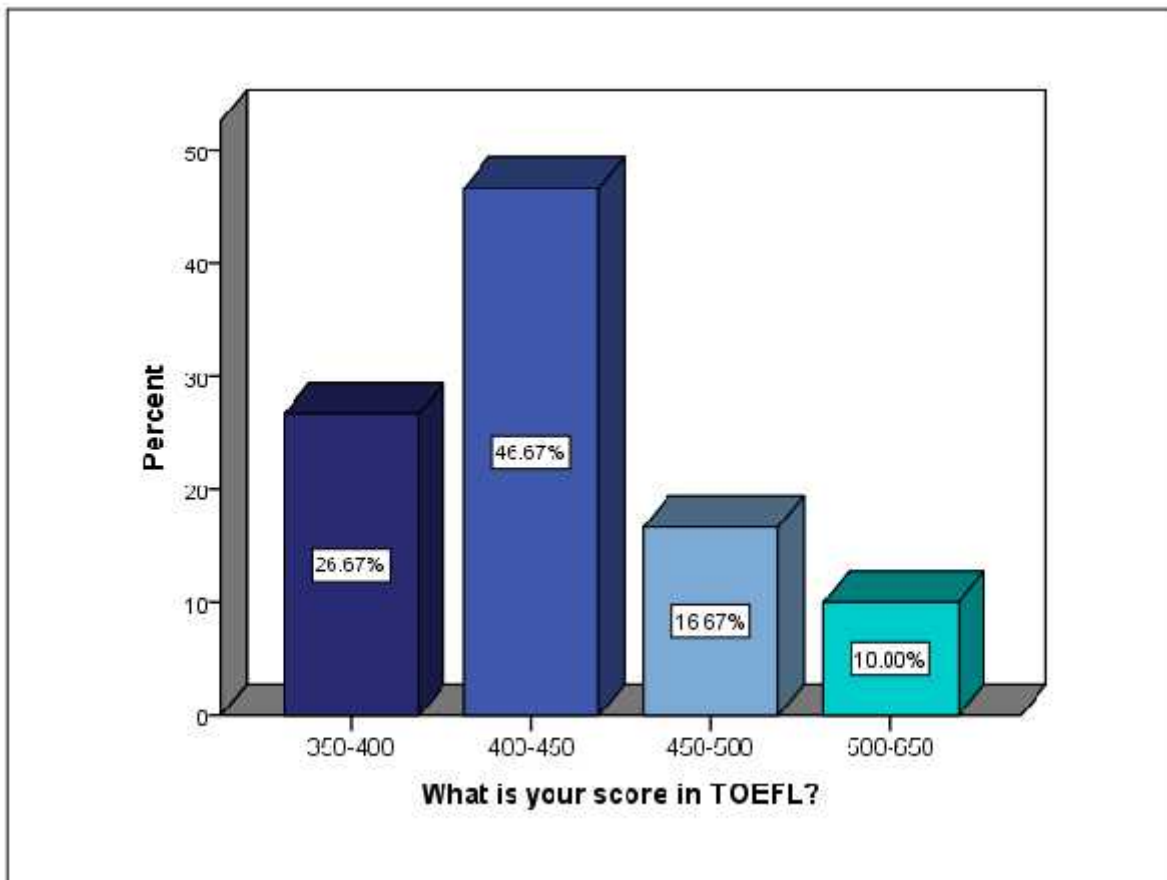
It can be observed in graph 5 that 66.67% of the students consider listening is the hardest skill to develop. On the contrary, 33.33% of them think reading is the hardest skill to develop.

GRAPH 6
What is your score in TOEFL?

Statistics

N	Valid	30
	Missing	0
Mean		2.10
Mode		2

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid 350-400	8	26.7	26.7
400-450	14	46.7	46.7
450-500	5	16.7	16.7
500-650	3	10.0	10.0
Total	30	100.0	100.0



It can be seen in graph 6 that 26.67% of the sample had a score between 350 and 400. Moreover, 46.67% of them (the majority) obtained a score between 400 and 450; 16.67% of the students got a score between 450 and 500 and 10% of them obtained a score between 500 and 650.

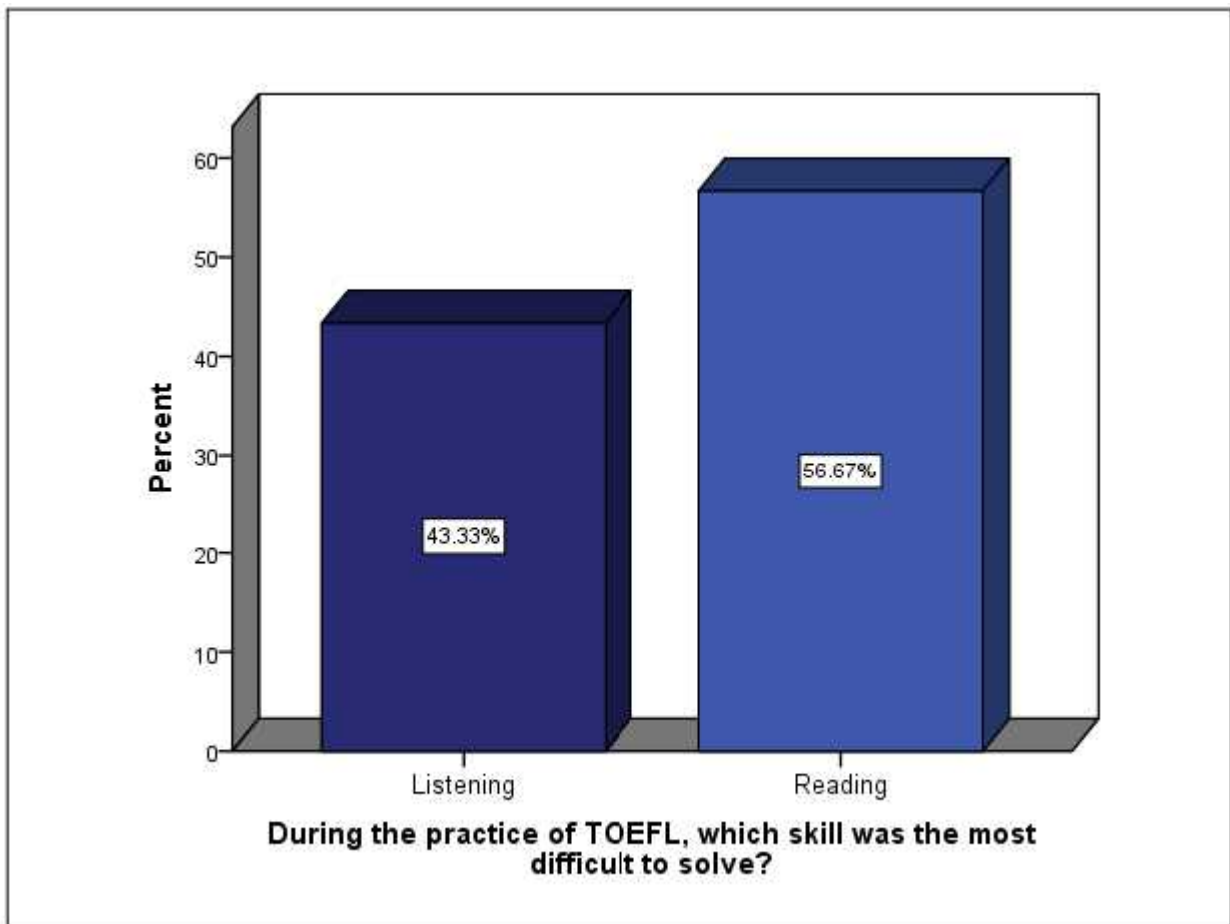
GRAPH 7

During the practice of TOEFL, which skill was the most difficult to solve?

Statistics

N	Valid	30
	Missing	0
Mean		1.57
Mode		2

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid Listening	13	43.3	43.3
Valid Reading	17	56.7	56.7
Total	30	100.0	100.0



According to graph 7, 43.3% of the students believe that listening was the most difficult part to solve during the practice of TOEFL. On the other hand, 56.67% of them consider that reading was the most difficult skill to solve.

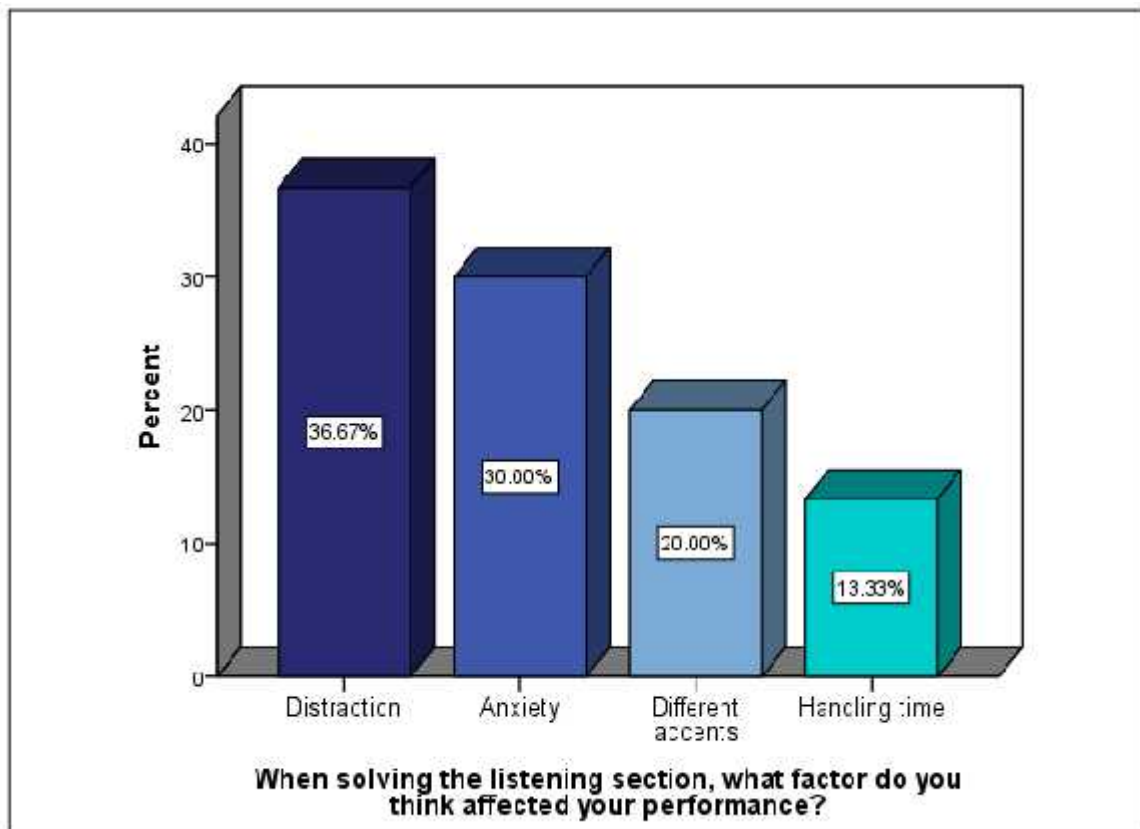
GRAPH 8

When solving the listening section, what factor do you think affected your performance?

Statistics

N	Valid	30
	Missing	0
Mean		2.10
Mode		1

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Distraction	11	36.7	36.7
Anxiety	9	30.0	30.0
Valid Different accents	6	20.0	20.0
Handling time	4	13.3	13.3
Total	30	100.0	100.0

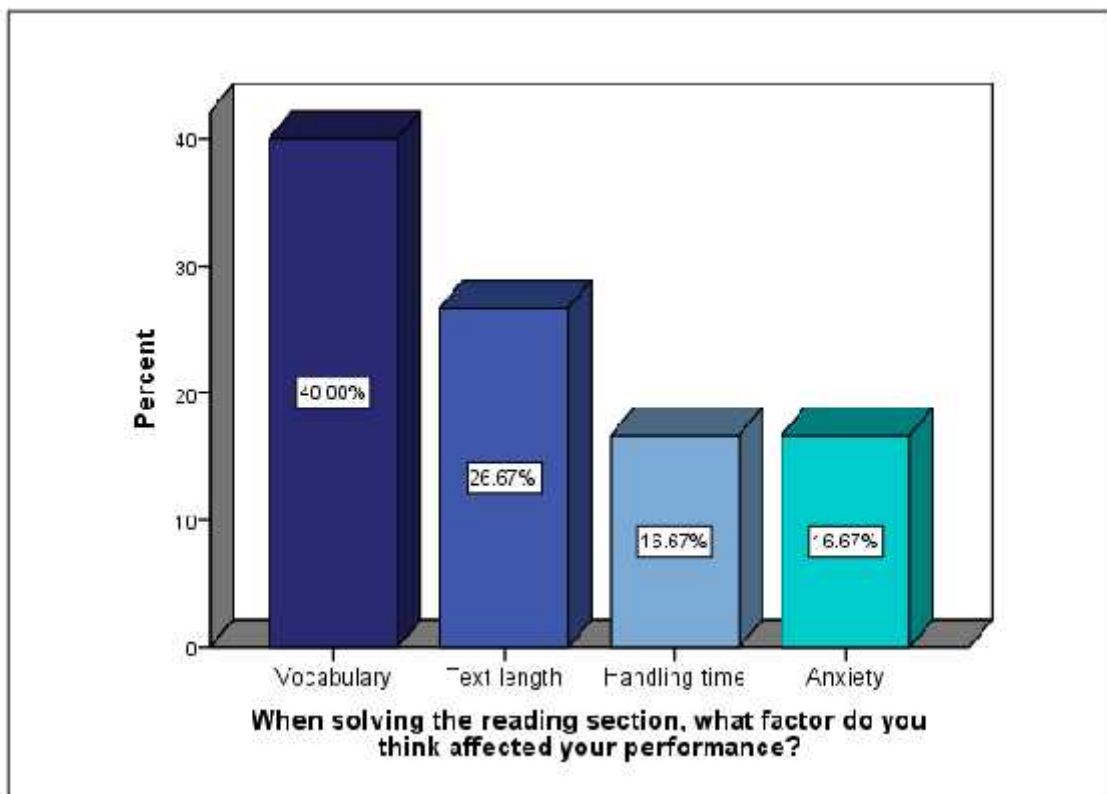


Graph 8 shows that most of the students (36.67%) consider distraction was the main factor that affected their performance when solving the listening section. Besides, 30% of them think the biggest factor that affected their performance was anxiety; 20% of the sample considers that different accents affected their performance and 13.33% of them answered that handling time affected their performance.

GRAPH 9

When solving the Reading section, what factor do you think affected your performance?

Statistics			Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
N	Valid	30			
	Missing	0			
Mean		2.10			
Mode		1			
	Vocabulary		12	40.0	40.0
	Text length		8	26.7	26.7
Valid	Handling time		5	16.7	16.7
	Anxiety		5	16.7	16.7
	Total		30	100.0	100.0



In graph 9, it can be noticed that 40% of the students consider vocabulary as the main factor that affected their performance when solving the reading section. Besides, it is observed that 26.67% of them believe text length was the biggest factor that affected their performance, 16.67% of the sample thinks the main factor which affected their performance was handling time and 16.67% of them consider that anxiety affected their performance at the moment of solving the reading section.

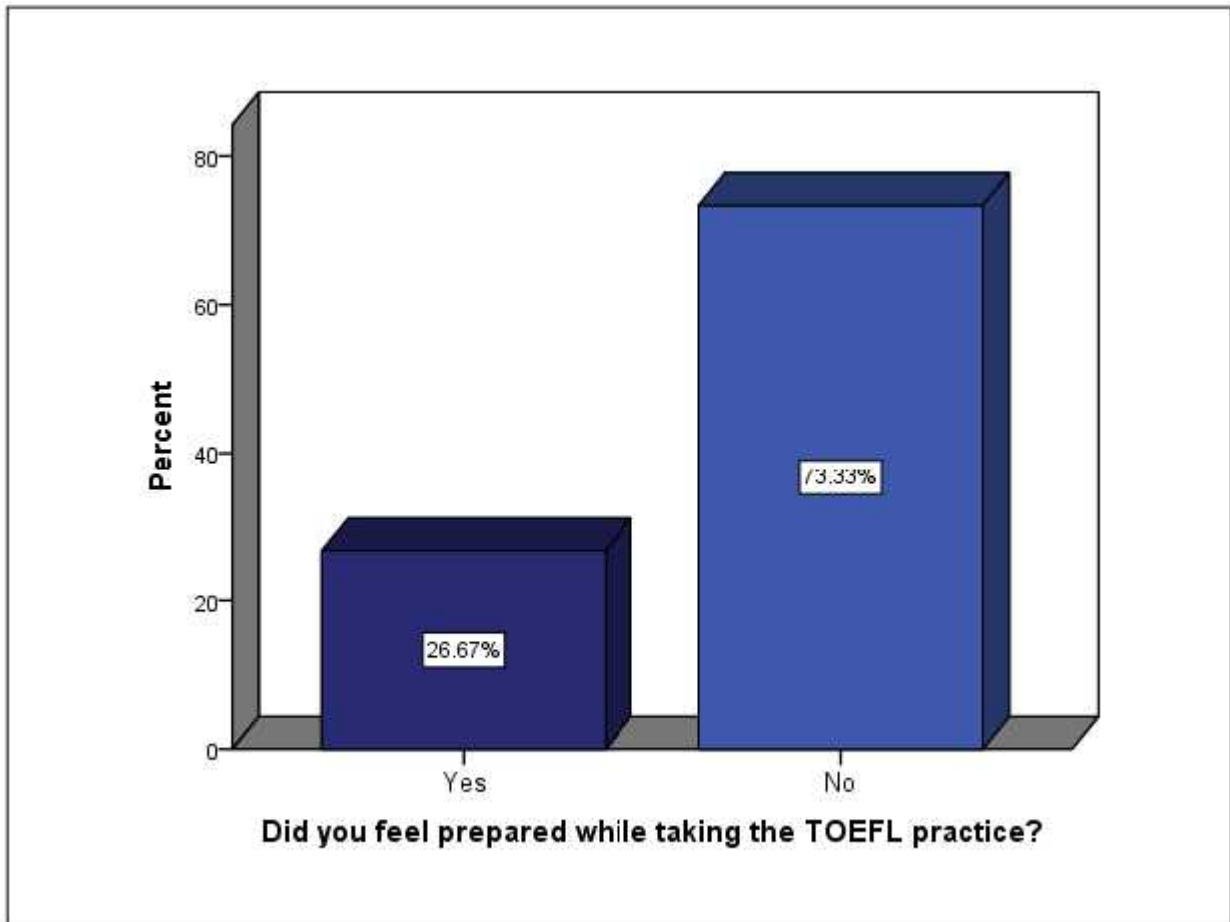
GRAPH 10

Did you feel prepared while taking the TOEFL practice?

Statistics

N	Valid	30
	Missing	0
Mean		1.73
Mode		2

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Yes	8	26.7	26.7
	No	22	73.3	73.3
	Total	30	100.0	100.0



In graph 10 it is observed that 26.67% of the students did not feel prepared while taking the TOEFL practice. On the other hand, 73.33% of them, the majority, felt prepared at the moment of taking it.

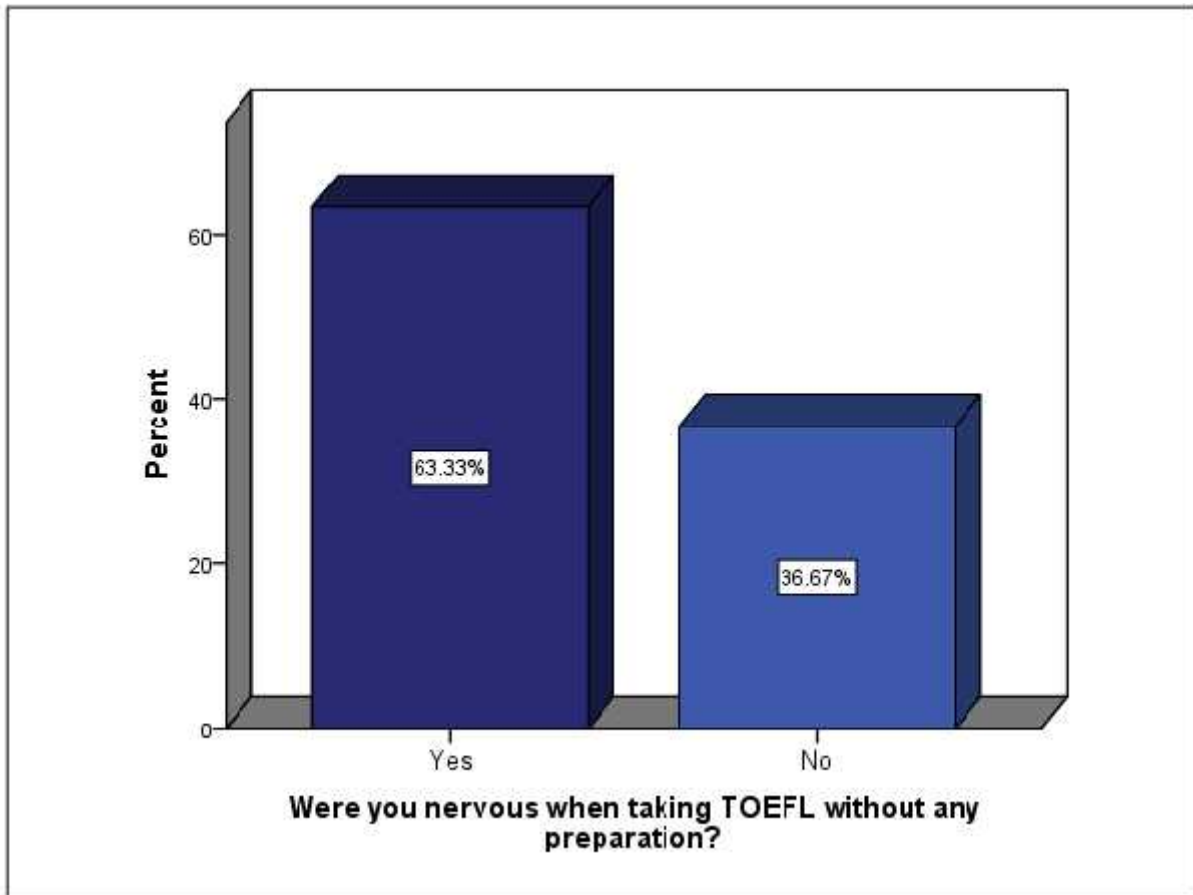
GRAPH 11

Were you nervous when taking TOEFL without any preparation?

Statistics

N	Valid	30
	Missing	0
Mean		1.37
Mode		1

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Yes	19	63.3	63.3
Valid No	11	36.7	36.7
Total	30	100.0	100.0



In graph 11 it is possible to see that 63.33% of the sample said they were nervous when taking TOEFL without any preparation. On the contrary, 36.67% of the students answered that they were not nervous when taking it.

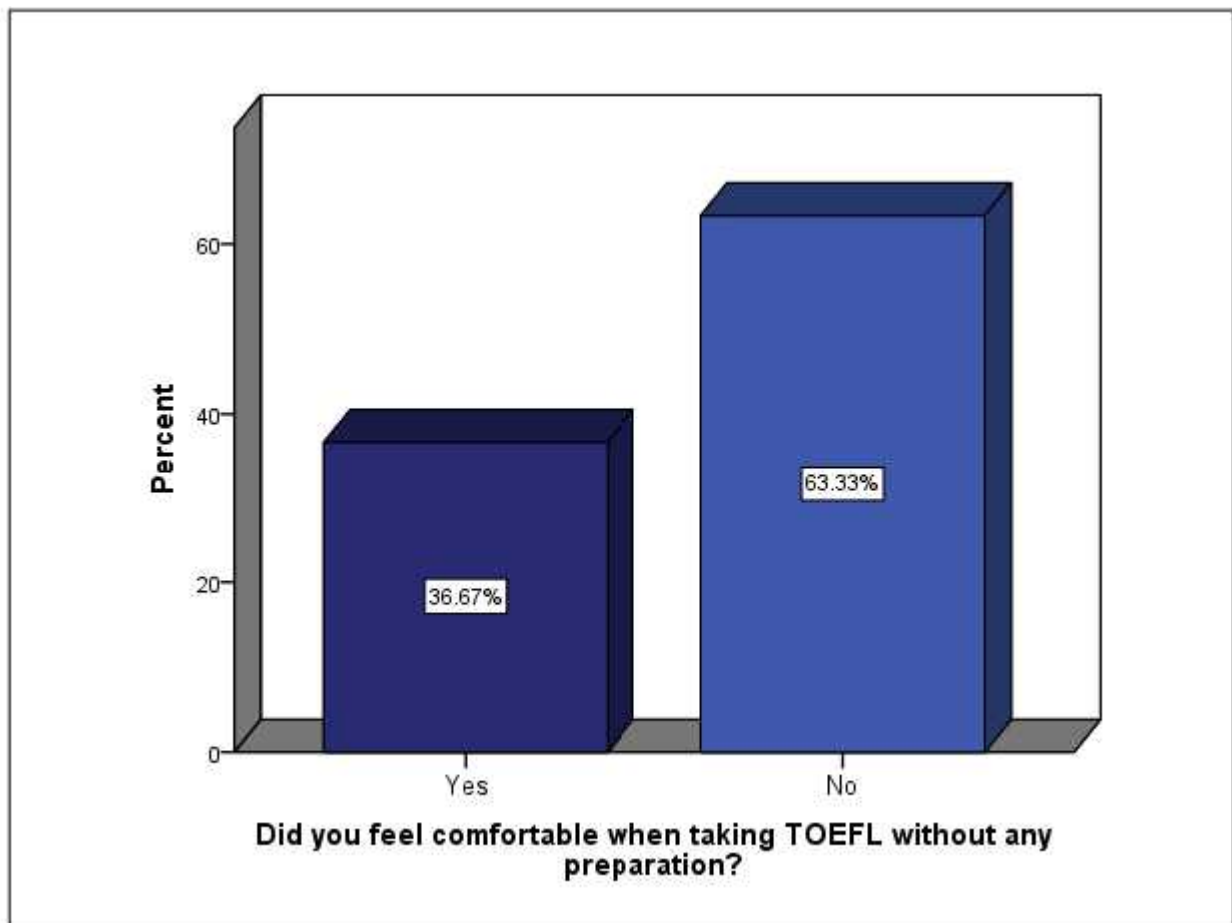
GRAPH 12

Did you feel comfortable when taking TOEFL without any preparation?

Statistics

N	Valid	30
	Missing	0
Mean		1.63
Mode		2

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Yes	11	36.7	36.7
Valid No	19	63.3	63.3
Total	30	100.0	100.0



According to graph 12, 36.67% of the sample felt comfortable at the moment of taking TOEFL without any preparation. Yet, the majority of them (63.33%) did not feel comfortable when taking it.

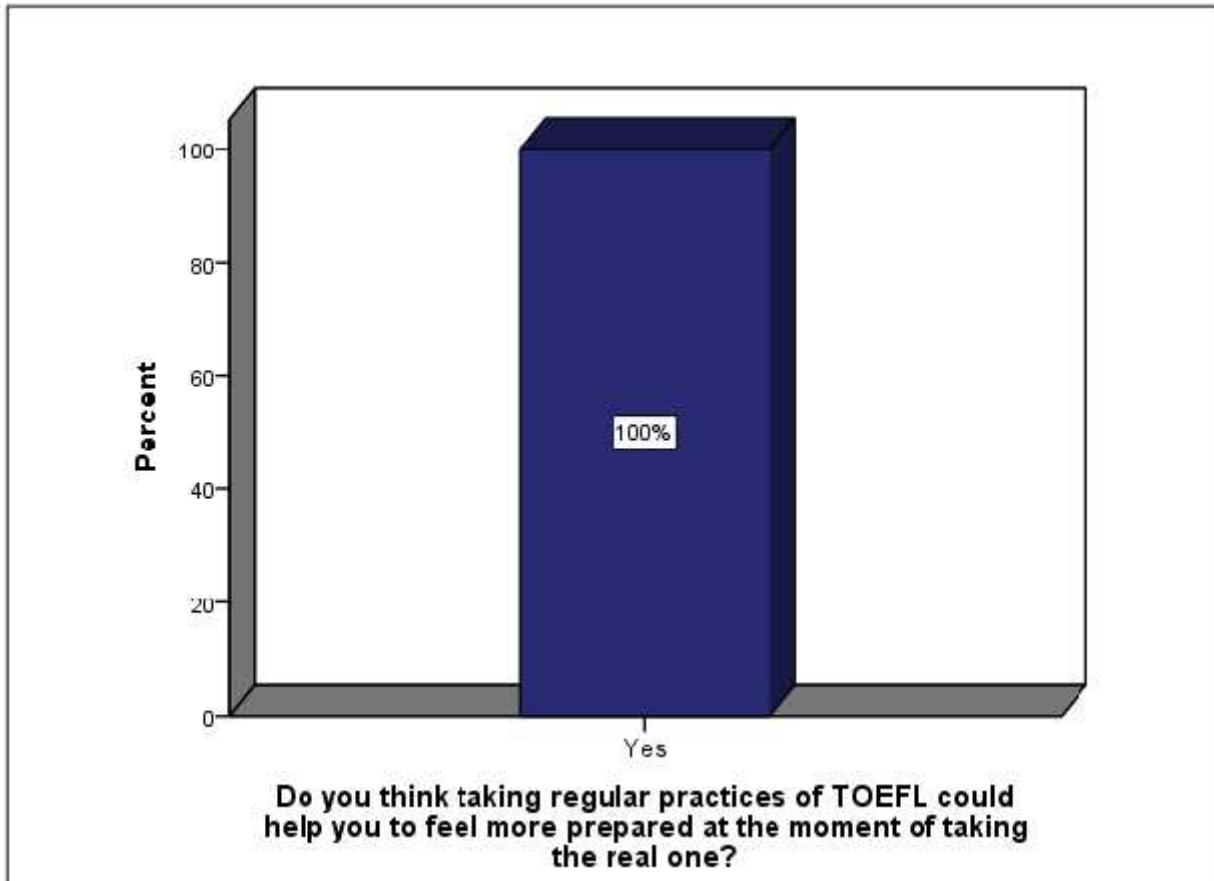
GRAPH 13

Do you think taking regular practices of TOEFL could help you to feel more prepared at the moment of taking the real one?

Statistics

N	Valid	30
	Missing	0
Mean		1.00
Mode		1

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid Yes	30	100.0	100.0



Graph 13 shows that every student in the sample (100%) thinks taking regular practices of TOEFL could help them to feel more prepared when taking the real one.

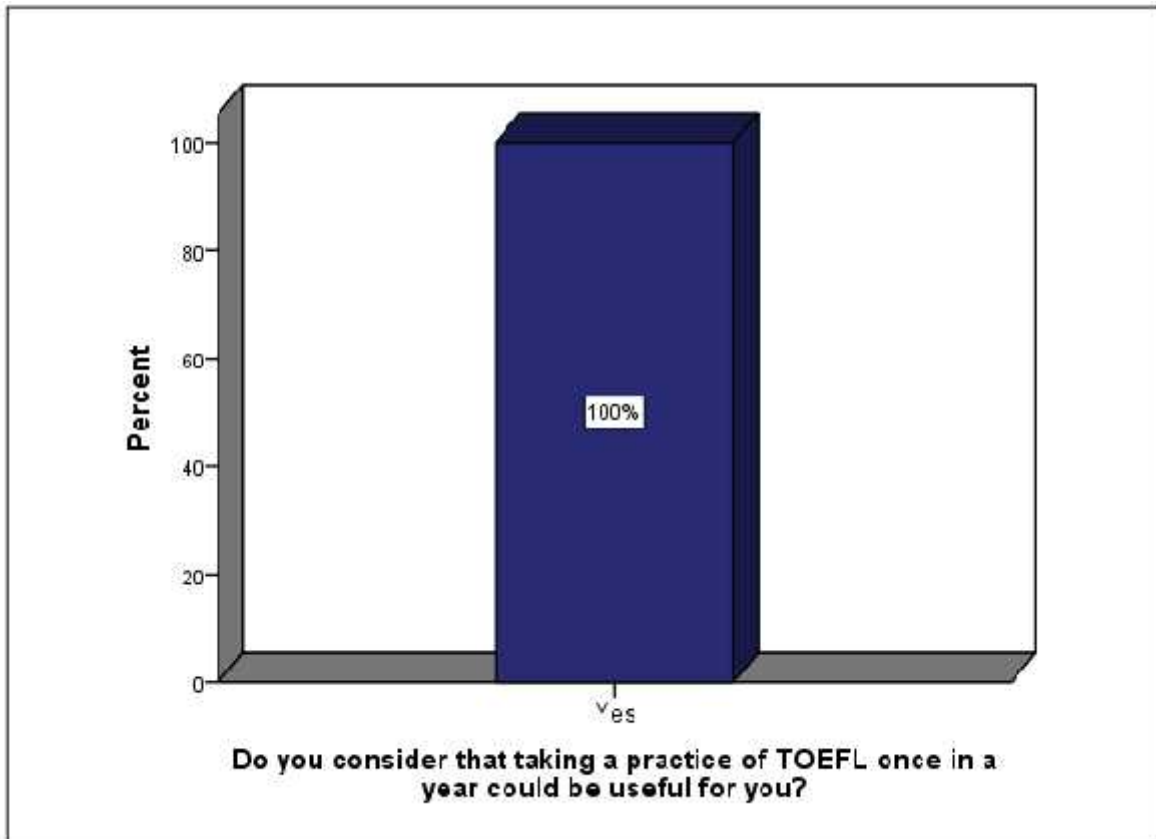
GRAPH 14

Do you consider that taking a practice of TOEFL once in a year could be useful for you?

Statistics

N	Valid	30
	Missing	0
Mean		1.00
Mode		1

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Yes	30	100.0	100.0



In graph 14 it can be observed that 100% of the students consider that taking a practice of TOEFL once in a year could be useful for them.

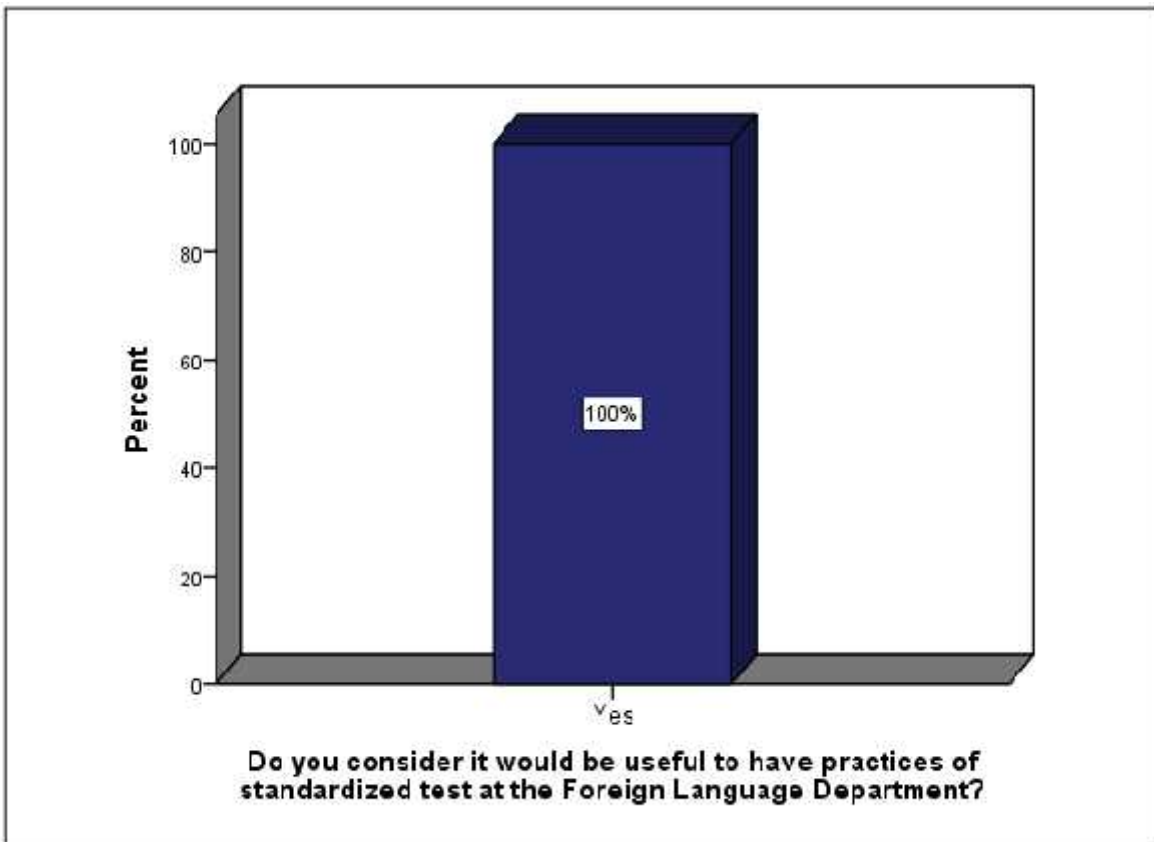
GRAPH 15

Do you consider it would be useful to have practices of standardized test at the Foreign Language Department?

Statistics

N	Valid	30
	Missing	0
Mean		1.00
Mode		1

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid Yes	30	100.0	100.0



According to graph 15, all of the students, that means 100%, consider it would be useful to have practices of standardized tests at the Foreign Language Department.

BIVARIATE ANALYSIS

BIVARIATE ANALYSIS 1

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
* Do you think TOEFL really measures students' listening and reading skills? * Did your perception match with your result?	30	83,3%	6	16,7%	36	100,0%

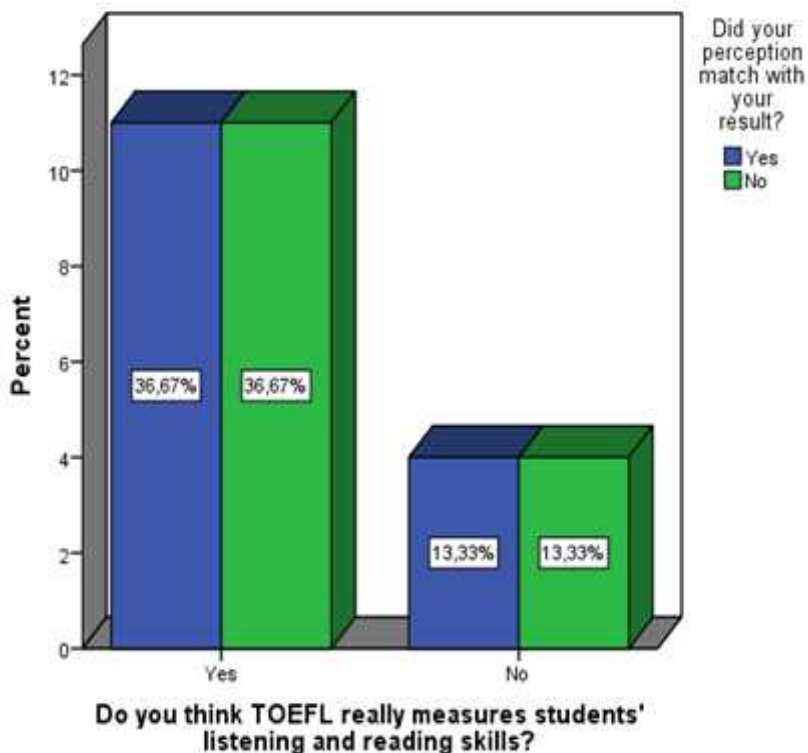
Do you think TOEFL really measures students' listening and reading skills? * Did your perception match with your result? Crosstabulation

Count

		Did your perception match with your result?		Total
		Yes	No	
Do you think TOEFL really measures students' listening and reading skills?	Yes	11	11	22
	No	4	4	8
Total		15	15	30

As the graph shows, the 73.34% of the population think that TOEFL measures the proficiency in the receptive skills. It is possible to say that the majority of the population trust in TOEFL practice as a reliable instrument to know their proficiency. Moreover, after taking the TOEFL practice and get their results the 50% of the population said that their perceptions did not match with their results. In addition, the half of the people that think TOEFL does not measure their skills realized that they have a wrong perception about their skills and through the practice of TOEFL, they could get informed about their real proficiency.

Bivariate Graph 1



BIVARIATE ANALYSIS 2

Case Processing Summary

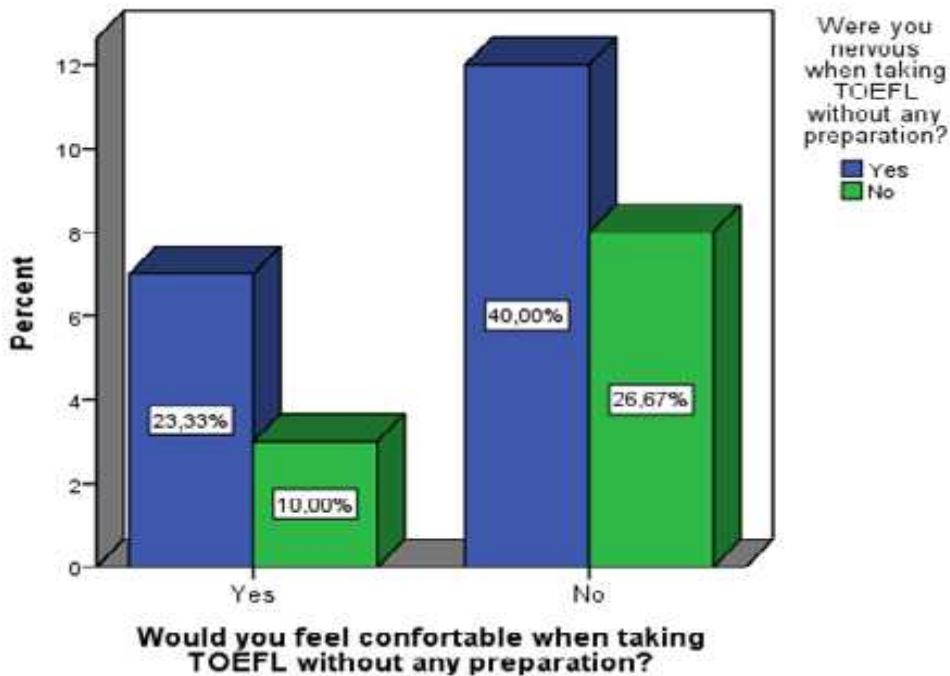
	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Would you feel comfortable when taking TOEFL without any preparation? * Were you nervous when taking TOEFL without any preparation?	30	83,3%	6	16,7%	36	100,0%

Would you feel comfortable when taking TOEFL without any preparation? * Were you nervous when taking TOEFL without any preparation? Crosstabulation

Count

		Were you nervous when taking TOEFL without any preparation?		Total
		Yes	No	
Would you feel comfortable when taking TOEFL without any preparation?	Yes	7	3	10
	No	12	8	20
Total		19	11	30

Bivariate Graph 2



This graph shows the attitude the students have towards a standardized test like TOEFL.

Before taking the test, the 66.67% of the students said they would not feel comfortable when taking TOEFL without any previous preparation. After taking the practice test, the 63.33% of the population affirmed they were nervous when taking the exam.

It is assumed that a considerable amount of students have a negative attitude respecting to that fact of taking a standardized test without a previous preparation.

BIVARIATE ANALYSIS 3

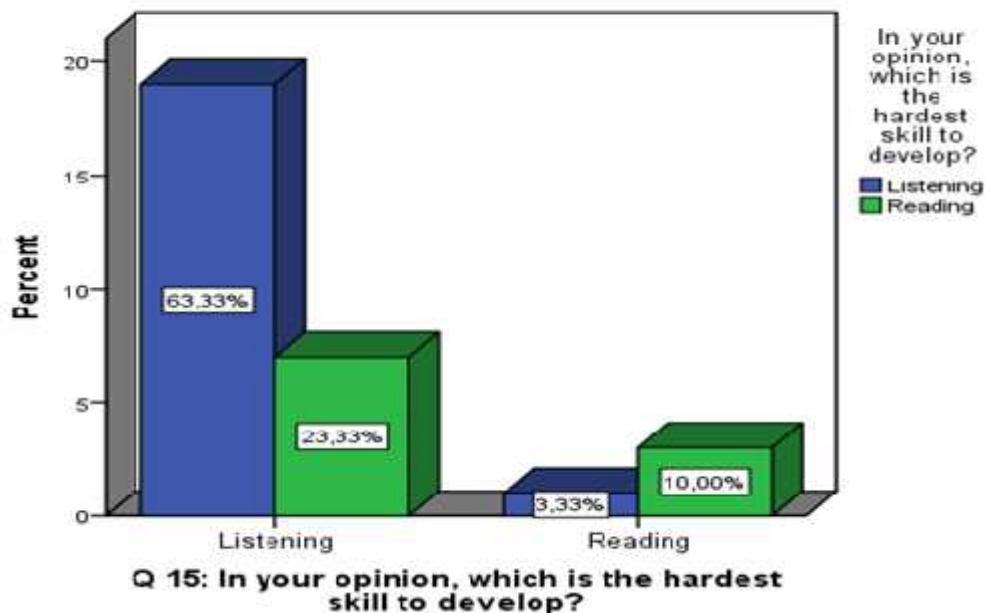
Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Q 15: In your opinion, which is the hardest skill to develop? * In your opinion, which is the hardest skill to develop?	30	83,3%	6	16,7%	36	100,0%

Q 15: In your opinion, which is the hardest skill to develop? * In your opinion, which is the hardest skill to develop? Crosstabulation

Count		In your opinion, which is the hardest skill to develop?		Total
		Listening	Reading	
Q 15: In your opinion, which is the hardest skill to develop?	Listening	19	7	26
	Reading	1	3	4
Total		20	10	30

Bivariate Graph 3



The third bivariate analysis describes the perception of the students about the hardest skill to develop. This analysis compares the same question in two different moments: before and after taking the TOEFL practice.

In the first questionnaire the 86.66% said the Listening skill was harder than Reading. Then, after taking the practice test and being informed about their scores which reveal Reading as the lowest score gotten, it was supposed that the Reading skill would be consider the hardest skill to develop but on the contrary at the speculation only the 33.33% choose the Reading skill as the hardest skill to development.

BIVARIATE ANALYSIS 4

Case Processing Summary

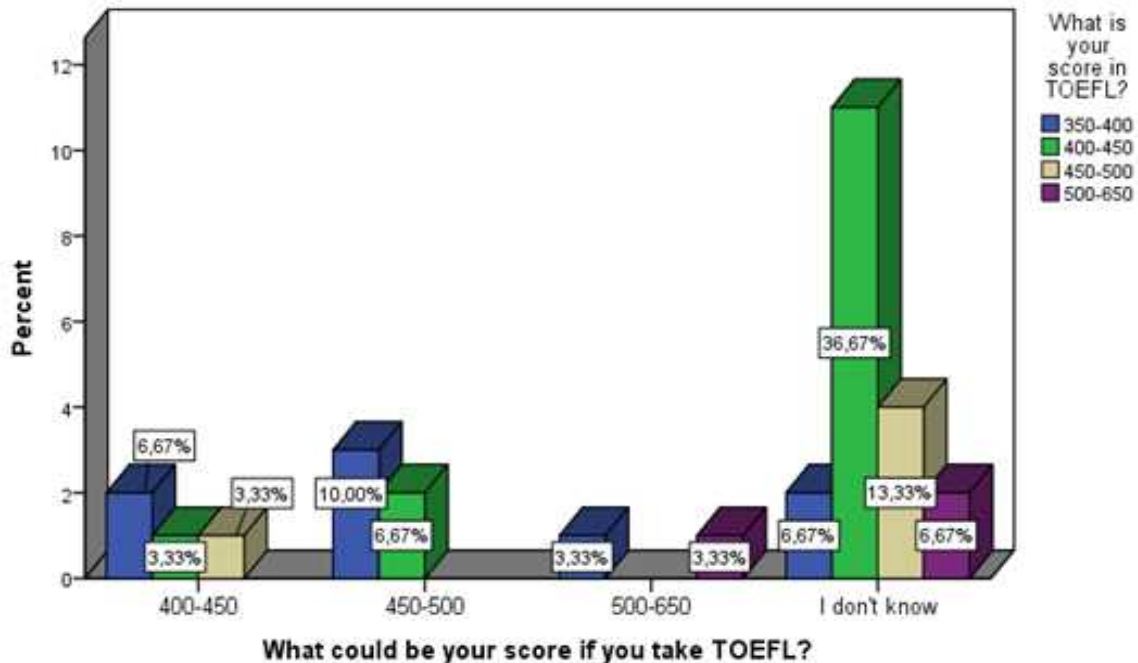
	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
What could be your score if you take TOEFL? * What is your score in TOEFL?	30	83,3%	6	16,7%	36	100,0%

What could be your score if you take TOEFL? * What is your score in TOEFL? Crosstabulation

Count

		What is your score in TOEFL?				Total
		350-400	400-450	450-500	500-650	
What could be your score if you take TOEFL?	400-450	2	1	1	0	4
	450-500	3	2	0	0	5
	500-650	1	0	0	1	2
	I don't know	2	11	4	2	19
Total		8	14	5	3	30

Bivariate Graph 4



The bivariate graph number 4 displays the perception of the students about their possible and real score in TOEFL.

What is important to notice is that the 13.33% of the sample consider themselves into the group who could get a global score between 400-450 in TOEFL but after doing the test the 23.34% appears in the 350-400 range of score which corresponds to the novice level and not to the intermediate level. Also, a big quantity of population, the 36.67% out of the 63.34%, is in the range of 400-450 which corresponds to the intermediate and low advanced proficiency level.

BIVARIATE ANALYSIS 5

Case Processing Summary

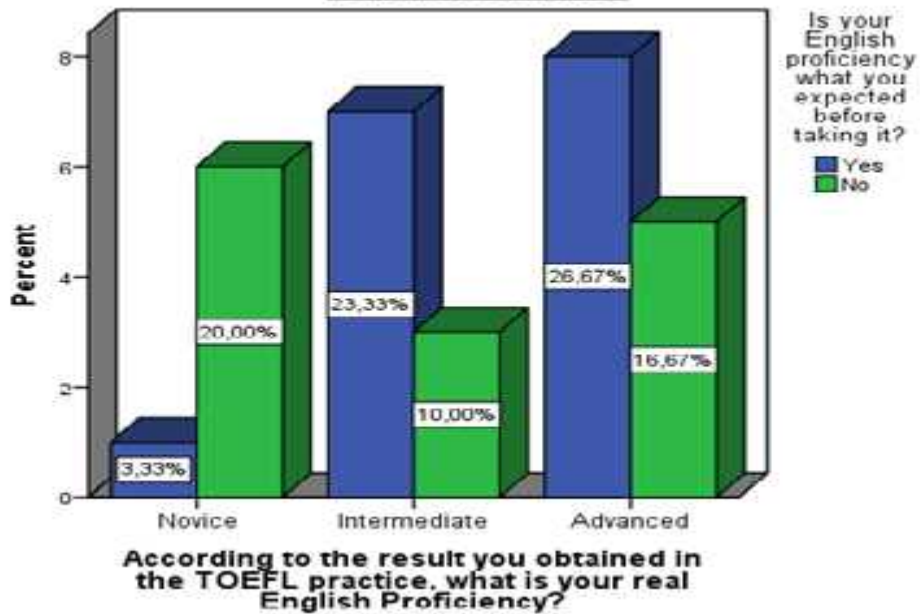
	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
*According to the result you obtained in the TOEFL practice, what is your real English Proficiency? * Did your perception match with your result?	30	83,3%	6	16,7%	36	100,0%

According to the result you obtained in the TOEFL practice, what is your real English Proficiency? * Did your perception match with your result? Crosstabulation

Count

		Did your perception match with your result?		Total
		Yes	No	
According to the result you obtained in the TOEFL practice, what is your real English Proficiency?	Novice	2	5	7
	Intermediate	6	4	10
	Advanced	7	6	13
Total		15	15	30

Bivariate Graph 5



This graph highlights the importance of having a standardized test in the Foreign Language Department.

As it presents, almost the half of the population, the 53.33%, got the score they expected but it is a still short range between the population who was right and those who had a wrong perception.

In addition 20.00% out of 23.33% of the sample did not consider themselves in the novice level and approximately the half of the students in intermediate and advanced level did not expected obtained these results.

5D. Global Analysis of the Research

5DI. Hypotheses

General hypothesis:

- ✓ **The students of third year at the Foreign Language Department are not aware of their reading and listening proficiency level.**

Students had some assumptions about their reading and listening proficiency level but they did not certainly know it. They answered questionnaire 1 based on these assumptions and some of them guessed their results, yet half of them had wrong ideas and that is why their results did not match with their assumptions. Moreover, they said that reading was their most developed skill but the results in the TOEFL practice showed that they were better at listening than at reading. In this sense, the hypothesis was proved because this practice allowed students to know they were wrong and they could identify in which skill they really need to improve.

Specific hypotheses:

- ✓ **Taking a TOEFL practice will contribute the students of third year to know their level of academic proficiency in the receptive skills.**

The researchers performed a TOEFL practice and before doing it, questionnaire 1 was administered. In this questionnaire, students were asked which receptive skill was the most developed and they answered reading, but when they took the TOEFL practice, the results showed they were completely wrong. Thanks to the results obtained in the practice, students know now their real English proficiency in the receptive skills because these results were intended to be given to the students for them to get informed about it, in that way they do not keep on speculating about it.

At the moment they were given the results, they realized their assumptions were the other way around, so they can improve the skills in which they are less prepared.

- ✓ **The perceptions the students have about their proficiency level in reading and listening skills are different from what a standardized test can show.**

According to the results in the first questionnaire administered to third year students, they were asked which of their receptive skills was more developed. Based on their perceptions more than half of them chose that reading was their most developed skill, besides, in their opinion they chose that listening is the hardest skill to develop in the learning process. In questionnaire two after the TOEFL practice, they were asked about what of the receptive skills was the most difficult to solve during the test. To which more than half of the students answered that reading was the hardest part during the test to solve. In addition, according to the scores obtained from the TOEFL practice, it was listening the part with the highest scores and reading the part with the lowest scores even though the students thought the contrary. It means that with all the facts shown above, the researchers proved their hypothesis and it is true that the perceptions the students have about their proficiency level in reading and listening skills are different from what a standardized test can show.

- ✓ **The students of third year consider it is important to get informed about their real proficiency in the receptive English skills.**

According to graph 33 in questionnaire one, most of the students said they consider important to know their English proficiency, besides, most of them also consider it is important to have regular practices of standardized tests with the purpose of being informed about their English proficiency. Moreover, when the researchers administered the TOEFL practice, many students were interested about when they were going to have the results of the test. With these facts, the

researchers prove the hypothesis and it is true that the students of third year consider it is important to get informed about their real proficiency in the receptive English skills.

5DII. Answers to the Research Questions

General Research Question

- ✓ **How aware are third year students at the FLD of their reading and listening proficiency level?**

According to the results obtained in questionnaire 1, students are not really aware of their reading and listening proficiency level. When they were asked what could be their score in listening, 36.11% which was the majority answered that they did not know; the rest of the students was divided between the other answers: 30.56% considered they were in a novice level, 30.56% thought they were in an intermediate level and only 2.78% answered they were in an advanced level. In the case of the reading skill, the trend continues having 38.89% of the students who answered that they did not know what could be their score in the reading section. 11.11% considered they were in a novice level, 27.78% thought they were in an intermediate level and 22.22% answered they were in an advanced level. The previous information confirms the fact that students at the Foreign Language Department are not really aware of their reading and listening proficiency level.

Specific Research Questions

- ✓ **What is the real level of academic proficiency in the receptive skills in third year students of the Foreign Language Department?**

Based on a TOEFL practice that students took, it was possible to know what their real level of academic proficiency in the receptive skills was. The results of the practice showed that students are better in listening than in reading since they obtained as mean 23 correct answers out of 50 in the listening section having as score of 455. On the contrary, in the reading section they obtained as mean 19 correct answers out of 50 having a score of 390. Thanks to TOEFL practice taken by the students, it was possible to get informed about their real level of academic proficiency in the receptive skills and comparing the scores, 455 in listening and 390 in reading, it is possible to say that students are better in listening than in reading.

- ✓ **What is the students' perception about their level of academic proficiency in reading and listening skills?**

In accordance with questionnaire 1, students think they are better in reading than in listening. There were some questions intended to know what the students thought about their receptive skills; one of those questions was: In your opinion, which is the hardest skill to develop? Most of the students, 80.56%, chose listening against 19.44% of them who answered that reading is the hardest skill to develop. In other words, students think reading is easier than listening; moreover, they were asked which of their receptive skills they considered the most developed. 44.44% of the students selected listening as the most developed skill. On the other hand, 55.56% of them answered that reading was the most developed receptive skill; this means that the majority of the students consider they are better in reading than in listening, yet if this answer is compared with the results obtained in the TOEFL

practice, it is possible to verify that they do not match since students got a better score in listening than in reading.

✓ **How interested are students in getting informed about their real level of academic proficiency in the receptive English skills?**

Students were asked in questionnaire 1 whether they would participate in taking a TOEFL practice for free if they had the opportunity. The majority of the students (97.22%) answered that they would take it. They were invited to participate in the practice and offered a snack; at the beginning, they seemed to be excited about it but the day this practice was going to take place, many of them did not show up. Considering this missing, another day was settled for the ones that could not get the previous practice and they were also invited, motivated to participate as it was beneficial for them and also offered a snack, but from 15 students that said they were going to take it, just 3 of them showed up. Thanks to the TOEFL practice, it was confirmed that students are not very interested in getting informed about their real level of academic proficiency in the receptive skills; this reveals the lack of interest from many of the students.

5DIII. Most Outstanding Findings

- More than half of the students considered their most developed skill was reading, however, the results observed in the TOEFL practice showed that they were wrong since this skill had the lowest score. Besides, in the second questionnaire they affirmed that reading was the hardest part to solve due to vocabulary and text length.
- Before taking the TOEFL practice, the students thought listening would be the most difficult part to solve during the test. However, after they took the TOEFL practice, they answered in a different way and more than half of the students experienced that reading was the most difficult part to solve.
- A big part of the students (55.56%) considered they had intermediate English proficiency before taking the TOEFL practice. After the test, the results showed that there are more students with advanced English proficiency, divided by a little percentage, than intermediate English proficiency.
- Even though there was a very little percentage (3.33%) who said they had novice proficiency. According to the results, there is a percentage of 23.33% of the third year students that are in the novice level.
- Although students did not have too much knowledge about TOEFL, they considered it would be important and useful to have regular practices on it since it would let them know about their real English proficiency and the areas they need to improve.
- All the students said that it would be useful to have regular practices of standardized tests at the Foreign Language Department and they said it would help to improve their English proficiency.

CHAPTER VI. Conclusions and Recommendations

6A. Conclusions

- The research about the awareness of reading and listening proficiency in third year students let the researchers know how important it is to practice a standardized test since it definitely showed that students were not really aware of their English proficiency in the receptive skills.
- The practice of the TOEFL test showed that the most developed receptive skill in third year students of the Modern Languages Major is listening.
- The practice of a standardized test like TOEFL helped them not only to find out their most developed skill between the receptive skills, but also to introduce, prepare, and get them used to it.
- Students from the Foreign Languages Department do not have general knowledge about TOEFL such as structure, scores, and time; this research allowed them to acquire basic knowledge about it.
- The students had wrong perceptions about their academic proficiency level and their most developed skill but through the practice of TOEFL, now they have a more reliable idea about their proficiency.
- The test helped the researchers to wipe students' assumptions away and prove the hindrance that they have in receptive English skills.
- Even though the entire sample manifested to be interested in taking the TOEFL practice and in that way to get informed about their proficiency, not all of them attended to the TOEFL practice.

6B. Recommendations

- The Foreign Languages Department should offer the students the opportunity to measure their proficiency after concluding the Skill Development Area through a TOEFL practice, so students can reorient their learning process and focus their efforts in their weak skills and also get used to it and prepare themselves.
- The Foreign Languages Department should offer opportunities to have practices of TOEFL. The strategies proposed for this research are: to install computer programs for practicing TOEFL in all the equipment in the computer laboratory of the department and reinforce the tutoring social service programs so the students could have practices in every time during their major.
- If it is not possible to have a TOEFL test, at least an institutional test should be administered at the Foreign Languages Department to constantly measure students' proficiency.
- Teachers should provide students with information about standardized tests like TOEFL, so they can have at least a general knowledge when taking the real one.
- It should be mandatory at least for students that are about to graduate to take and succeed a standardized test like TOEFL.
- All the students of the Foreign Languages Department should take a TOEFL practice after concluding the Skill Development Area and before graduating. If the students do not reach at least an advanced intermediate level it may be mandatory for them to attend tutoring sessions or take the PERA (Remedial Academic Program).

CHAPTER VII: Bibliography and Appendixes

7A. Bibliographical References

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7B. Letter Adressed to the Teachers



Ciudad Universitaria, 07 de septiembre de 2015.

Solicitud de autorización para administrar instrumento de investigación.

Mti. Jorge Homero LLanes
Docente de Lectura y Conversación I

Por medio de la presente, nosotras Ruth Flores, Lisseth López y Karla Mejia, nos dirigimos en calidad de egresadas de la carrera de Licenciatura en Lenguas Modernas con especialidad en Francés e Inglés solicitando su autorización para administrar nuestros instrumentos de investigación para el proyecto de graduación concerniente al tema “El conocimiento de las competencias en lectura y escucha por medio de una práctica de TOEFL afín de medir fortalezas y debilidades en las habilidades receptivas en estudiantes de tercer año de la carrera de Lenguas Modernas del Departamento de Idiomas, Universidad de El Salvador año 2015”. Dichos instrumentos consisten en dos cuestionarios y una prueba diagnóstico de TOEFL los cuales consideramos enriquecerán el desarrollo de su cátedra.

De antemano agradecemos su valiosa colaboración esperando poder contar con su apoyo y así poder fijar una fecha para la realización de los mismos.

Sin más que agregar, nos despedimos expresando nuestro más sincero respeto.

Atentamente,

Ruth Flores

Karla Mejia

Lisseth Salinas

7C. Letter Adressed to Engineer Marta de Carranza



Ciudad Universitaria, 25 de junio de 2015.

Solicitud de cita para obtención de información.

Marta Carranza
Educación USA Director El Salvador

Por medio de la presente, nosotros los docentes del Departamento de Idiomas de la Universidad de El Salvador: Mti. Edgar Nicolás Ayala y MsD. Ana Carolina Ramos, nos dirigimos a usted con el objetivo de solicitar una cita para las estudiantes Ruth Flores, Karla Mejía y Lisseth Salinas de la carrera de Licenciatura en Lenguas Modernas con especialidad en Francés e Inglés y así puedan entrevistarse con respecto a las estadísticas y datos importantes del TOEFL ya que ellas están elaborando su trabajo de tesis con el título "El conocimiento de las competencias en lectura y escucha por medio de una práctica de TOEFL a fin de medir fortalezas y debilidades en las habilidades receptivas en estudiantes de tercer año de la carrera de Lenguas Modernas del Departamento de Idiomas, Universidad de El Salvador año 2015".

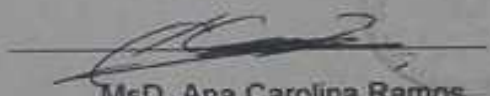
De antemano agradecemos su colaboración y rogamos a la vez su comprensión, esperando poder fijar una fecha adecuada para concretizar dicha cita.

Sin más que agregar, nos despedimos y expresamos nuestros respetos.



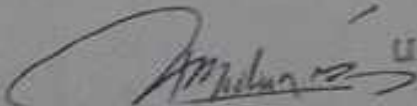
Mti. Edgar Nicolás Ayala

Coordinador de procesos de grado




MsD. Ana Carolina Ramos

Docente asesora



Educación USA
Education USA



7D. Questionnaire 1 to Students



UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

TOPIC: The awareness of reading and listening proficiency through a TOEFL practice to measure strengths and weaknesses in the receptive skills in third year students of the Modern Languages Major at the Department of Foreign Languages.

OBJECTIVE: To identify and explore how much the students know about standardized test regarding types, format and uses.

This research will be carried out through a TOEFL practice test that will be used to evaluate student's English proficiency. This tool is aimed to evaluate the receptive English skills: Listening and Reading.

code: Student's

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QUESTIONNAIRE 1

Instructions: Check the option that best responses to the questions.

PART I: Socio-demographic data.

1. Gender. Female Male

2. Age: 18 - 21 22-26 27 or more

3. Marital status. Single Married Divorced

4. Place of residence. City Country

5. Socio-economic status Low Medium High class

PART II: General knowledge about standardized tests.

6. Do you know what a standardized test is?

Yes No

7. Have you ever taken a standardized test?

Yes No

8. Do you know what TOEFL stands for?

Yes No

9. How much time is it required to do TOEFL?

1-2 hours 3-4 hours 5-6 hours Non settled time

10. What is the TOEFL score acceptable in El Salvador?

100 points 450 points 500 points I don't know

11. Do you know how many formats of TOEFL there are?

Yes No

12. Check the formats of TOEFL that you know.

PBT CBT iBT None

13. How many sections does TOEFL include?

Three four five I don't know

14. Who can take TOEFL?

Non-native speakers Native speakers Both I don't know

15. Is it required to take TOEFL before graduating from Modern Language

Major?

Yes No I don't know

PART III: Knowledge about the proficiency in the receptive skills.

16. What is your real English proficiency?

Novice Intermediate Advanced Distinguished

17. Do you think TOEFL really measures students' listening and reading skills?

Yes No

18. Which of the receptive English skills do you consider the most developed in your learning process?

Listening Reading

19. In your opinion, which is the hardest skill to develop?

Listening Reading

20. What could be your score if you take TOEFL?

400-450 450-500 500-650 I don't know

21. What could be your proficiency in your reading skill?

Novice Intermediate Advanced I don't know

22. What could be your proficiency in your listening skill?

Novice Intermediate Advanced I don't know

23. During the practice of TOEFL, which skill could be more difficult to solve?

Listening Reading

24. When solving the listening section, what factor do you think would affect your performance?

Distraction Anxiety Different accents Handling time

25. When solving the reading section, what factor do you think would affect your performance?

Vocabulary Text length Handling time Anxiety

PART IV: The students' perceptions of practicing and implementing a standardized test.

26. Do you think the practice of TOEFL will help to improve your English?

Yes No

27. Do you consider it would be useful to have practices of standardized test at the Foreign Language Department?

Yes No

28. Are you prepared to take a standardized test like TOEFL at this moment?

Yes No

29. Would you be nervous when taking TOEFL without any preparation?

Yes No

30. Would you feel comfortable when taking TOEFL without any preparation?

Yes No

31. Do you think taking regular practices of TOEFL could help you to feel more prepared at the moment of taking the real one?

Yes No

32. Do you consider that taking a practice of TOEFL once in a year could be useful for you? Yes No

33. Do you think it is important to know your real proficiency?

Yes No

34. Could the fact of being informed about your current score in TOEFL help you to improve? Yes No

35. If you had the opportunity to take TOEFL for free, would you participate?

Yes No

Thank you!

7D. Questionnaire 2 to Students



UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

TOPIC: The awareness of reading and listening proficiency through a TOEFL practice to measure strengths and weaknesses in the receptive skills in third year students of the Modern Languages Major at the Department of Foreign Languages.

OBJECTIVE: To explore how the students feel and think about taking a standardized test.

code: Student's

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QUESTIONNAIRE 2

Instructions: Check the option that best responses to the questions.

PART I: Knowledge about the proficiency in the receptive skills.

1. What is your real English proficiency?
Novice Intermediate Advanced Distinguished
2. Is your English proficiency what you expected before taking it?
Yes No
3. Did your perception match with your result?
Yes No
4. Do you think TOEFL really measures students' listening and reading skills?
Yes No
5. In your opinion, which is the hardest skill to develop?
Listening Reading
6. What is your score in TOEFL?
350- 400 400-450 450-500 500-650

7. During the practice of TOEFL, which skill was the most difficult to solve?
Listening Reading
8. When solving the listening section, what factor do you think affected your performance?
Distraction Anxiety Different accents Handling time
9. When solving the reading section, what factor do you think affected your performance?
Vocabulary Text length Handling time Anxiety

PART II: The students' perceptions of practicing and implementing a standardized test.

10. Did you feel prepared while taking the TOEFL practice?
Yes No
11. Were you nervous when taking TOEFL without any preparation?
Yes No
12. Did you feel comfortable when taking TOEFL without any preparation?
Yes No
13. Do you think taking regular practices of TOEFL could help you to feel more prepared at the moment of taking the real one?
Yes No
14. Do you consider that taking a practice of TOEFL once in a year could be useful for you? Yes No
15. Do you consider it would be useful to have practices of standardized test at the Foreign Language Department?
Yes No

Thank you!



Students filling the first questionnaire.



Students doing the TOEFL practice.



Students in the small talk about their scores filling the second questionnaire.

LISTENING

Time – approximately 60 minutes

This section measures your ability to understand spoken English. There are fifty questions in this section. The listening material and questions about it will be presented only one time. You may not take notes.

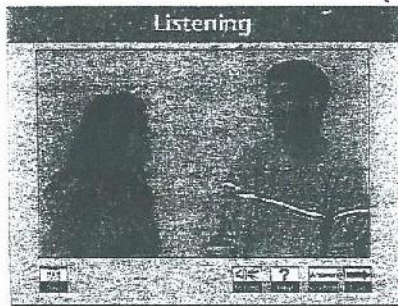
Part A

In Part A, you will hear short conversations between two people. Each conversation is followed by a question about it. Each question in this part has four answer choices. Select the best answer to each question. Answer the questions on the basis of what is stated or implied by the speakers.

🔊 Now we will begin Part A with the first conversation.



1. What does the man mean?
 - (A) Tom's part in the play included mime.
 - (B) Tom lifted an iced drink.
 - (C) It was kind of Tom to make the offer.
 - (D) Tom waved his hand as he parted.



2. What does the woman mean?
 - (A) They shipped her the gift.
 - (B) They broke what was in the package.
 - (C) They arranged to go away.
 - (D) They shared the cost of the gift.



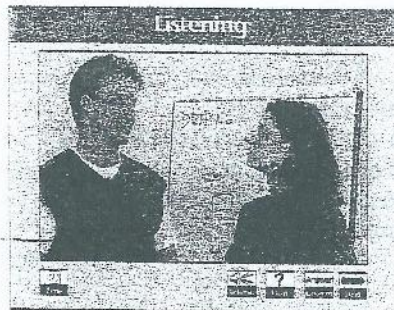
3. What does the woman mean?
 - (A) Hardback books cost twice as much as before.
 - (B) The cost of hardback books goes up two or three times a year.
 - (C) The cost of hardback books has gone up twice in the last three years.
 - (D) Two years ago hardback books cost a third as much as now.



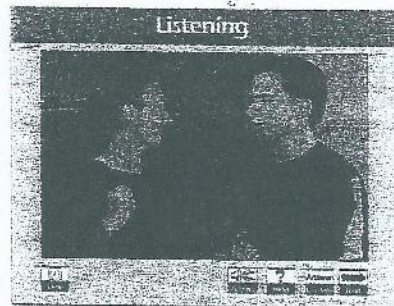
4. What does the woman mean?
 - (A) She thinks they didn't go to the Supreme Court.
 - (B) She can't believe they went to the Supreme Court.
 - (C) It doesn't seem possible to her that they missed the Supreme Court.
 - (D) Their going to the Supreme Court seems unbelievable.



5. What does the woman imply?
- (A) He passed by a narrow margin.
 - (B) He was close to a passing mark.
 - (C) He will be called into the physics office.
 - (D) He shouldn't shout in the hallway.



6. What does the man imply?
- (A) He doesn't want the woman to visit him.
 - (B) It's easy to find his house.
 - (C) The woman wouldn't be able to find the parking lot.
 - (D) It's difficult to explain how to get to his house.



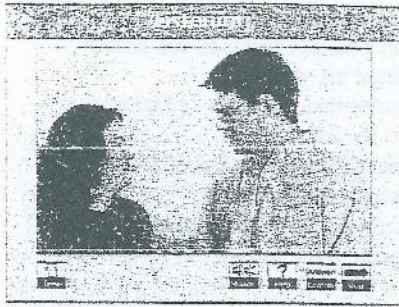
7. What does the woman say about Scott?
- (A) He finished working on his dissertation more than five years ago.
 - (B) He has taken less than five years to write his dissertation.
 - (C) He began writing his dissertation more than five years ago.
 - (D) He will be writing his dissertation for at least five more years.



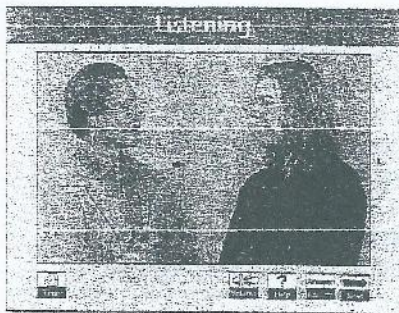
8. What does the woman mean?
- (A) They need to buy some gasoline.
 - (B) They should ask for directions.
 - (C) They need to check their headlights and taillights.
 - (D) They should pull off the road.



9. What does the woman imply?
- (A) She needs to get a haircut.
 - (B) She's going to visit Barbara.
 - (C) She wants to see Jim.
 - (D) She's on her way to exercise.



10. What does the woman mean?
- (A) She is surprised he didn't finish.
 - (B) She is surprised he took so long to finish.
 - (C) She is surprised the exam was so easy.
 - (D) She is surprised the exam took hardly any time at all.



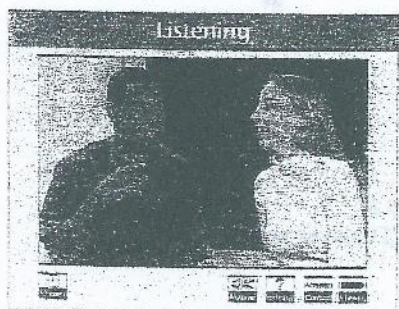
11. What does the woman imply the man should do?
- (A) Ask about bus routes at the information desk
 - (B) Refer to the map at the bus station
 - (C) Pick up a map from the information desk
 - (D) Map out the routes in the Student Union



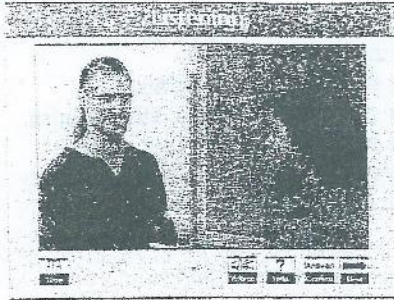
12. What does the woman imply?
- (A) Her sister cut her hair.
 - (B) Her sister works at home.
 - (C) Her sister will cut his hair.
 - (D) Her sister needs more practice.



13. What does the woman mean?
- (A) She's upset with Jill about not giving her notes back.
 - (B) She wants to give Jill another piece of information.
 - (C) She's thinking about binding her notes.
 - (D) She wouldn't mind going to see Jill about the notes.



14. What does the man mean?
- (A) He's heard about Sue's great ideas.
 - (B) He agrees with Sue's ideas for the project.
 - (C) He thinks Sue's ideas are impractical.
 - (D) He finds some of Sue's ideas agreeable.



15. What does the woman mean?
- (A) She can't believe that Bob has already completed his work.
 - (B) She knows that Bob won't be able to go back to the library.
 - (C) She doesn't know that Bob didn't finish the assignment.
 - (D) She's certain that Bob shouldn't have gone back to the library.



16. What can be inferred about the woman?
- (A) She would probably rather walk to the university than take the bus.
 - (B) She is probably very studious and wants to be far away from campus life.
 - (C) She would probably like to commute to Los Altos from a quiet suburb.
 - (D) She probably has to commute to the university campus frequently.



17. What does the man mean?
- (A) Dan's leave-taking surprised him.
 - (B) It wasn't true that Dan asked him to make a speech.
 - (C) He was amazed at the way Dan defended him.
 - (D) He didn't know what to say when Dan accused him.




18. What does the woman mean?
- (A) Ted could set up a good deal for the man.
 - (B) The man should consider driving a bus.
 - (C) Ted would be interested in buying the man's car.
 - (D) The man could get good information about bicycles from Ted.

This is the end of Part A.
Turn off your cassette or audio CD player now.

Go on to Part B.

Part B

In Part B, you will listen to several talks and conversations. Each talk or conversation is followed by several questions. The conversations and talks are about a variety of topics. You do not need special knowledge of the topics to answer the questions correctly. Rather, you should answer each question on the basis of what is stated or implied in the conversation or talk. You may not take notes.

 Now we will begin Part B with the first conversation.



19. What is the main topic of the conversation?
- (A) The birthday gift for Phil
 - (B) The man's fencing class
 - (C) The time and place to meet
 - (D) The best place to park

20. Why does the woman want to go downtown?
- (A) She wants to buy a present for Phil.
 - (B) She needs to pick up her new contact lenses.
 - (C) She has to pay a fine for a traffic ticket.
 - (D) She wants to help the man buy a present.

21. Where are the people going to meet?
- (A) In front of the gym building
 - (B) In the fencing class
 - (C) On the one-way street
 - (D) In the student parking lot



22. What happened to the woman?
- (A) She didn't complete her assignment.
 - (B) She reported to Dr. Reed.
 - (C) She waited in line to meet Dr. Reed.
 - (D) She got an extension.

23. What did Dr. Reed give the woman?
- (A) A new deadline
 - (B) A different assignment
 - (C) Some organizational tips
 - (D) Some ideas for the report

24. What does the man want?
- (A) A copy of the assignment
 - (B) The due dates for future reports
 - (C) The main points of the assignment
 - (D) Advice on organizing his material



25. What is the man going to do during the summer?

- (A) Attend classes
- (B) Hold down a part-time job
- (C) Go camping in Colorado
- (D) Dig on an archaeological site

28. What objects might be found at a buffalo-kill site?

- (A) Buffalo bones and flint knives
- (B) Buffalo skins and rifles
- (C) Buffalo herds grazing near cliffs
- (D) Buffalo meat being dried

26. What is NOT done at Copper Mountain?

- (A) Fossil collecting
- (B) Mapping strata
- (C) Laboratory analysis
- (D) Fieldwork

29. What does the man imply about summer classes?

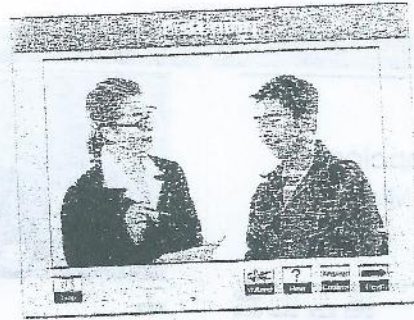
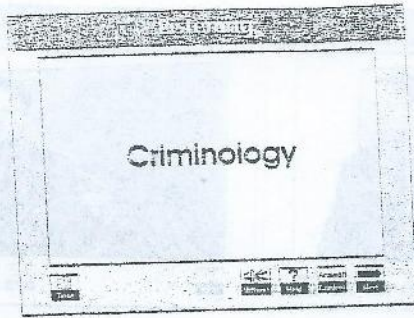
- (A) They're more interesting than regular classes.
- (B) They're more work than regular classes.
- (C) They're more expensive than regular classes.
- (D) They're more challenging than regular classes.

27. According to the man, why can't some of the summer classes be held during the academic year?

Choose 2 answers.

- A Because too many students are interested in taking them
- B Because field trips would keep students away from regular classes
- C Because professors are too busy to help students
- D Because weather conditions can make it difficult to work

Now get ready to listen.



Now get ready to answer the questions.

30. What are the people discussing?
- (A) A well-known painting
 - (B) A painting that thieves favor
 - (C) A popular painting among the public
 - (D) The most valuable painting in the museum

31. How long had the painting been missing?
- (A) For 3 years
 - (B) For 4 years
 - (C) For 5 years
 - (D) For 20 years

32. What reason is given for the painting's popularity among thieves?
- (A) It's a Rembrandt.
 - (B) It's worth \$5 million.
 - (C) It's easily recognized.
 - (D) It's 9 by 11 inches.

33. What is the professor uncertain about?
- (A) How thieves can steal the painting
 - (B) Why someone would buy a painting
 - (C) How many times the painting has been taken
 - (D) How much a stolen painting sells for

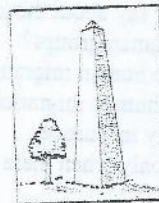
34. Select the work of art below that thieves would be attracted to.



(A)



(B)



(C)



(D)

Now get ready to listen.



Now get ready to answer the questions.

35. What is the purpose of the talk?
- (A) To examine the causes of population movement
 - (B) To explain why humans started leaving Africa
 - (C) To show how North America was settled
 - (D) To outline the history of human migration

36. How did people survive the Ice Age in northern Europe and Asia?
- (A) They moved south to avoid the cold.
 - (B) They made shelter, clothes, and fire.
 - (C) They hunted migrating animals.
 - (D) They took over unused land.

37. What does the speaker say about the invasion of occupied land by human groups?
- (A) It is not related to human migration.
 - (B) It is one form of human migration.
 - (C) It occurred mainly in Europe.
 - (D) It was practiced only when there was no free land.

38. What does the speaker say about human migration?
- (A) It was done mainly by early tribal societies.
 - (B) It appears to no longer be common.
 - (C) It seems to be a basic human instinct.
 - (D) It has been done only at certain times in history.

39. The professor briefly explains a series of human migrations. Put the migrations in chronological order.

Write the letter of each sentence in the space where it belongs. Use each sentence only once.

- A Humans crossed the Bering land bridge and spread throughout the Americas.
- B Humans migrated from the savannahs of Africa into Europe and Asia.
- C Humans spread through eastern Asia and south to Australia.
- D Humans have continued to migrate throughout the world.

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Now get ready to listen.



Now get ready to answer the questions.

40. What is the main topic of the professor's discussion?

- (A) Jack London's works
- (B) Jack London's life
- (C) Jack London's politics
- (D) Jack London's family

41. Why did London become a writer?

- (A) Because of his failure in becoming a political leader
- (B) To avoid working in a factory
- (C) Because he was an avid reader
- (D) To cover the costs of his kidney illness

42. According to the professor, where did London get his ideas for his publications?

Choose 2 answers.

- A He retold stories written by other authors.
- B He told the stories of people he met when he was a factory worker.
- C He used material from his own experiences.
- D He created stories from his imagination.

43. Why does the professor mention London's novel *The Call of the Wild*?

- (A) To give an example of London's diverse experiences
- (B) To name a work that showed London's anticapitalist ideas
- (C) To name the work that brought London fame
- (D) To give an example of London's disciplined approach to writing

44. According to the professor, in what ways was London inconsistent and self-contradictory?

Choose 2 answers.

- A In his support for socialism
- B In his support for women's rights
- C In his support for the prohibition of alcohol
- D In his innovative ideas

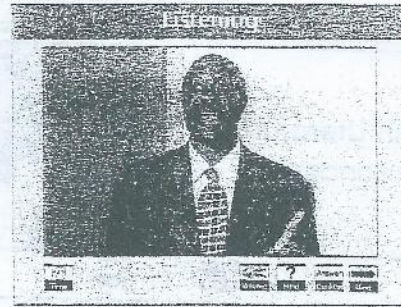
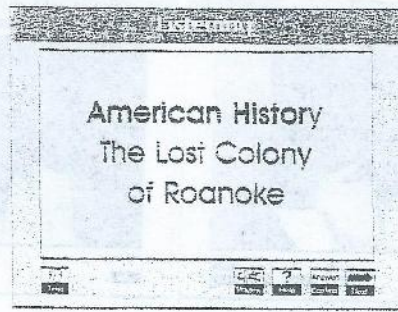
45. The professor describes London's life chronologically. Summarize his life by putting the events in order.

Write the letter of each sentence in the space where it belongs. Use each sentence only once.

- A London worked at becoming a successful writer.
- B London introduced practical innovations on his ranch.
- C London's family settled in Oakland after having moved around.
- D London's working life as a young man was very diverse.

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Now get ready to listen.



Now get ready to answer the questions.

46. What is the lecture mainly about?
- (A) Theories of the Roanoke episode
 - (B) Scholars' claims about the Lost Colony
 - (C) The return of the original Roanoke colonists
 - (D) The events surrounding the Roanoke mystery

47. According to the professor, what did the people on the relief vessels find in Roanoke?

Choose 2 answers.

- A The 100 new pioneers
- B An abandoned fort
- C Cut-down entrance posts to the fort
- D A mysterious clue

48. Which of the following may explain what happened to the Roanoke settlers?
- (A) They returned to England for supplies.
 - (B) They moved to a nearby fort.
 - (C) They married into the native population.
 - (D) They got involved in the war with Spain.

49. What happened to each of the three groups of people left at Roanoke?

Write the letter of each phrase in the space where it belongs. Use each phrase only once.

- A were found dead
- B disappeared
- C returned to England

The original settlers	The holding force of fifteen men	The 100 new settlers
1.	2.	3.

50. Why does the professor refer to Roanoke as an enigmatic episode in early American history?
- (A) Because Roanoke had been abandoned
 - (B) Because there was not a trace of the settlers on the island of Croatoan
 - (C) Because what happened to the settlers is a mystery
 - (D) Because the story is fascinating for history students

This is the end of the Listening Section.
Turn off your cassette or audio CD player now.

Go on to the Structure Section.

STRUCTURE

Time - 15 minutes

This section measures your ability to understand the structures of standard written English. There are twenty questions in this section. There are two types of questions.

The first type of question consists of incomplete sentences. Beneath each sentence there are four words or phrases. You will select the one word or phrase that best completes the sentence.

Example:

Structure

Directions: Click on the one word or phrase that best completes the sentence.

John Le Carré _____ for his novels concerning espionage.

- famous
- has fame
- is famous
- famed

Time

? Help Answer Confirm Next

The second type of question consists of a sentence with four underlined words or phrases. You will select the one underlined word or phrase that must be changed for the sentence to be correct.

Example:

Structure

Directions: Click on the one underlined word or phrase that must be changed for the sentence to be correct.

The rings of Saturn are so distant
to be seen from Earth without a telescope.

Time

? Help Answer Confirm Next

Now begin working on the Structure questions.

1. Not all birds _____
 (A) flying
 (B) fly
 (C) to fly
 (D) flown

6. A traveler can reach some of the village along
 the Amazon only by riverboat.

2. Natural predators, disturbing from tourists,
 and pollution have all contributed
 to the decline of the California condor.

7. The western part of Oregon generally receives
 more rain than _____ the eastern part.
 (A) in it does
 (B) does
 (C) it does in
 (D) in

3. A construction kit consists of parts that can
 be _____.
 (A) together they are fitted
 (B) that when fitted together
 (C) fitted together
 (D) together are fitted

8. Fiber is important element in nutrition, and it
 aids in protecting the digestive tract as well.

4. The Soay sheep, the old breed of sheep in
existence, has changed little since 3500 B.C.E.

9. _____ porpoises and dolphins, whales
 are mammals.
 (A) As
 (B) Also
 (C) Like
 (D) When

5. The Swedish scientist _____ to people
 who have done something important
 to help humankind.
 (A) left money to be awarded
 to Alfred B. Nobel
 (B) Alfred B. Nobel left to be awarded money
 (C) Alfred B. Nobel left money to be awarded
 (D) awarding money to Alfred B. Nobel
 to be left

10. The first European settlement of Australia
 left the city of Portsmouth in May 1787.

11. _____, Luxor did not reach preeminence until about 2000 B.C.E.
 (A) Many centuries earlier it was founded
 (B) The city founded centuries earlier
 (C) Although founded many centuries earlier
 (D) Founding the city centuries earlier

12. Starches provide people with important nutrients which they need them.
 A B
 C D

13. _____ living in Birmingham, England, that the American writer Washington Irving wrote *Rip Van Winkle*.
 (A) It was
 (B) There he was
 (C) It was while
 (D) While he was

14. The Bactrian, or Asian, camel can be identified by their two humps.
 A B C
 D

15. _____ known as "Stonehenge" has never been determined.
 (A) Who built the stone circle
 (B) The stone circle
 (C) That the stone circle
 (D) There is the stone circle

16. A trade center since antiquity, Catalonia itself has often been ruled by outsider.
 A B C
 D

17. Certain Paleolithic artifacts are given special terms _____.
 (A) which indicating their location of discovery
 (B) whose locations are indicating their discovery
 (C) what the location of their discovery is
 (D) indicating the location of their discovery

18. Early balloonists remained aloft in the air for relatively short periods.
 A B
 C D

19. No matter _____, Mozart was an accomplished composer while still a child.
 (A) how remarkable it seems
 (B) how seems it remarkable
 (C) it seems remarkable how
 (D) how it seems remarkable

20. At space camp, youngsters go through concentrated astronaut training but shuttle simulations.
 A B
 C D

This is the end of the Structure Section.
 Go on to the Reading Section.

READING

Time - 30 minutes

(including the reading of the passages)

In this section, you will read several passages. Each passage is followed by ten to fifteen questions. There are fifty questions in this section. You should answer all questions following a passage on the basis of what is stated or implied in that passage. For each question, select or write the correct answer.

Now begin reading the first passage.

Questions 1-11

Experiments have shown that in selecting personnel for a job, interviewing is, at best, a hindrance and may even cause harm. These studies have disclosed that the judgments of interviewers differ markedly and bear little or no relationship to the adequacy of job applicants. Of the many reasons why this should be the case, four in particular stand out. The first reason is related to an error of judgment known as the "halo effect." If a person has one noticeably good trait, his or her other characteristics will be judged as better than they really are. Thus, an individual who dresses smartly and shows self-confidence is likely to be judged capable of doing a job well regardless of his or her real ability. The "horns effect" describes essentially the same error, but focuses on one particularly bad trait. Here the individual will be judged as incapable of doing a good job because of one flaw.

Interviewers are also prejudiced by the "primacy effect." This error occurs when interpretation of later information is distorted by earlier related information. Hence, in an interview situation, the interviewer spends most of the interview trying to confirm the impression given by the candidate in the first few moments. Studies have repeatedly demonstrated that such an impression is unrelated to the aptitude of the applicant.

The phenomenon known as the "contrast effect" also skews the judgment of interviewers. A suitable candidate may be underestimated because he or she is different from a previous one who appears exceptionally intelligent. Likewise, an average candidate who is preceded by one who gives a weak showing may be judged as more suitable than he or she really is.

Since interviews as a form of personnel selection have been shown to be inadequate, other selection procedures have been devised that more accurately predict candidate suitability. Of the various tests devised, the predictor that appears to do this most successfully is the applicant's cognitive ability as measured by a variety of verbal and spatial tests.

1. This passage mainly discusses the
 - (A) effects of interviewing on job applicants
 - (B) weaknesses of the job interview process
 - (C) judgments of interviewers concerning job applicants
 - (D) techniques interviewers use for judging job applicants

⇒ Experiments have shown that in selecting personnel for a job, interviewing is, at best, a hindrance and may even cause harm. These studies have disclosed that the judgments of interviewers differ markedly and bear little or no relationship to the adequacy of job applicants. Of the many reasons why this should be the case, four in particular stand out. The first reason is related to an error of judgment known as the "halo effect." If a person has one noticeably good trait, his or her other characteristics will be judged as better than they really are. Thus, an individual who dresses smartly and shows self-confidence is likely to be judged capable of doing a job well regardless of his or her real ability. The "horns effect" describes essentially the same error, but focuses on one particularly bad trait. Here the individual will be judged as incapable of doing a good job because of one flaw.

2. The word hindrance in paragraph 1 is closest in meaning to
- (A) encouragement
 - (B) assistance
 - (C) procedure
 - (D) interference

Paragraph 1 is marked with an arrow (⇒).

Experiments have shown that in selecting personnel for a job, interviewing is, at best, a hindrance and may even cause harm. **These studies have disclosed that the judgments of interviewers differ markedly and bear little or no relationship to the adequacy of job applicants. Of the many reasons why this should be the case, four in particular stand out. The first reason is related to an error of judgment known as the "halo effect." If a person has one noticeably good trait, his or her other characteristics will be judged as better than they really are.** Thus, an individual who dresses smartly and shows self-confidence is likely to be judged capable of doing a job well regardless of his or her real ability. The "horns effect" describes essentially the same error, but focuses on one particularly bad trait. Here the individual will be judged as incapable of doing a good job because of one flaw.

3. Look at the word **they** in the passage. Select another word or phrase in the bold text that **they** refers to.
4. According to the passage, the halo effect
- (A) stands out as the worst judgment error
 - (B) only takes effect when a candidate is well dressed
 - (C) exemplifies how one good characteristic colors perceptions
 - (D) increases the interviewer's ability to judge real potential

→ Interviewers are also prejudiced by the “primacy effect.” This error occurs when interpretation of later information is distorted by earlier related information. Hence, in an interview situation, the interviewer spends most of the interview trying to confirm the impression given by the candidate in the first few moments. Studies have repeatedly demonstrated that such an impression is unrelated to the aptitude of the applicant.

5. The word **confirm** in paragraph 2 is closest in meaning to
- (A) verify
 - (B) conclude
 - (C) recollect
 - (D) misrepresent

Paragraph 2 is marked with an arrow (→).

6. According to the passage, the first impression
- (A) can easily be altered
 - (B) is the one that stays with the interviewer
 - (C) is unrelated to the interviewer's prejudices
 - (D) has been repeatedly demonstrated to the applicant

→ The phenomenon known as the “contrast effect” also **skews** the judgment of interviewers. A suitable candidate may be underestimated because he or she is different from a previous one who appears exceptionally intelligent. Likewise, an average candidate who is preceded by one who gives a weak showing may be judged as more suitable than he or she really is.

7. The word **skews** in paragraph 3 is closest in meaning to
- (A) biases
 - (B) opposes
 - (C) improves
 - (D) distinguishes

Paragraph 3 is marked with an arrow (→).

Since interviews as a form of personnel selection have been shown to be inadequate, **other selection procedures have been devised that more accurately predict candidate suitability. Of the various tests devised, the predictor that appears to do this most successfully is the applicant's cognitive ability as measured by a variety of verbal and spatial tests.**

8. Look at the word **this** in the passage. Select another word or phrase in the **bold** text that **this** refers to.

[1] Experiments have shown that in selecting personnel for a job, interviewing is, at best, a hindrance and may even cause harm. These studies have disclosed that the judgments of interviewers differ markedly and bear little or no relationship to the adequacy of job applicants. Of the many reasons why this should be the case, four in particular stand out. The first reason is related to an error of judgment known as the "halo effect." If a person has one noticeably good trait, his or her other characteristics will be judged as better than they really are. Thus, an individual who dresses smartly and shows self-confidence is likely to be judged capable of doing a job well regardless of his or her real ability. The "horns effect" describes essentially the same error, but focuses on one particularly bad trait. Here the individual will be judged as incapable of doing a good job because of one flaw.

[2] Interviewers are also prejudiced by the "primacy effect." This error occurs when interpretation of later information is distorted by earlier related information. Hence, in an interview situation, the interviewer spends most of the interview trying to confirm the impression given by the candidate in the first few moments. Studies have repeatedly demonstrated that such an impression is unrelated to the aptitude of the applicant.

[3] The phenomenon known as the "contrast effect" also skews the judgment of interviewers. A suitable candidate may be underestimated because he or she is different from a previous one who appears exceptionally intelligent. Likewise, an average candidate who is preceded by one who gives a weak showing may be judged as more suitable than he or she really is.

[4] Since interviews as a form of personnel selection have been shown to be inadequate, other selection procedures have been devised that more accurately predict candidate suitability. Of the various tests devised, the predictor that appears to do this most successfully is the applicant's cognitive ability as measured by a variety of verbal and spatial tests.

9. The author mentions all of the following reasons why interviewing is not an accurate way to predict candidate suitability EXCEPT the
- (A) halo effect
 - (B) primacy effect
 - (C) contrast effect
 - (D) cognitive effect
10. Select the number of the paragraph in which the author discusses the effect of comparing two candidates.
11. The paragraphs following the passage would most likely discuss which of the following?
- (A) Other reasons for misjudgments of applicants
 - (B) More information on the kinds of judgments interviewers make
 - (C) More information on cognitive-ability tests
 - (D) Other selection procedures included in interviewing

Questions 12-25

A variety of experiments can be performed to illustrate the nature of light, but perhaps the most well known is the classic "double-slit experiment" first performed by Thomas Young in 1803. In the first part of this experiment, a light is shone through a tiny vertical slit in a screen and allowed to pass on to a second detecting screen. The light spreads out after passing through the hole, and a large illuminated area that fades into darkness at the edges shows up on the detecting screen. To form this pattern, the light actually bends or diffracts when passing through the slit.

In the second part of the experiment, light is shone through two parallel slits. This time the light passes through the slits, but instead of creating a large lighted area, the detecting screen now shows alternating bands of light and darkness. The band in the center is the brightest. Around that are alternating bands of light and darkness with the light bands becoming less intense the farther away they are from the central one.

What is happening is called the "phenomenon of interference." The waves of light from the two slits interfere with each other. Like all waves, light waves have crests, their highest points, and troughs, their lowest points. In places where the crests coming from one slit extend over the crests coming from the other slit, the result is an intensification of light, and light bands appear on the detecting screen. In places where the crests from one slit overlap the troughs from the other slit, they cancel each other out, and the result is an area of darkness on the detecting screen.

But what happens if particles of light, or photons, are shot one after the other through the slits? If only one slit is open, these photons build up the same pattern as that of the beam of light. The fascinating thing is that if two slits are open and photons are fired one at a time through either of them, the pattern that builds up on the detecting screen is the same pattern obtained when a beam of light is shone through two slits. In other words, a single photon appears to "know" whether one slit or two are open.

12. With what topic are the first two paragraphs mainly concerned?
- (A) Thomas Young's various illustrations
 - (B) The significance of photon interference
 - (C) The classic double-slit light experiment
 - (D) The double slit of light on a detecting screen

A variety of experiments can be performed to illustrate the nature of light, but perhaps the most well known is the classic "double-slit experiment" first performed by Thomas Young in 1803. In the first part of this experiment, a light is shone through a tiny vertical slit in a screen and allowed to pass on to a second detecting screen. The light spreads out after passing through the hole, and a large illuminated area that fades into darkness at the edges shows up on the detecting screen. To form this pattern, the light actually bends or diffracts when passing through the slit.

13. Look at the word **slit** in the passage. Select another word or phrase in the bold text that is closest in meaning to the word **slit**.

In the second part of the experiment, light is shone through two parallel slits. This time the light passes through the slits, but instead of creating a large lighted area, the detecting screen now shows alternating bands of light and darkness. The band in the center is the brightest. Around that are alternating bands of light and darkness with the light bands becoming less intense the farther away they are from the central one.

14. Look at the word **one** in the passage. Select another word or phrase in the bold text that **one** refers to.
15. Select the drawing that shows which pattern of light emerges on a detecting screen when a single photon is fired through two open slits.



(A)



(B)



(C)



(D)

What is happening is called the "phenomenon of interference." The waves of light from the two slits interfere with each other. Like all waves, light waves have crests, their highest points, and troughs, their lowest points. In places where the crests coming from one slit extend over the crests coming from the other slit, the result is an intensification of light, and light bands appear on the detecting screen. In places where the crests from one slit overlap the troughs from the other slit, they cancel each other out, and the result is an area of darkness on the detecting screen.

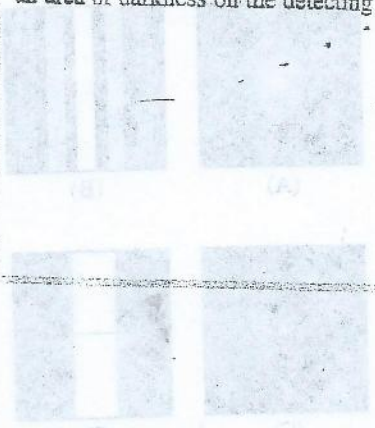
16. Look at the phrase **each other** in the passage. Select the word or phrase in the bold text that **each other** refers to.

→ What is happening is called the "phenomenon of interference." The waves of light from the two slits interfere with each other. Like all waves, light waves have **crests**, their highest points, and **troughs**, their lowest points. In places where the crests coming from one slit extend over the crests coming from the other slit, the result is an intensification of light, and light bands appear on the detecting screen. In places where the crests from one slit overlap the troughs from the other slit, they cancel each other out, and the result is an area of darkness on the detecting screen.

17. Why does the author mention **crests and troughs** in paragraph 3?

- (A) To explain what all waves are like so that the reader will understand waves
- (B) To inform the reader what the highest points and the lowest points in a wave are called
- (C) To explain why the physical aspects of a wave are important for the movement of light
- (D) To give background information that the reader needs to understand the phenomenon of photon interference

Paragraph 3 is marked with an arrow (→).



What is happening is called the "phenomenon of interference." The waves of light from the two slits interfere with each other. Like all waves, light waves have crests, their highest points, and troughs, their lowest points. In places where the crests coming from one slit extend over the crests coming from the other slit, the result is an intensification of light, and light bands appear on the detecting screen. In places where the crests from one slit overlap the troughs from the other slit, they cancel each other out, and the result is an area of darkness on the detecting screen.

18. Look at the word **overlap** in the passage. Select another word or phrase in the **bold** text that is closest in meaning to the word **overlap**.

→ **1** What is happening is called the "phenomenon of interference." **2** The waves of light from the two slits interfere with each other. **3** Like all waves, light waves have crests, their highest points, and troughs, their lowest points. **4** In places where the crests coming from one slit extend over the crests coming from the other slit, the result is an intensification of light, and light bands appear on the detecting screen. **5** In places where the crests from one slit overlap the troughs from the other slit, they cancel each other out, and the result is an area of darkness on the detecting screen.

19. Select the number of the sentence in paragraph 3 that describes what happens when the crest of a wave extends over the trough of another wave.

Paragraph 3 is marked with an arrow (→).

But what happens if particles of light, or photons, are shot one after the other through the slits? If only one slit is open, these photons build up the same pattern as that of the beam of light. The fascinating thing is that if two slits are open and photons are fired one at a time through either of them the pattern that builds up on the detecting screen is the same pattern obtained when a beam of light is shone through two slits. In other words, a single photon appears to "know" whether one slit or two are open.

20. Look at the word **photons** in the passage. Select another word or phrase in the **bold text** that is closest in meaning to the word **photons**.

→ But what happens if particles of light, or photons, are shot one after the other through the slits? If only one slit is open, these photons build up the same pattern as that of the beam of light. The fascinating thing is that if two slits are open and photons are fired one at a time through either of them the pattern that builds up on the detecting screen is the same pattern obtained when a beam of light is shone through two slits. In other words, a single photon appears to "know" whether one slit or two are open.

21. What does the author mean by the statement a single photon appears to "know" whether one slit or two are open in paragraph 4?
- (A) A single photon behaves as if other photons were causing interference.
 - (B) A single photon can predict photon and light-beam behavior.
 - (C) A single photon has the ability to think about whether one slit or two are open.
 - (D) A single photon knows how the other photons will behave and alters its behavior accordingly.

Paragraph 4 is marked with an arrow (→).

A variety of experiments can be performed to illustrate the nature of light, but perhaps the most well known is the classic "double-slit experiment" first performed by Thomas Young in 1803. ¹ In the first part of this experiment, a light is shone through a tiny vertical slit in a screen and allowed to pass on to a second detecting screen. The light spreads out after passing through the hole, and a large illuminated area that fades into darkness at the edges shows up on the detecting screen. ² To form this pattern, the light actually bends or diffracts when passing through the slit.

In the second part of the experiment, light is shone through two parallel slits. This time the light passes through the slits, but instead of creating a large lighted area, the detecting screen now shows alternating bands of light and darkness. ³ The band in the center is the brightest. Around that are alternating bands of light and darkness with the light bands becoming less intense the farther away they are from the central one.

What is happening is called the "phenomenon of interference." ⁴ The waves of light from the two slits interfere with each other. Like all waves, light waves have crests, their highest points, and troughs, their lowest points. In places where the crests coming from one slit extend over the crests coming from the other slit, the result is an intensification of light, and light bands appear on the detecting screen. In places where the crests from one slit overlap the troughs from the other slit, they cancel each other out, and the result is an area of darkness on the detecting screen.

But what happens if particles of light, or photons, are shot one after the other through the slits? ⁵ If only one slit is open, these photons build up the same pattern as that of the beam of light. The fascinating thing is that if two slits are open and photons are fired one at a time through either of them the pattern that builds up on the detecting screen is the same pattern obtained when a beam of light is shone through two slits. In other words, a single photon appears to "know" whether one slit or two are open.

22. The passage discusses all of the following experiments EXCEPT
- (A) shining light beams through a single slit
 - (B) shining light beams one at a time through two slits
 - (C) shining photons one at a time through a single slit
 - (D) shining photons one at a time through two slits
23. With which of the following statements would the author most probably agree?
- (A) The physics of light has been understood since the first experiment in 1803.
 - (B) There still exist unexplained phenomena in the study of light behavior.
 - (C) Photons cannot make patterns unless they can overlap each other.
 - (D) The intensification of light bands is dependent on the strength of the light beam.

24. The following sentence can be added to the passage:

This is fairly easy to replicate in a classroom setting.

Where would it best fit in the passage?

Select the square (□) that shows where the sentence should be added.

1. A variety of experiments can be performed to illustrate the nature of light, but perhaps the most well known is the classic "double-slit experiment" first performed by Thomas Young in 1803. In the first part of this experiment, a light is shone through a tiny vertical slit in a screen and allowed to pass on to a second detecting screen. The light spreads out after passing through the hole, and a large illuminated area that fades into darkness at the edges shows up on the detecting screen. To form this pattern, the light actually bends or diffracts when passing through the slit.

2. In the second part of the experiment, light is shone through two parallel slits. This time the light passes through the slits, but instead of creating a large lighted area, the detecting screen now shows alternating bands of light and darkness. The band in the center is the brightest. Around that are alternating bands of light and darkness with the light bands becoming less intense the farther away they are from the central one.

3. What is happening is called the "phenomenon of interference." The waves of light from the two slits interfere with each other. Like all waves, light waves have crests, their highest points, and troughs, their lowest points. In places where the crests coming from one slit extend over the crests coming from the other slit, the result is an intensification of light, and light bands appear on the detecting screen. In places where the crests from one slit overlap the troughs from the other slit, they cancel each other out, and the result is an area of darkness on the detecting screen.

4. But what happens if particles of light, or photons, are shot one after the other through the slits? If only one slit is open, these photons build up the same pattern as that of the beam of light. The fascinating thing is that if two slits are open and photons are fired one at a time through either of them the pattern that builds up on the detecting screen is the same pattern obtained when a beam of light is shone through two slits. In other words, a single photon appears to "know" whether one slit or two are open.

25. Select the number of the paragraph that describes what happens when a light beam is projected through a single slit.

Questions 26-38

It was once believed that being overweight was healthy, but nowadays few people subscribe to this viewpoint. While many people are fighting the battle to lose weight, studies are being conducted concerning the appetite and how it is controlled by both emotional and biochemical factors. Some of the conclusions of these studies may give insights into how to deal with weight problems. For example, when several hundred people were asked about their eating habits in times of stress, 44 percent said they reacted to stressful situations by eating. Further investigations with both humans and animals indicated that it is not food that relieves tension but rather the act of chewing.

A test in which subjects were blindfolded showed that obese people have a keener sense of taste and crave more flavorful food than people who are not extremely overweight. When deprived of variety and intensity of tastes, obese people are rarely satisfied and consequently eat more to fulfill this need. Also, blood samples taken from people after they were shown a picture of food revealed that overweight people reacted with an increase in blood insulin, a chemical associated with appetite. This did not happen to average-weight people.

In another experiment, results showed that certain people have a specific, biologically induced hunger for carbohydrates. When people eat carbohydrates, the level of serotonin, a neurotransmitter in the brain, rises. Enough serotonin produces a sense of satiation, and, as a result, their hunger for carbohydrates subsides.

Exercise has been recommended as an important part of a weight-loss program. However, it has been found that mild exercise, such as using the stairs instead of the elevator, is better in the long run than taking on a strenuous program, such as jogging, which many people find difficult to continue over long periods of time and which also increases appetite.

26. What is the main purpose of the passage?
- (A) To discuss the health problems caused by being overweight
 - (B) To recommend a weight-loss program for the obese
 - (C) To help overweight people overcome their eating problem
 - (D) To present research into the factors causing obesity
27. The author mentions people's eating habits during times of stress to show that
- (A) overweight people are tense
 - (B) thin people don't eat when under stress
 - (C) a large percentage of people deal with stress by eating
 - (D) 56 percent of the population isn't overweight

→ A test in which subjects were blindfolded showed that obese people have a keener sense of taste and crave more flavorful food than people who are not extremely overweight. When deprived of variety and intensity of tastes, obese people are rarely satisfied and consequently eat more to fulfill this need. Also, blood samples taken from people after they were shown a picture of food revealed that overweight people reacted with an increase in blood insulin, a chemical associated with appetite. This did not happen to average-weight people.

28. The word *crave* in paragraph 1 is closest in meaning to
- (A) devour
 - (B) absorb
 - (C) season
 - (D) desire

Paragraph 1 is marked with an arrow (→).

→ A test in which subjects were blindfolded showed that obese people have a keener sense of taste and crave more flavorful food than people who are not extremely overweight. When deprived of variety and intensity of tastes, obese people are rarely satisfied and consequently eat more to fulfill this need. Also, blood samples taken from people after they were shown a picture of food revealed that overweight people reacted with an increase in blood insulin, a chemical associated with appetite. This did not happen to average-weight people.

29. Paragraph 2 supports which of the following conclusions?
- (A) Thin people don't enjoy food as much as overweight people do.
 - (B) A variety of foods and strong flavors satisfy heavy people.
 - (C) Overweight people have an abnormal sense of taste.
 - (D) Deprivation of food makes people fat.

Paragraph 2 is marked with an arrow (→).

30. According to the passage,
- (A) insulin increases in the bloodstream when people eat large amounts of food.
 - (B) insulin can be used to lessen the appetite.
 - (C) insulin causes a chemical reaction when food is seen.
 - (D) insulin levels don't change in average-weight people who see food.

⇒ In another experiment, results showed that certain people have a specific, biologically induced hunger for carbohydrates. When people eat carbohydrates, the level of serotonin, a neurotransmitter in the brain, rises. Enough serotonin produces a sense of satiation, and, as a result, their hunger for carbohydrates subsides.

31. It can be inferred from paragraph 3 that for certain people
- (A) eating carbohydrates eliminates hunger
 - (B) carbohydrates biologically induce hunger
 - (C) carbohydrates don't satisfy a hungry person
 - (D) carbohydrates subside when serotonin is produced

Paragraph 3 is marked with an arrow (⇒).

In another experiment, results showed that certain people have a specific, biologically induced hunger for carbohydrates. When people eat carbohydrates, the level of serotonin, a neurotransmitter in the brain, rises. Enough serotonin produces a sense of satiation, and, as a result, their hunger for carbohydrates subsides.

32. Look at the word **their** in the passage. Select another word or phrase in the **bold text** that **their** refers to.

→ In another experiment, results showed that certain people have a specific, biologically induced hunger for carbohydrates. When people eat carbohydrates, the level of serotonin, a neurotransmitter in the brain, rises. Enough serotonin produces a sense of satiation, and, as a result, their hunger for carbohydrates **subsides**.

33. Look at the word **subsides** in paragraph 3. Select another word or phrase in the **bold** text that is **OPPOSITE** in meaning to the word **subsides**.

Paragraph 3 is marked with an arrow (→).

34. What can be said about serotonin?
- (A) It is a chemical that increases appetites.
 - (B) Only certain people produce it in their brains.
 - (C) It tells the brain when a person is full.
 - (D) It neurotransmits carbohydrates to the brain.

→ Exercise has been recommended as an important part of a weight-loss program. However, it has been found that **mild exercise**, such as using the stairs instead of the elevator, is better in the long run than taking on a **strenuous** program, such as jogging, which many people find difficult to continue over long periods of time and which also increases appetite.

35. Look at the word **strenuous** in paragraph 4. Select another word or phrase in the **bold** text that is **OPPOSITE** in meaning to the word **strenuous**.

Paragraph 4 is marked with an arrow (→).

1 It was once believed that being overweight was healthy, but nowadays few people subscribe to this viewpoint. While many people are fighting the battle to lose weight, studies are being conducted concerning the appetite and how it is controlled by both emotional and biochemical factors. Some of the conclusions of these studies may give insights into how to deal with weight problems. For example, when several hundred people were asked about their eating habits in times of stress, 44 percent said they reacted to stressful situations by eating. Further investigations with both humans and animals indicated that it is not food that relieves tension but rather the act of chewing.

2 A test in which subjects were blindfolded showed that obese people have a keener sense of taste and crave more flavorful food than people who are not extremely overweight. When deprived of variety and intensity of tastes, obese people are rarely satisfied and consequently eat more to fulfill this need. Also, blood samples taken from people after they were shown a picture of food revealed that overweight people reacted with an increase in blood insulin, a chemical associated with appetite. This did not happen to average-weight people.

3 In another experiment, results showed that certain people have a specific, biologically induced hunger for carbohydrates. When people eat carbohydrates, the level of serotonin, a neurotransmitter in the brain, rises. Enough serotonin produces a sense of satiation, and, as a result, their hunger for carbohydrates subsides.

4 Exercise has been recommended as an important part of a weight-loss program. However, it has been found that mild exercise, such as using the stairs instead of the elevator, is better in the long run than taking on a strenuous program, such as jogging, which many people find difficult to continue over long periods of time and which also increases appetite.

36. The author suggests that it might be good for extremely overweight people wanting to lose weight to do all of the following EXCEPT
- (A) jog fifteen miles daily and look at pictures of food
 - (B) walk up stairs instead of using the elevator
 - (C) eat plenty of chewy carbohydrates
 - (D) avoid stressful situations and eat spicy foods.
37. Which one of the following exercises might be best for an overweight person to engage in daily?
- (A) A stroll
 - (B) A long swim
 - (C) Cross-country skiing
 - (D) A 10-mile bicycle ride
38. Select the number of the paragraph in which the author discusses a nutritional substance that reduces hunger.

Questions 39-50

In June 1863 a Confederate army under the command of General Lee encountered a Union army commanded by General Meade near the town of Gettysburg in Pennsylvania. The ensuing battle, which lasted three days, is considered the single most important engagement of the American Civil War.

On the morning of July 1, the battle opened with Confederate troops attacking a Union cavalry division to the west of the town at McPherson Ridge. Reinforcements came to both sides, but eventually the Union forces were overpowered and were driven back to the south of Gettysburg. They formed defensive positions along Cemetery Ridge, a long rise of land running southwards from outside the town, and on two hills just to the north and east of the ridge. The whole army formed a defensive arc resembling a fishhook. The Confederate forces, about a mile away, faced the Union positions in a larger arc from the west and north.

Throughout the day of July 2, Lee's forces attacked, leaving thousands of dead on both sides. The Confederates overran the Union's advance lines in the southern part of their "hook," but they failed to dislodge the Union forces from their main positions. A strategically important hill known as Little Round Top on the Union's left flank was stormed unsuccessfully by the Confederates with a devastating number of casualties on both sides.

On the third day of battle, Lee decided to concentrate his attack on the center of the Union forces that ranged along Cemetery Ridge. As a prelude to the attack, the Confederate artillery bombarded the ridge for two hours but inflicted less damage than they had expected, due to poor visibility. When the bombardment ceased, a Confederate infantry force of twelve thousand men charged courageously across the open land toward the Union lines. They were subjected to heavy artillery and rifle fire and sustained a huge number of casualties. This attack, now known as Pickett's Charge after the general whose division led it, failed in its objective to break the Union line. After this failure General Lee decided to withdraw his army toward safer territory in the South. Both sides had suffered huge losses of men, but the Union had succeeded in preventing the Confederates from successfully invading the North, and so Gettysburg proved to be a decisive turning point in the Civil War.

39. The passage is mainly about
- (A) the defeat of the Confederate army in the American Civil War
 - (B) the battle between the Confederate and Union forces at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania
 - (C) the attack known as Pickett's Charge, when General Lee invaded the North
 - (D) the skillful deployment of Union forces at the battle of Gettysburg

→ On the morning of July 1, the battle opened with Confederate troops attacking a Union cavalry division to the west of the town at McPherson Ridge. Reinforcements came to both sides, but eventually the Union forces were overpowered and were driven back to the south of Gettysburg. They formed defensive positions along Cemetery Ridge, a long rise of land running southwards from outside the town, and on two hills just to the north and east of the ridge. The whole army formed a defensive arc resembling a fishhook. The Confederate forces, about a mile away, faced the Union positions in a larger arc from the west and north.

40. The word Reinforcements in paragraph 2 is closest in meaning to
- (A) additional troops
 - (B) subsidiary branches
 - (C) armored divisions
 - (D) inexperienced conscripts

Paragraph 2 is marked with an arrow (→).

On the morning of July 1, the battle opened with Confederate troops attacking a Union cavalry division to the west of the town at McPherson Ridge. Reinforcements came to both sides, but eventually the Union forces were overpowered and were driven back to the south of Gettysburg. **They** formed defensive positions along Cemetery Ridge, a long rise of land running southwards from outside the town, and on two hills just to the north and east of the ridge. The whole army formed a defensive arc resembling a fishhook. The Confederate forces, about a mile away, faced the Union positions in a larger arc from the west and north.

41. Look at the word **They** in the passage. Select another word or phrase in the bold text that **They** refers to.

→ **1** On the morning of July 1, the battle opened with Confederate troops attacking a Union cavalry division to the west of the town at McPherson Ridge. **2** Reinforcements came to both sides, but eventually the Union forces were overpowered and were driven back to the south of Gettysburg. **3** They formed defensive positions along Cemetery Ridge, a long rise of land running southwards from outside the town, and on two hills just to the north and east of the ridge. **4** The whole army formed a defensive arc resembling a fishhook. **5** The Confederate forces, about a mile away, faced the Union positions in a larger arc from the west and north.

42. The following sentence can be added to paragraph 2.

Throughout the night the remainder of Meade's forces arrived in large numbers, strengthening these positions.

Where would it best fit in the paragraph?

Select the square (□) that shows where the sentence should be added.

Paragraph 2 is marked with an arrow (→).

→ 1 On the morning of July 1, the battle opened with Confederate troops attacking a Union cavalry division to the west of the town at McPherson Ridge. 2 Reinforcements came to both sides, but eventually the Union forces were overpowered and were driven back to the south of Gettysburg. 3 They formed defensive positions along Cemetery Ridge, a long rise of land running southwards from outside the town, and on two hills just to the north and east of the ridge. 4 The whole army formed a defensive arc resembling a fishhook. 5 The Confederate forces, about a mile away, faced the Union positions in a larger arc from the west and north.

43. Select the number of the sentence in paragraph 2 in which the author mentions a Confederate success.

Paragraph 2 is marked with an arrow (→).

→ Throughout the day of July 2, Lee's forces attacked, leaving thousands of dead on both sides. The Confederates overran the Union's advance lines in the southern part of their "hook," but they failed to dislodge the Union forces from their main positions. A strategically important hill known as Little Round Top on the Union's left flank was stormed unsuccessfully by the Confederates with a devastating number of casualties on both sides.

44. The word *stormed* in paragraph 3 is closest in meaning to
- (A) diverted
(B) attacked
(C) dislodged
(D) avoided

Paragraph 3 is marked with an arrow (→).

→ On the third day of battle, Lee decided to concentrate his attack on the center of the Union forces that ranged along Cemetery Ridge. As a prelude to the attack, the Confederate artillery bombarded the ridge for two hours but inflicted less damage than they had expected, due to poor visibility. When the bombardment ceased, a Confederate infantry force of twelve thousand men charged courageously across the open land toward the Union lines. They were subjected to heavy artillery and rifle fire and sustained a huge number of casualties. This attack, now known as Pickett's Charge after the general whose division led it, failed in its objective to break the Union line. After this failure General Lee decided to withdraw his army toward safer territory in the South. Both sides had suffered huge losses of men, but the Union had succeeded in preventing the Confederates from successfully invading the North, and so Gettysburg proved to be a decisive turning point in the Civil War.

45. The word *sustained* in paragraph 4 is closest in meaning to
- (A) nourished
(B) defended
(C) established
(D) suffered

Paragraph 4 is marked with an arrow (→).

→ On the third day of battle, Lee decided to concentrate his attack on the center of the Union forces that ranged along Cemetery Ridge. As a prelude to the attack, the Confederate artillery bombarded the ridge for two hours but inflicted less damage than they had expected, due to poor visibility. When the bombardment ceased, a Confederate infantry force of twelve thousand men charged courageously across the open land toward the Union lines. They were subjected to heavy artillery and rifle fire and sustained a huge number of casualties. This attack, now known as Pickett's Charge after the general whose division led it, failed in its objective to break the Union line. After this failure General Lee decided to withdraw his army toward safer territory in the South. Both sides had suffered huge losses of men, but the Union had succeeded in preventing the Confederates from successfully invading the North, and so Gettysburg proved to be a decisive turning point in the Civil War.

46. The author mentions the poor visibility in paragraph 4 to help explain why
- (A) the attack failed to attain its objectives
 - (B) the men charged across the open land
 - (C) the Union lines sustained a large number of casualties
 - (D) General Lee withdrew his troops to safer territory

Paragraph 4 is marked with an arrow (→):

47. What does the author mean by saying Gettysburg was a decisive turning point in the Civil War?
- (A) It was at Gettysburg that the Union troops forced the Confederates to flee to the South.
 - (B) It was the battle in the American Civil War that turned the public opinion against supporting the war.
 - (C) It was the place where the most devastating number of casualties on both sides occurred.
 - (D) It was because of events at Gettysburg that the Union was eventually victorious.

In June 1863 a Confederate army under the command of General Lee encountered a Union army commanded by General Meade near the town of Gettysburg in Pennsylvania. The ensuing battle, which lasted three days, is considered the single most important engagement of the American Civil War.

On the morning of July 1, the battle opened with Confederate troops attacking a Union cavalry division to the west of the town at McPherson Ridge. Reinforcements came to both sides, but eventually the Union forces were overpowered and were driven back to the south of Gettysburg. They formed defensive positions along Cemetery Ridge, a long rise of land running southwards from outside the town, and on two hills just to the north and east of the ridge. The whole army formed a defensive arc resembling a fishhook. The Confederate forces, about a mile away, faced the Union positions in a larger arc from the west and north.

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On the third day of battle, Lee decided to concentrate his attack on the center of the Union forces that ranged along Cemetery Ridge. As a prelude to the attack, the Confederate artillery bombarded the ridge for two hours but inflicted less damage than they had expected, due to poor visibility. When the bombardment ceased, a Confederate infantry force of twelve thousand men charged courageously across the open land toward the Union lines. They were subjected to heavy artillery and rifle fire and sustained a huge number of casualties. This attack, now known as Pickett's Charge after the general whose division led it, failed in its objective to break the Union line. After this failure General Lee decided to withdraw his army toward safer territory in the South. Both sides had suffered huge losses of men, but the Union had succeeded in preventing the Confederates from successfully invading the North, and so Gettysburg proved to be a decisive turning point in the Civil War.

48. The author discusses all of the following tactics EXCEPT
- (A) the defensive positions taken by the troops
 - (B) a courageous charge across open ground
 - (C) the importance of espionage in determining position
 - (D) a bombardment concentrated on the Union's forces
49. From which direction did Pickett's Charge originate?
- (A) Northeast
 - (B) Northwest
 - (C) Southeast
 - (D) Southwest
50. According to the passage, the battle at Gettysburg was
- (A) a huge success for the Union army
 - (B) the most important battle in the Civil War
 - (C) a devastating defeat for Pickett
 - (D) General Lee's greatest engagement

This is the end of the Reading Section.
Go on to the Writing Section.