

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



**“CAUSATIVE FACTORS OF LOW SCORES IN THE CAMBRIDGE SAMPLE
TOEFL TEST ADMINISTERED TO STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE SUBJECTS
TEACHING PRACTICE I AND II IN THE FOREIGN LANGUAGES
DEPARTMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR DURING THE
YEARS 2014-2016”**

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I dedicate this work to God because He has been my rock and my strength. He has been with me in every step I take, strengthening my heart and enlightening my mind. I am so grateful to my Heavenly Father for putting in my way those people who have been my mentors, my support and my company throughout my college career. I also dedicate this accomplishment to my loving parents, Marta Julia Siguenza and Arturo Galdamez, for believing in me and teaching me to fight untiringly for what I want, for their constant motivation, but more than anything, for giving me the best inheritance that a parent can give to their children: Education. I would also like to dedicate this work to my sisters, Diana and Wendy, for their words of encouragement and for their unconditional help in the elaboration of this thesis; and to my beloved daughter Valentina, for being my source of motivation and my inspiration. Finally, but not less important, I want to dedicate this work to my teammates and friends, who without expecting anything in return shared their knowledge, joys and sorrows with me, and all those people who during these five years were by my side supporting me and made possible this dream come true.

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DEDICATION

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WE DID IT!

Jennyffer Elizabeth Medina Purito



DEDICATION

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Jessica Alexandra Sánchez Silva





INTRODUCTION

For many years, the University of El Salvador has been recognized for being dedicated to excellence in teaching and for preparing students in many disciplines who make a difference within the country. As well, the University provides well-prepared graduates with a great sense of humanism and a high quality of knowledge that brings to our society countless opportunities of growth and development in several areas. The Bachelor of Arts in English with Emphasis in Teaching option is considered one of the majors with the highest degree of demand in the campus, and since students get prepared to become English teaching professionals, they must take the authentic TOEFL test after graduating to be recognized as certified teachers by the Ministry of Education.

However, before students get graduated they need to take their Teaching Practice subjects I and II in the fourth year of the major. By that time, they should have approved the five intensive English courses in which they are expected to reach an advanced English level. Thus, for students to take the Teaching Practice I subject and to be placed knowledgeably to develop their practicum, they are required to take the Cambridge Sample TOEFL Test which is a practice test for the certified and authentic TOEFL.

Moreover, there have been researches regarding to students' level of proficiency in the Foreign Languages Department (hereinafter referred to as "FLD"), and it was discovered that students are not entirely in the level of proficiency they are supposed to be, even after taking the Teaching Practice subjects. This research paper is a follow up to those investigations but in this case, the level of proficiency is not the only reason students are getting low scores.



In the last years, students have been getting scores that do not reflect the English proficiency level they are supposed to have at that point of the major, and it is so alarming since most of them are not even reaching the minimum score required -which is going to be explained as well within this work. So, the current research presents the factors why students from the Bachelor of Arts in English with emphasis in Teaching option have been getting low scores during the years 2014-2016.



In addition, the scores obtained during the last three years and the information provided by the researchers, due to their own experiences when taking this sample test, were a plus when doing the analysis, and based on the information collected, researchers found what the causative factors of low scores in the Sample TOEFL Test were during the last three years.



Therefore, by recognizing those factors researchers were intended not only to present them but also to provide effective recommendations that need to be taken into account in a short term to improve students' scores not only to prevent graduating average students but also because that will enhance the chances for these graduates to get certified and therefore obtain better job opportunities.





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CHAPTER I

“STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM”





1.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM

Language is the main way to communicate among people to share ideas or thoughts. Here in El Salvador, the native language is Nahuatl, which is now barely spoken by some elderly people in some rural areas, and the official language is Spanish. Additionally, English is a language that some people in the country speak as a second language, and it is also one of the most spoken languages around the world, by approximately 360 to 400 million people, and more than a half of these (231 million) live in the United States.

Even though English is not the official language in this country, people have started learning it, and over the years the language has been gaining more acceptance among Salvadoran population because of the great advantages it currently brings. Nowadays, English language has acquired more relevance in job profiles as an important skill in order to get hired for high level positions, for traveling around the world, getting scholarships and teaching purposes.

There are many reasons why to learn English as a foreign language; one of them is that speaking English is a great plus in people's lives. It is highly important to mention that in the case of job profiles, scholarships and for teaching positions, there is an official way of measuring how knowledgeable people are in the language. The TOEFL test is the instrument used for several institutions to measure language proficiency.

In the University of El Salvador, specifically in the Foreign Languages Department from the School of Arts and Sciences, there is a Bachelor of Arts in English with Emphasis in Teaching where graduate students must take the TOEFL test and reach at least the minimum score to pass it and get the approval from the Ministry of Education to work as certified





teachers in public schools or Universities. It is worth mentioning that this test is not only taken after getting graduated but also before performing their teaching practice, which is just a sample version of the original test.

In addition, based on the scores from the last three years, researchers found out that students from the Foreign Languages Department have been getting low scores (See Appendix A for the test results.) Thus, it is very important to discover what is going on in this matter, and because of the lack of information in this area, the research team decided to gather more information and find out the causative factors of this issue in order to provide valuable information on what can be done in terms of improving the scores.

With this in mind, this research took place at the Foreign Languages Department of the University of El Salvador, specifically with students who took the Cambridge Sample TOEFL test during the years 2014-2016. This research attempted to find out the causative factors of low scores and why students have gotten those scores in the test administered to students enrolled in the Bachelor of Arts in English with Emphasis in Teaching in the FLD.

Since there was not a minimum score established by the Foreign Languages Department authorities, the researchers decided to take as a reference the score taken as minimum by the teachers in charge of administering the test to these students, in this case is a grade of 6.0 equal to 529 points in the TOEFL scale, so all the scores below this were considered as low scores.

According to the syllabus of the Bachelor of Arts in English with Emphasis in Teaching, it is a requirement to take the Teaching Practice I and II in the fourth year of the major, in semesters I and II respectively. These subjects help students to improve and show their





English skills and put into practice not only the teaching techniques learned along the major, but also the procedures and abilities they have learned through the theory seen in class. However, before doing such a thing, students must take a test that helps professors to discover students' English level of proficiency in order to take the Teaching Practice I. So, students take this test and based on the results they are placed on the appropriate subject level to do their practicum.

These students are sent to Public Schools, CENIUES –a Languages Academy headed by the University of El Salvador–, the Foreign Languages Department, and other schools within the University. Besides that, since students must be in an advanced level of the major – fourth year– which means they have approved all the English subjects and skill development areas, they must get a score in the Sample TOEFL Test that reflects their proficiency in the English language, but unfortunately most of the scores obtained are under the minimum required by most of the national and international institutions.

In the last three years, most of the students have gotten scores that called the researchers' attention because almost all of them were below of the minimum score. According to the data provided by the professors who are in charge of administering the test, the lowest score was of 298 points throughout those years, this is a situation that students have been facing for a long time. The lack of research on this area made this study more significant since it would serve as the basis for future projects.

A research about this topic was considered so important because it provided valuable information to the Foreign Languages Department authorities and for all the people involved. This study did not only benefit students by providing important hints to improve their scores,



but also to the authorities of the Foreign Languages Department to realize what is going on with their students and what solutions can be applied to overcome the issue. Moreover, the improvement in the scores in the Cambridge sample TOEFL test will mean that there will be an improvement in the genuine TOEFL test.

There was a project in 2015 that prepared students from the Foreign Languages Department who were in the 5th year of the major to take the TOEFL test, which was really important and was intended to improve students' scores. According to Professor Leticia Faró who was in charge of that project, after finishing it, some students improved their scores, so it was proved that lack of preparation was a factor to fail the test. But, researchers thought it was not only the factor of low scores and there was a need to go more deeply and find out other causative factors that affected the performance of students in the test.



1.2 INVESTIGATION QUESTIONS

Research Question

What are the causative factors of low scores in the Cambridge Sample TOEFL Test administered to students enrolled in the subjects Teaching Practice I and II in the Foreign Languages Department of the University of El Salvador during the years 2014-2016?

Subsidiary Questions

- What are the most common causative factors of low scores in the Cambridge Sample TOEFL test that students at the FLD have faced?
- Are causative factors of low scores in the test skill-based issues or willingness-based issues?
- How will this research paper help other researchers in terms of being the basis for future studies about students' scores in the Cambridge Sample TOEFL test administered in the Foreign Languages Department?



1.3 OBJECTIVES

General Objective

To identify the causative factors of low scores in the Cambridge Sample TOEFL test administered to students enrolled in the subjects Teaching Practice I and II in the Foreign Languages Department of the University of El Salvador during the years 2014-2016.

Specific Objectives

1. To describe the most common causative factors of low scores in the test by ranking them to provide valuable information to those future TOEFL test takers enrolled in this major.
2. To examine if causative factors of low scores are skill-based issues or willingness-based issues by analyzing the data gathered in order to present the results as main findings.
3. To set the basis for future researches about students' performance in the test administered in the FLD by offering recommendations with the purpose of improving future scores.



1.4 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY



The present research project was focused on finding out why students from the Bachelor of Arts in English with Emphasis in Teaching of the Foreign Languages Department of the University of El Salvador enrolled in Teaching Practice I and II subjects are getting low scores in the Cambridge Preparation for the TOEFL Test.

This test helps to measure the students' English proficiency and according to the information gathered from the professors who are in charge of administering the test, most of the students are getting scores that do not reflect the level of proficiency they must have when taking this test in the past three years. Why do students get low scores? That's the question that was going to be answered.

Even though this situation has occurred within the Foreign Languages Department, no one has taken into consideration to find out what is going on. Since there was no much information about causative factors of low scores on the test in the FLD, the team decided to carry out this research and identify the factors that were causing students to get low scores.

This study was also intended to provide valuable information to those future TOEFL test takers enrolled in this major. Moreover, by describing the most common factors of low scores there would be an open door to change what is wrong within the FLD and do what it takes to do in order to improve students' test performance.

Since most students got low scores because there were multiple factors that affected their performance during the test, there was no doubt that by examining the cause of the problem



there would be multiple solutions that could be applied to help students to increase their scores and approve the Cambridge Sample TOEFL test.

Finally, to develop the research project and gather valuable information, the team made use of the literature included, and compared the results from the professors' interview, surveys to the students, and the Sample TOEFL Test scores from the years 2014 thru 2016 to present the results.



1.5 LIMITATIONS



The team faced multiple limitations when doing the research project. The first one encountered in this study was the lack of literature about the Cambridge Sample TOEFL test, since there was scarcity of studies done by other researchers in the FLD and there is just one book related to that test.

It was difficult to get students' collaboration, especially, because those who took the test in the year of 2014 are undergraduate students already, so they were not attending classes anymore at the university. It was not easy to get in touch with them and sometimes when the team was able to do it, they were not available to fill out the questionnaire designed for them.

A third limitation was the time, due to all the members in the research team were working, so they needed to find out a way to organize their schedules in order to play an active role within this research.

A fourth limitation was experienced by the hard time of getting the interviews from the two professors. They were busy trying to place their students in the appropriate teaching practice, and as well as teaching classes, so their time was limited.


And finally, around the 58% of the sample participated in the gathering of the data. Some of the students are drop-out students, so they either were working, or out of the country, or did not come to classes at the time of administering the survey. So, for the team was difficult to get the collaboration of the 271 students.



CHAPTER II

“THEORETICAL

FRAMEWORK”



2.1 PREVIOUS RESEARCHES: “HISTORICAL FRAMEWORK”

Even though the students belonging to the Foreign Languages Department have been facing issues with the English language proficiency throughout the last years, no one has taken into consideration to invest time and effort in helping to solve this situation or at least try to help them making some useful changes that will lead students to get better results or have greater English level.



When looking for some background, the research team found just a few researches totally related to English proficiency carried out at the University of El Salvador by undergraduate students. The most recent ones were:

- “Correlation between personality types and English proficiency”

It was published in 2013, based on students who finished the Intensive Advanced English II course (academic year 2012), and its results established that 38% students reached a B2 level, 42% reached B1, and 5% reached a C1 level. In that research, oral proficiency was not measured since the results were obtained from a practice TOEFL test. (Osorio Naves & Quant Alvarenga, 2013)

- “How personality and motivation affect oral proficiency”

It was also carried out with students from the Intensive Advanced English II course (academic year 2012). In this occasion, students went under an oral interview and the results were: 33% reached a B2 level, 21% a B1 level and 44% reached an A2 level. (Orellana, Mejia, Diaz, & Mejia, 2013)

- 
- 
- “How do Teaching Practice I and Teaching Practice II influence students’ English language proficiency level academic year 2015?”

According to Lucero Vides and William Galvez, both students in the FLD and authors of this research study, the results found in this particular research after administering the practice TOEFL test and an oral interview were that the majority of students reached an A2 level.

Since this was a longitudinal study, the progress of those students was followed a year after to research on how Practice Teaching I and Practice Teaching II influenced those students and their proficiency level. To verify whether the practicum influenced them or not; it was necessary to administer the same instruments again. (Vides Lopez & Galvez Canjura, 2015, p. 4)



2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.2.1 TOEFL TEST HISTORY



The Test of English as a Foreign Language commonly known as TOEFL emerged in the early 1960's and it was designed for measuring the English proficiency of those people who are non-native speakers of the English language. This test was first applied as a requirement for those who planned to study at schools or universities where English is the native language.

Nowadays this test is applied in more than 9,000 institutions among universities, colleges and licensing agencies working in more than 130 countries. The test is also used by government scholarships and exchange programs around the world.

The TOEFL test was developed in 1962 under the sponsorship of the National Council on the Testing of English as a Foreign Language integrated by representatives of more than 30 public and private institutions with emphasis of English proficiency of nonnative speakers who wanted to study in universities or colleges in the United States.

The development of the TOEFL test was initially supported by the Council in 1963 through 1964, then was financed by grants from the Ford and Danforth Foundations (Cf. ETS 2007 document), the first entity in administrating the TOEFL test was the Modern Language Association (Charles A. Ferguson 1998).

Later in 1965, the College Board® and Educational Testing Service® (ETS®) decided to take the responsibility of ongoing the testing program. Since the TOEFL test was taken for students who were close to graduating, there was an arrangement for the operation of the testing program between ETS, the College Board, and the Graduate Record Examinations®



Board in 1973. Under this arrangement, ETS is responsible for administering the TOEFL program with guidance from the TOEFL Board (Charles A. Ferguson 1998.)

2.2.2 THE TOEFL TEST EVOLUTION



The TOEFL test has evolved since its beginnings in 1963, from a paper-based test, to a computer-based test and, and finally in 2005 to an internet based test. Even though there are changes in the method of test delivery the most important are the theories of language proficiency that driven the redesign of the test’s construct and content.

The authors Taylor and Angelis (2008) offer a detailed description of how thinking in the fields of linguistics and educational psychology and measurement influenced the development of the TOEFL test in three different stages.

The First TOEFL Test

“When the first TOEFL test was developed, linguistic theories envisioned language competence as a set of separate components such as grammar, vocabulary and comprehension” (Carroll, 1961; Lado, 1961). This emphasis on discrete language skills was compatible with multiple choice measurement practices that existed at the time.

At this first stage, there was a need of evaluating other important skills, although methods to do so on a large scale were not available yet. The speaking, writing and “integrative” skills were the others skills needed (Carroll, 1961) that required test takers to combine discrete language components in the service of communication—the construction and production of meaning.



Since the first TOEFL test did not measure these skills, there was a continuing research and development over the following years with the main purpose of incorporating these skills in future assessments.



A Suite of TOEFL Tests

The second major stage of TOEFL was developed in the 1970's, it was mainly focus of incorporating speaking and writing. A multiple-choice TOEFL test that assessed reading, listening, and structure and written expression continued to be administered to all candidates.

There was also a developing of separate tests of speaking and writing created by ETS. At the beginning these tests were taken by smaller numbers of candidates just to accomplish the requirements of specific institutions. The TSE® Test, better known as the Test of Spoken English™, was developed initially to assess the oral skills of international graduate students who were being considered for positions as T.A's (teaching assistants).

On the TSE test, test takers tape-recorded oral responses to prerecorded questions that targeted specific language functions. In 1986 was introduced the TWE® Test, known as the Test of Written English™, consisted of a single essay written in response to a brief question or topic. The TWE test required test takers to mature and establish ideas and express these ideas using suitable English vocabulary and grammar. Initially, the TWE test was administered as a required component of the TOEFL test at five administrations per year.

Also, there was another change during this second stage of the TOEFL test development as the technology to administer tests. Language experts continued to elaborate on Carroll's ideas about "integrative" language skills, and theories of "communicative competence" emerged (Bachman & Palmer, 1996; Canale & Swain, 1980; Hymes, 1972).



Through this period, ETS sponsored studies to discover the relationship between theories of “communicative competence” and the TOEFL test (Duran, Canale, Penfield, Stansfield, & Liskin-Gasparro, 1985; Henning & Cascallar, 1992). In 1998, near the end of this stage was introduced a computer-based version of the TOEFL test (TOEFL® CBT), which included an essay component.

The development of the TOEFL CBT test and the continued interest in communicative competence signaled a transition to the next stage of the evolution of the TOEFL test.


The TOEFL iBT Test

In the 1990’s was considered a new design of the TOEFL by the TOEFL program and the COE, they deliberated about a test that were more reflective in relation of communicative competence. “The construct of communicative competence that would guide the design of the new test was elaborated further as communicative language use in academic contexts” (Chapelle, Grabe, & Berns, 1997).

In academic contexts, language involves both input (listening, reading) and output (speaking, writing) modalities.

2.2.3 FORMATS AND CONTENTS

The “TOEFL test is designed to measure the English language proficiency of people whose native language is not English.” (Ma, 2015). Moreover, the certification is valid just for two years, and then the test taker has to do the test again because their score is no valid anymore. There are three different versions of the test, which are described below:

- 
- ✓ Paper- Based Test (PBT)
 - ✓ Computer –Based Test (CBT)
 - ✓ Internet-Based Test (iBT)

It is important to mention that each test has its own scores and they are going to be presented in the throughout the development of this research.

Paper-Based Test

The PBT is offered in countries that do not give the opportunity to do the iBT that is the most popular and the last version of the TOEFL test as well. The TOEFL PBT is a paper-delivered test that measures the English proficiency at the college or university level. It measures listening, reading, and writing English. In addition, the cost is US\$170 (Service, 2016), and it lasts about two hours including the writing part where it is intended to write an essay.

The structure of this test provides around 140 multiple-choice questions that might vary because there is not an exact number per each PBT. These questions are placed separately in the test as listening, structure, reading, and writing sections ("TOEFL Paper-and-Pencil", 2016) It is important to mention that this test is still used in some countries where there is no access to Internet or a Computer Internet Center and the results are valid for two years as well as the other TOEFL test versions.

In addition, in our country there are specific places where people can take the test as: Centro Cultural Salvadoreño Americano and Escuela Americana. They have set up a minimum score in order to approve it. (The TOEFL®, May 2016)

Section	Description	Time Limit	No. of Questions
Listening Comprehension	Measures the ability to understand spoken English	30-40 minutes	50
Structure and Written Expression	Measures the ability to recognize language appropriate for standard written English	25 minutes	40
Reading Comprehension	Measures the ability to understand non-technical reading material	55 minutes	50
<i>TWE</i> ® Test	Measures the ability to write in English	30 minutes	1 topic

According to Virginia Tech Graduate School the scores below are used for the aforementioned test:

	PAPER-BASED
TOTAL:	310 - 677
Listening:	31 - 68
Reading:	31 - 67
Structure/Writing:	31 - 68 [Str.]

Computer –Based Test

The test is running on a computer using a CD-ROM, even though it is not commonly used it is still accepted and available in some areas around the world. Besides, it was created not only to prove that the test taker’s score was not influenced under lack of computers experience but also it was designed specially with the purpose of teaching skills in computers. A great feature about this test was that test takers received test preparation material for free in order to get a high score. ("The TOEFL CBT (Computer-based test)", 2003)

There is a mix of different questions for each people that are graded according to the level of difficulty. Also, the test has four sections as: listening, structure, writing and reading. ("TOEFL Paper-and-Pencil", 2016)

The scoring for this test is based on the difficulty level of the items where it is taken into account the number of items answered and the performance of the test taker. If the test taker answers correctly a question that is difficult, they get more credit in the score. “Moreover, the scoring of a computer-adaptive section is cumulative. The computer considers the examinee’s performance on all questions to determine the score.” (Educational Testing Service 2000-2001)

Minimum and Maximum Observed Section and Total Scores on Computer-Based TOEFL		
Section	Minimum	Maximum
Listening	0	30
Structure/Writing	0	30
Reading	1	30
Total Score	10	300



Internet-Based Test

IBT (Internet-Based Test) version has been used the most in the different places around the world. Since it is the last version of the TOEFL test, it offers the opportunity for the test taker to confirm they are ready for communication effectively in the English field. The TOEFL iBT last up to 4 hours and its structure is made of the four basic skills: Reading, Listening, Speaking and Writing. (Educational Testing Service, 2013)

This TOEFL version is performed by Internet and it is approved around the world because it is the most used and acceptable for the institutions that require it. This version is the most complete due to the fact that not only includes the basic skills but also a section that evaluates the verbal and writing abilities. Additionally, test takers will have to not only read or listen, but also to speak in response to a question because this is the only test that has a speaking section.

This test includes extra questions in the Reading and Listening sections that are not part of the final score but help in way to the test taker to prove his knowledge in the area. These questions are either new or predetermine to see how they will function under actual testing conditions. The scores are based on the test taker's performance when answering the questions.

Also, to receive an official score people must answer at least one question from each section. To get an overview about the scores in this test, there is an explanation below according to i-courses.org:

Test section	Number and type of questions	Timing	Maximum points
Reading	3-4 passages; 12-14 questions in each passage	60 - 80 minutes	30
Listening	4-6 lectures; 6 questions each 2-3 conversations; 5 questions each	60 - 90 minutes	30
BREAK		10 minutes	
Speaking	2 independent tasks 4 integrated tasks	20 minutes	30
Writing	1 integrated task 1 independent task	20 minutes 30 minutes	30
TOTAL		230 - 240 minutes	120

2.2.4 COMPARING SCORES FROM PBT, CBT, AND iBT.

Skill description, and scores for each TOEFL Version:

It is observed that the Test Paper Based is requiring a highest score than the others and the iBT requires a lower score although there is a speaking section in this type of test and the fact that it is the only one that provides a section like that. To see an overview of the scores related to each TOEFL test version see the next table:

TOEFL Paper	TOEFL Computer (CBT)	TOEFL Computer (IBT)
625 - 680	263 - 300	113 - 120
600	250	100
575	232	90 - 91
550	213	79 - 80
525	196	69 - 70
500	173	59 - 60
475	152	49 - 50
450	133	39 - 40
425	113	29 - 30

The following table also shows not only the scores for each test but also the level of proficiency according to each set of scores. ("Paper-based test TOEFL scores", 2016).

Approximate VEC Level	TOEFL Paper	TOEFL Computer (CBT)	TOEFL Computer (IBT)
Beginner	0 - 310	0 - 30	0 - 8
Middle beginner	310 - 343	33 - 60	18-Sep
Upper Beginner	347 - 393	63 - 90	19 - 29
Low Intermediate	397 - 433	93 - 120	30 - 40
Middle Intermediate	437 - 473	123 - 150	41 - 52
Intermediate	477 - 510	153 - 180	53 - 64
Low advanced	513 - 547	183 - 210	65 - 78
Middle advanced	550 - 587	213 - 240	79 - 95
Upper Advanced	590 - 637	243 - 270	96 - 110
Upper Advanced	640 - 677	273 - 300	111 - 120
Top Level	Top Score	Top Score	Top Score
Upper Advanced	677	300	120

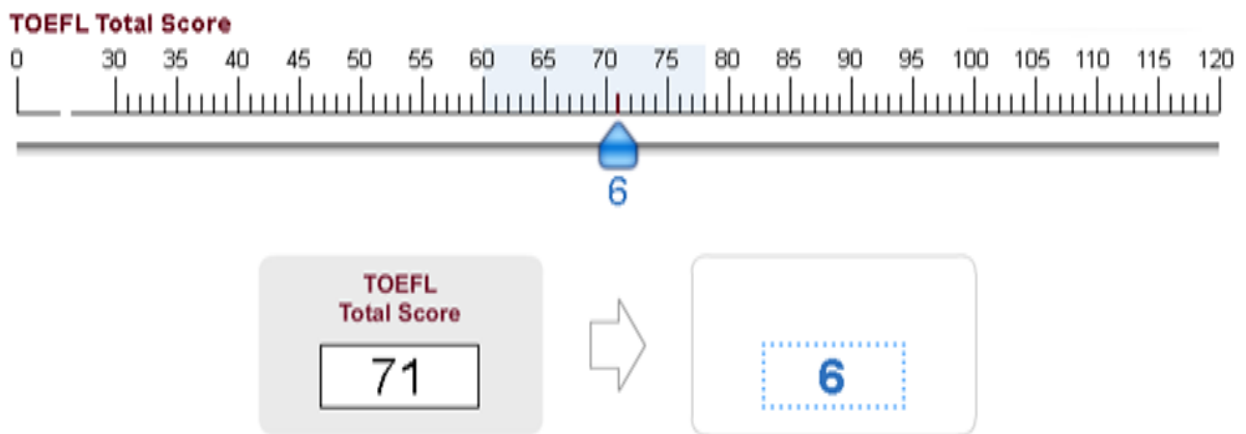
There is also another table that shows not only the scores for the three TOEFL test versions but also a level of proficiency as Beginners, Intermediates or Advanced, according to each score (See appendix B.)

2.2.5 NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS MINIMUM TOEFL SCORE REQUIREMENT:



- **FOREIGN LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT (FLD):**

Since there is no official minimum score set by the FLD authorities, the research team decided to take as a reference the minimum score used by Professors Grace Gomez and Ricardo Cabrera who are in charge of administering the Cambridge Sample TOEFL Test in the department. So, according to the teachers, they make use of a scale that can be found in the “Cambridge Preparation for the TOEFL® Test” book where they place students’ scores in ranges that later are converted to a 1-10 score scale in which they have taken number 6 as their minimum score.

Based on the aforementioned data the team used a Score Comparison Tool (Educational Testing Service , 2016) in order to get the minimum score required by the FLD as it follows:



- 6 points in a 1-10 scale = 71 points on the IBT version of the TOEFL
- 71 points on the IBT version of the TOEFL = 527 -530 range on the PBT version
(See Appendix B.)



As a result of this conversion, the team has taken 529 points as the minimum score required by the Foreign Languages Department.

- **MINISTRY OF EDUCATION (MINED):**

The minimum required by the Ministry of Education in our country is 551 points for students from the Bachelor of Arts in English with Emphasis in Teaching who want to apply for a job within that public entity. (Diario Oficial El Salvador, 2013, p. 12) See also Appendix C.

- **US EMBASSY:**

According to the US Embassy website, one of the Fulbright program requirements to get one of the Fulbright Scholarships for Graduate Studies to start academic studies in the United States is English proficiency. This must be demonstrated by taking an English Proficiency Test, or by attaching TOEFL scores to the application if the applicant has already completed testing where the minimum acceptable score is 80 points on the IBT version of the TOEFL or 550 points on the PBT version. (Embassy of The United States - San Salvador, El Salvador, 2011-2012)

- **ESCUELA AMERICANA & CCEAS (CENTRO CULTURAL SALVADOREÑO):**

Both institutions are certified places by ETS (Educational Testing Service) to administer the official TOEFL test here in El Salvador, and the minimum score required is 80 points on the IBT version of the TOEFL or 551 points on the PBT version.





2.2.6 THE CAMBRIDGE PREPARATION FOR THE TOEFL TEST

As it is known the TOEFL test is designed for measuring the English proficiency for those people who English is not their mother tongue. These people have to prove their good English level by getting a high score in this test. In addition, with the purpose of helping and preparing them to obtain better results, it has been designed The Cambridge Preparation for the TOEFL Test book.

The Cambridge Preparation for the TOEFL Test book helps students master the language skills (reading, listening, speaking and writing) which they need to succeed on the TOEFL iBT and communicate in an academic setting. Using integrated skills approach that are similar to the structure of the TOEFL iBT, this is a fully revised text perfect for self-study and activities in classroom.

The “Cambridge Preparation for the TOEFL Test” book contains multiple exercises related to each English skill, covering all of the question types in the exam and four practice tests. Furthermore, a supporting section is provided to improve grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and study skills. The book includes tests plus three additional practice tests in an electronic format that simulates the online TOEFL iBT.

As its name says, this test was specially designed with the purpose of practicing for the real TOEFL iBT and to provide helpful and powerful tools to help those students who want to be successful in getting a high score at the time of doing the TOEFL iBT test. This material provides a general point of view about what the TOEFL iBT contains and how it is developed.



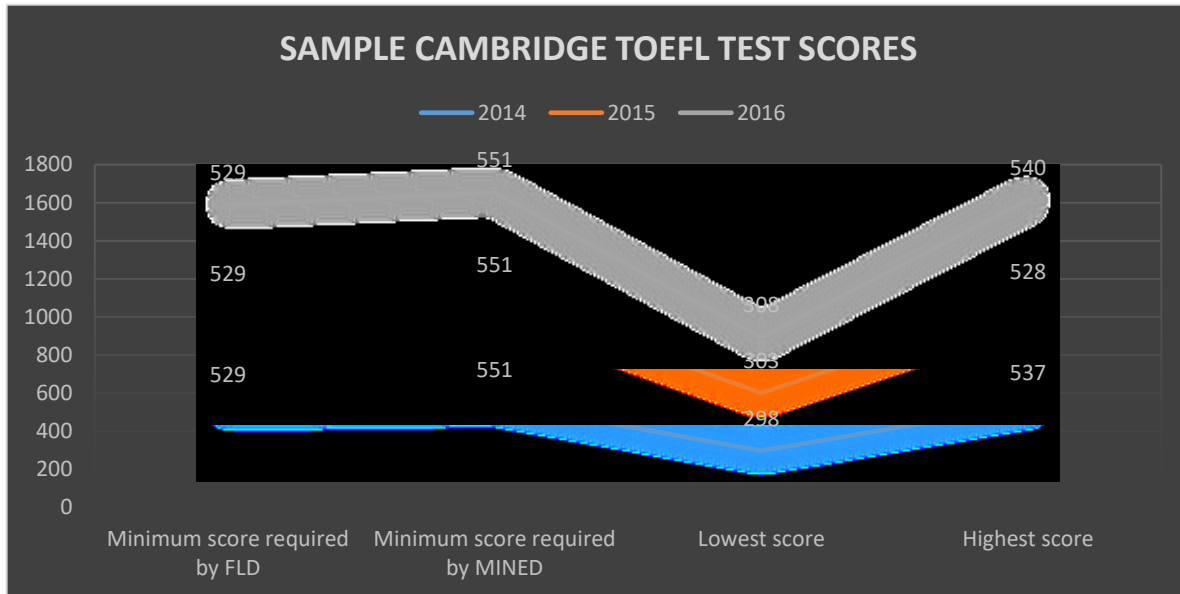
Students can take advantage from the book not only because they can practice their English skills but also, they realize which ones need to improve. By doing this practice, they faced a previous experience which let them have a clearer and real vision of the TOEFL iBT test.

2.2.7 ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY AT THE FOREIGN LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT.

As mentioned previously in this research work, the test administered to students from the subject Teaching Practice I in the FLD belongs to the “Cambridge Preparation for the TOEFL Test” book. These students are required to take this practice or sample test after enrolling to the subject, and before the classes period starts.

Since most of the students have gotten scores below the level of proficiency they are supposed to be, being the lowest score of 298 points throughout 2014-2016 (according to the data provided by the professors who are in charge of administering the test), the researchers analyzed them in order to provide major findings that can help to improve students’ scores.

Unfortunately, this is a situation that students have been facing for a long time, and even though there are a few researches done in this area nothing has been changed over the last 3 years at the FLD as the following chart shows:







Expert's opinions about low performance factors in the TOEFL Test

The Cambridge Sample TOEFL test is a practice for the real TOEFL that has been administered by educational institutions around the world to get their students prepared. As it has been mentioned before in this research, the FLD authorities have made use of this useful resource for a long time ago, but in the last three years the scores have been low.

According to the literature reviewed, students get low performance in this kind of tests because of the following main reasons:

- Lack of information about the test. According to Ngafifudin (2016) one of the main reasons why students get low scores is because of the lack of understanding of the TOEFL itself. Students do not know it in terms of structure, content, or techniques to approve it and they probably may not be provided with enough information related to it.

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- Ngafifudin establishes that students who have never taken the practice test, or just practice some exercises related to it, are the ones who get low scores. The lack of practice is a current issue that the FLD authorities should address immediately. Since the practice test has never been done before, students are not familiar with the TOEFL or the sample test and do not study the strategies needed to be able to get a high score so they end up failing the test with a poor preparation.
 - English proficiency is one of the biggest factors that cause a low score in the test. Brown and Yule's (1983) agree that this factor is on the top of their ranking of causative factors, where students are not able to show a good performance since they have not had a sufficient background and have not developed their English skills. A weak background may be since English is not students' mother tongue so they do not have a strong basis.
 - Careless and attitude towards the test: Lack of willingness or enthusiasm to succeed in the test is another factor according to Mark, (2012.) Students do not take it seriously; they know this test can be long and stressful at the same time but do not take ownership about this even though it is beneficial as usual. Sometimes students do not know about all the benefits this can bring and that is why they care less about getting a high score. In many places around the world there is a preparation for this exam, but students do not take advantage about it as well, and they do not allow to be coached to improve their skills.

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- The factors mentioned before are the most common according to the experts in this area, they advise to take the test seriously and get to know it in terms of structure and content. Getting a good score can be achieved with a good preparation, using an effective practice, and learning techniques to pass the TOEFL test, as well.



CHAPTER III

“METHODOLOGY”





3.1 RESEARCH APPROACH

As it is known in the research field there are two main approaches for collecting and reporting data, those are the qualitative and quantitative approaches. In order to find out the causative factors of low scores in the test and obtain better results, the research project was conducted by using what it is called the *Mixed Method*, this means to make use of both approaches in the research. By using the great benefits each one provides, the researchers could obtain more detailed and useful information.

The *qualitative research* helps to obtain non-numerical information and it is mainly used for descriptive data. This approach is used to examine the way people feel or think about a specific topic or issue. Using a qualitative method enhances the research purpose for collecting evidence on values, opinions and behaviors as mentioned before, among students, teachers and the Cambridge Practice TOEFL test. Some common methods include focus groups, individual interviews, and participation/observations. The sample used in this approach is commonly smaller than the one used in the quantitative.

On the other hand, the *quantitative research* is used for numerical data that can be organized into categories, in rank order, or measured in units of measurement. This type of data can be used to elaborate charts, graphs and tables.

To obtain specific type of data for Mixed Method, a survey and an In-Depth Interview were applied (See Appendixes D & E). In this way, the survey was used to gather student's opinions and the In-Depth Interview was used for teachers who are experts in this



field. By combining these two approaches and using the tools both provide, it was possible to explain the Causative factors of low scores in the Cambridge Sample TOEFL test administered to students enrolled in the subjects Teaching Practice I and II in the Foreign Languages Department of the University of El Salvador.



3.2 TYPE OF STUDY

The researchers made use of the *Descriptive Study*. This type of study helped the team to identify and explain the causative factors of low scores in the Cambridge Sample TOEFL test. Descriptive study is the one in which information is collected without changing the situation or manipulating variables to search for specific properties of people, groups, communities or any phenomenon that is submitted to analysis (Dankhe, 1986).

Bickman and Rog (1998) suggest that descriptive studies can answer questions such as “what is” or “what was.” So, that this type of study provided the requirements to achieve the researchers’ aims and to answer to the research question which helped them out to elaborate a more detailed study.

“The main purposes of descriptive study are: to describe, explain, and validate findings.” Description of what the researchers see is the cause of a creative exploration, and serves to organize factors that are not expected to find in order to fit them with explanations, and then test or validate those explanations (Kratwohl, 1993).



3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

As this study was entitled "Causative factors of low scores in the Cambridge Sample TOEFL test administered to students enrolled in the subjects Teaching Practice I and II in the Foreign Languages Department of the University of El Salvador during the years 2014-2016," the research team found out about the causative factors of low scores by making use of a *Nonexperimental Research Design*.

A nonexperimental research design is the one in which “there is not any situation created deliberately, but there are real situations, situations that already exist and require to be observed only; it means that these situations are not intentionally provoked or created by the researcher.” (Nonexperimental Research Design) So researchers acted just as passive agents by only describe the factors founded.



Non-experimental research can be Transactional and Longitudinal. Sometimes, the research is focused on analyzing the level of one or more variables in a specific moment or the relationship among variables in a specific time.

3.4 POPULATION AND SAMPLE

A population is the group of people in which researchers are interested in examining (Adams and Lawrence, 2015.) Due to this study was intended to find out the causative factors of low scores in the Cambridge Sample TOEFL test administered to students enrolled in the subjects Teaching Practice I and II in the Foreign Languages Department during the years 2014-2016, the population within those years according to the FLD authorities is 271 students from the Bachelor of Arts with Emphasis in Teaching option who took the test. The following table shows in a detailed form the number of students per year.

Years	N° of Students who took the test
2014	96
2015	70
2016	105
Total	271

This study focused on two types of participants: students who took the test from 2014 -2016 and professors in charge of the Teaching Practice I and II from the Foreign Language Department and who are experts in this area of study. With the results from the students and teacher's opinions through the instruments the group was able to get great and significant information.



After gathering the data, from a direct source as the professors in charge of administering this test, it was necessary to select the sample. To do it, the research team included all those students who were active students in the case of Teaching Practice II subject (performed test in 2016) and Seminar II subject (performed test in 2015) and in the case of students from the 2014, they were undergraduate students contacted by the researchers.

Since the team was advised by some experts to take 100% of the population, the team decided to take it not only because a big sample can be more reliable but also because the study would be more accurate, significant and outstanding. The sample was compounded by 157 students who were willing to help and attended the classes when the researchers administered the survey.

The approach used to obtain the sample was the Non-Probability. Since not all the member of the population had an equal chance to be included, only students whose scores were under 529 points and who were active students.





3.5 DATA GATHERING PROCESS

In order to collect the necessary information for this research study, data were gathered in the following order: Firstly, it was decided to pass along an interview to Professor Grace Gomez and Professor Ricardo Cabrera who are the teachers in charge of administrating the TOEFL Sample Test at the Foreign Languages Department. The interview took about 45 minutes and they were interviewed separately.

This qualitative research technique has been applied because the team was able to deeply explore teachers' perspectives on this particular situation with their opinions. The instrument was revised and approved by the advisor Professor Francisco Rodriguez to make sure it would cover all the aspects to gather information about the causative factors of low scores in the TOEFL Sample Test. In order to get a more reliable study, the researchers recorded the interviews and write the answers down.

Secondly, since it is essential to generate valuable and valid information from the students who performed the test in the years 2014, 2015 and 2016, it was decided to apply the questionnaire technique. A questionnaire is a “structured technique for collecting primary data. It is generally a series of written questions for which the respondents have to provide the answers” (Bell 1999). A survey was designed as instrument and given to students with statements related to the causative factors of low scores in the TOEFL sample test, and the time required to fill out the survey was 15 minutes. In the case of students who took the test in the year 2014, since they were already undergraduate students they were not attending classes anymore, so the research team decided to run the survey but in an online format to properly collect their answers.



Overall, the research team administered the instrument to all active students who were currently enrolled in Seminar II and Teaching Practice II being the ones who took the sample test during those years. Not all of the students who represent the population answered the survey because even though the team decided to take 100% of it, a few of them has dropped out classes, and only 157 students were able to be part of this study.

Students were asked to add at the end of the survey other causative factors different from those the team provided in order for them to get these new factors and present them as extra information. Likewise, to save this data the use of technology such as cell phones, laptops, computers, video camera and photo camera were needed.

3.5.1 RESEARCH TECHNIQUES

In order to gather information and collect the data, the researchers made use of two helpful techniques: In Depth Interview and Survey. Since the study was mixed, the team could choose whether to use qualitative and/or quantitative techniques. Both techniques were expected to allow researchers to find out what are the causative factors of low scores at the Cambridge Preparation for the TOEFL test.

The In- Depth Interview helped out to collect evidence on respected opinions from the professors with major expertise in the field. Furthermore, to gather student's opinions a Survey technique was applied to generate truthful information, which made this study more valuable and significant.





3.5.2 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

The instruments were well-designed questionnaires. The first one with 14 open-ended questions for the In-Depth Interview. It was created to get to know the teachers' opinions in this field and it was considered as valuable resource due the experience as a teacher of the subjects of Teaching Practice I and II and as an administrator of the test. Professor Grace Gomez and Professor Ricardo Cabrera provided such an important information that helped the research team to be able to find solutions and recommendations in order to improve students' scores.

After gathering the information obtained from the interviews to the teachers in charge of administrating the Cambridge Sample TOEFL Test in the Foreign Languages Department, the team has concluded some important points and, hence provide the following analysis which offers their point of view about this research project. The team asked questions to the interviewees that helped to identify the causative factors of low scores in the sample TOEFL test.

The answers revealed not only aspects found in the test's results but also confirmed the causative factors that the research team were expecting. The interview was analyzed by means of a qualitative method. Because this method deals with opinions, words and participants rather than numbers. Teacher's opinions were classified per topics created by the researchers, which helped them in such a great manner to analyze the answers obtained. Some of the topics were: language competences, preparation for the test, teacher's methodology, and test environment and equipment.

Besides the questionnaire mentioned before, a questionnaire #2 was created for students. It was a survey with 26 statements that were arranged in four different sections. The options





to answer the questions were stated based on the Likert Scale which helped researchers ascertain how strongly their respondents agree to a particular statement. (Flatworld Solutions. Different Types of Questions in Questionnaire Design. [ONLINE] Available at:<https://www.outsource2india.com/.../questionnaire-types-of-qu...>)

The researchers thought about adding an extra section with an open question in the survey to find out other causative factors of low scores in the test administered to students. As a matter of fact, all the answers were presented (Appendix E.) The answers just confirmed the causative factors of low scores provided by the research team and there were new causative factors provided by students.

This quantitative technique was analyzed in a different manner. The data analysis procedure was carried out through the software “Microsoft Excel” which was a useful program during the complete analytical and statistical process. The team classified the surveys by year to get a clearer analysis and get data organized in pie charts with the main purpose of providing the students’ point of view regarding which were the causative factors of low scores according to them.

A third instrument was used; this was provided by the teachers in charge of administering the test. The scores of students who took the test during 2014-2016 were arranged from the highest to the lowest and per year. In order to get a more accurate population, the researchers delete those names that appeared more than once, meaning some students took the test twice. To get those students’ scores, there were taken the first results they got.

Moreover, the information gotten from teachers and students was compared and connected to each other including the scores in the test. In short, analyzing and comparing

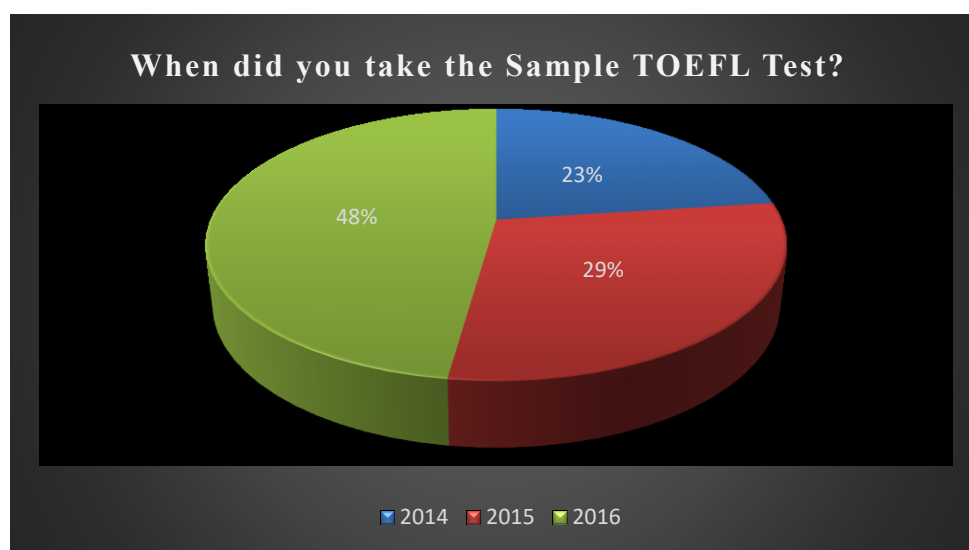


the information from the sources directly provided to this study a whole view of the causative factors of low scores and so that, being able to, not only present the causative factors, but also an implementation plan to start with the improvement in this scores and the level of proficiency in students.

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

In the following section the researchers show the results from the survey administered to undergraduate students and active students from the subjects Seminar II and Teaching Practice II who took the Sample TOEFL Test in the years 2014, 2015 and 2016 respectively.

Year	Frequency	Percentage
2014	36	23%
2015	46	29%
2016	75	48%
Total	157	100%



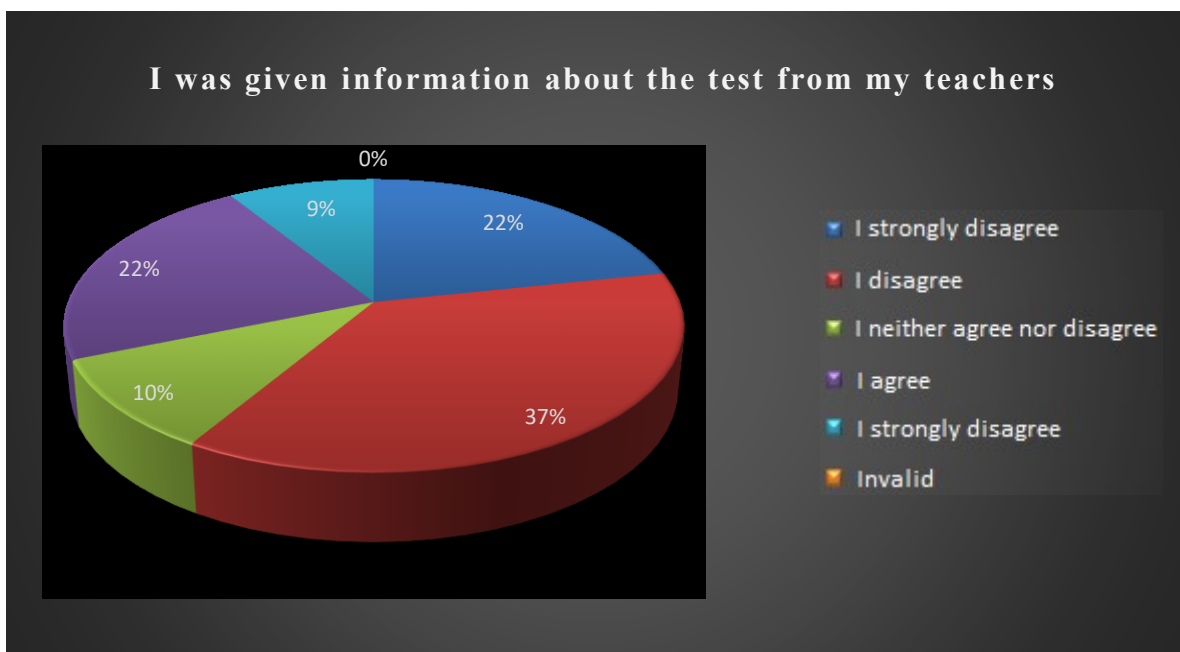
Analysis: This pie chart shows how many students took the sample TOEFL Test at the Foreign Languages Department in the years 2014, 2015 & 2016. As represented by the green area, most of the students who helped the research team to answer the survey, took the test in semester I/2016. In addition, 29% of the sample belongs to students who took the test in 2015, and the last 23% belongs to the ones who took it in 2014. Therefore, the answers obtained thru this survey are going to reflect which factors are currently causing students to get low scores in the sample test.

SECTION # 1: TOEFL SAMPLE TEST AWARENESS

Table 1.1

Likert Scale Responses	Frequency/Percentage per year						Total	%
	2014		2015		2016			
I strongly disagree	9	25%	12	26%	13	17%	34	22%
I disagree	13	36%	15	33%	30	40%	58	37%
I neither agree nor disagree	4	11%	2	4%	10	14%	16	10%
I agree	6	17%	16	35%	13	17%	35	22%
I strongly agree	4	11%	1	2%	9	12%	14	9%
Invalid	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	36	100%	46	100%	75	100%	157	100%

Chart 1.1

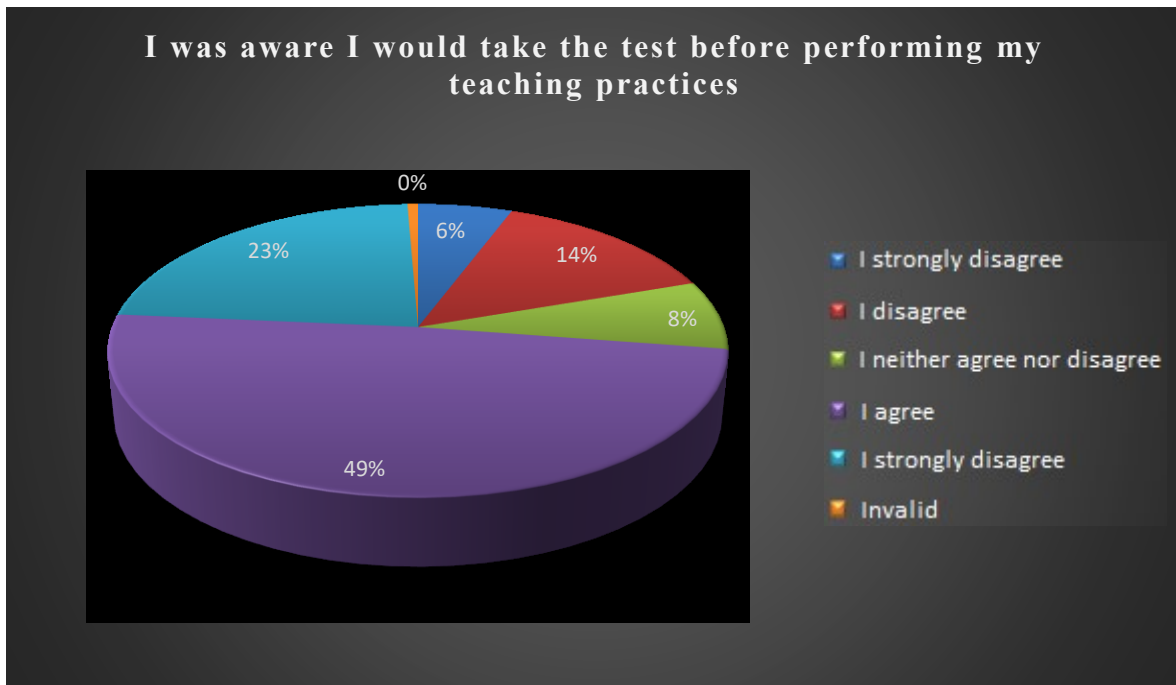


Analysis: This pie chart shows that 37% of the students disagree and 22% strongly disagree with the fact of being informed about the test by their teachers. On the other hand, 22% agrees, 9% strongly agrees and only 10% neither agrees nor disagrees. Although some students claim they were informed about the test, the results confirmed that more than half of the students were not given any information about what the Sample TOEFL Test is about, which, according to the researchers, it is a causative factor of low scores in the test.

Table 1.2

Likert Scale Responses	Frequency/Percentage per year						Total	%
	2014	2015	2016	2014	2015	2016		
I strongly disagree	2	6%	4	9%	3	4%	9	6%
I disagree	6	17%	9	20%	7	9%	22	14%
I neither agree nor disagree	0	0%	3	6%	9	12%	12	8%
I agree	21	58%	21	46%	35	47%	77	49%
I strongly agree	7	19%	8	17%	21	28%	36	23%
Invalid	0	0%	1	2%	0	0%	1	0%
Total	36	100%	46	100%	75	100%	157	100%

Chart 1.2

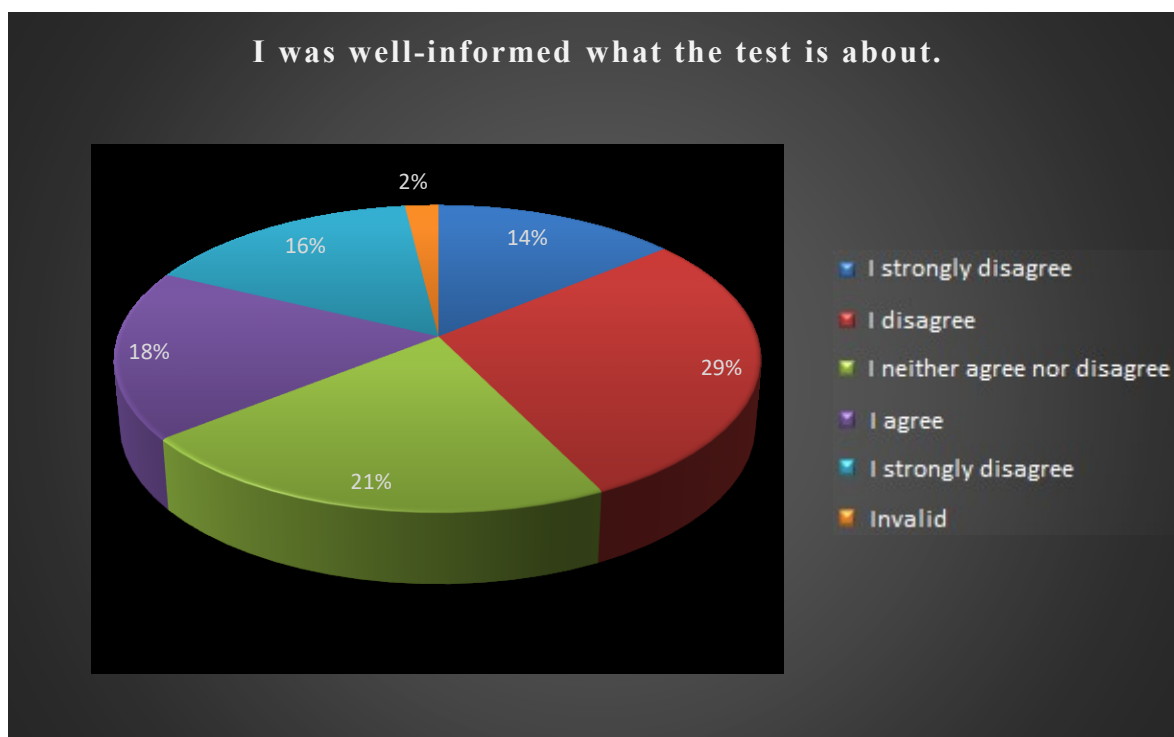


Analysis: This pie chart shows the students' awareness about taking the test before performing their teaching practices. As represented by the purple and light blue areas of the pie chart, 72% of the sample was aware while only 28% was not, which leads the research team to the conclusion that, it is well known for the students that they have to take the Sample TOEFL Test in their fourth year of the major. So, their scores could not have been affected by this fact.

Table 1.3

Likert Scale Responses	Frequency/Percentage per year						Total	%
	2014		2015		2016			
I strongly disagree	3	8%	8	17%	11	14%	22	14%
I disagree	11	31%	15	33%	19	25%	45	29%
I neither agree nor disagree	9	25%	8	17%	17	23%	34	21%
I agree	7	19%	10	22%	11	15%	28	18%
I strongly agree	6	17%	4	9%	15	20%	25	16%
Invalid	0	0%	1	2%	2	3%	3	2%
Total	36	100%	46	100%	75	100%	157	100%

Chart 1.3

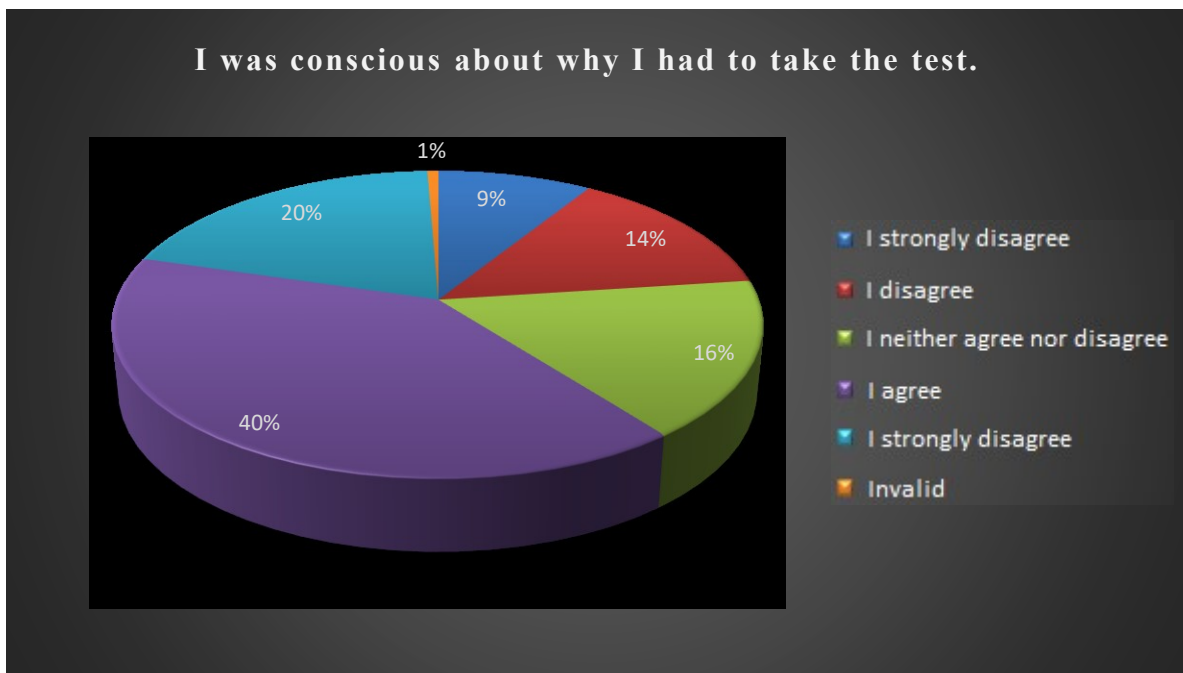


Analysis: This pie chart shows if students were well-informed regarding what the Sample TOEFL Test is about. As it is represented by the red section, most of the students disagree with the statement with a 29%, 14% strongly disagrees, and 21% neither agrees nor disagrees. An 18% of students agree and 16% strongly agree respectively. So, based on the results it could be said that not being well-informed what the Sample TOEFL Test is about causes low scores in the test.

Table 1.4

Likert Scale Responses	Frequency/Percentage per year						Total	%
	2014		2015		2016			
I strongly disagree	3	8%	4	9%	7	9%	14	9%
I disagree	7	20%	9	19%	6	8%	22	14%
I neither agree nor disagree	5	14%	10	22%	11	15%	26	16%
I agree	16	44%	15	33%	32	43%	63	40%
I strongly agree	5	14%	7	15%	19	25%	31	20%
Invalid	0	0%	1	2%	0	0%	1	1%
Total	3	100%	46	100%	75	100%	157	100%

Chart 1.4

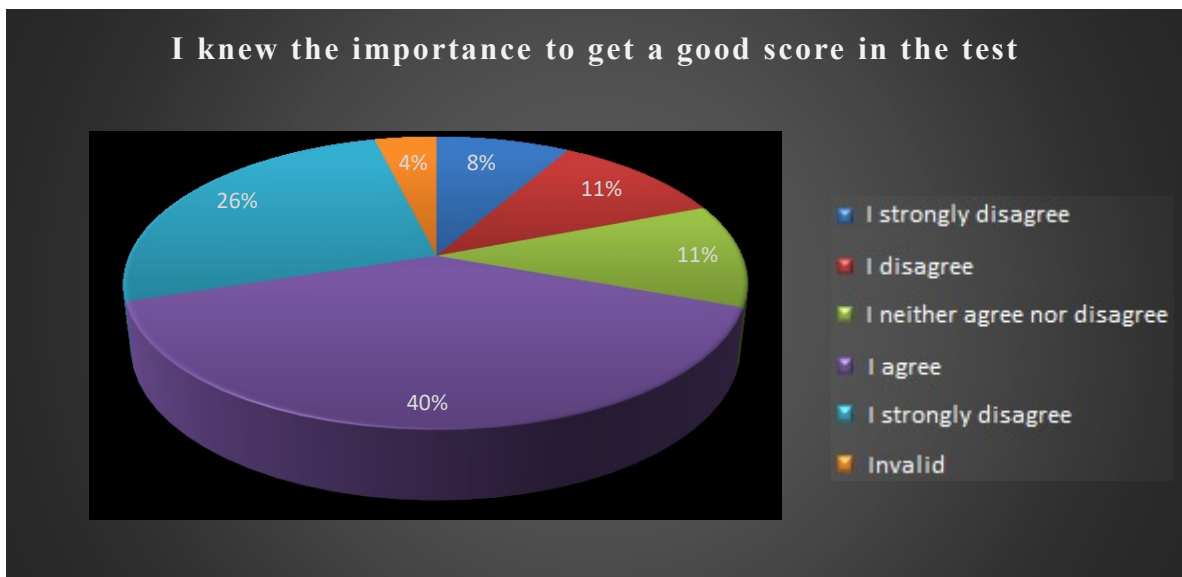


Analysis: As shown in this pie chart 40% of the students agrees and 20% strongly agrees with the fact that they were conscious about why they had to take the Sample TOEFL Test. However, it also shows that 14% of the students disagrees, 9% totally disagrees, 16% neither agrees nor disagrees, and just 1% resulted as invalid responses. As a result, it could be said that more than half of the students were conscious about why they had to take the Sample TOEFL Test so they could prepare properly for it.

Table 1.5

Likert Scale Responses	Frequency/Percentage per year						Total	%
	2014		2015		2016			
I strongly disagree	5	14%	4	9%	4	5%	13	8%
I disagree	4	11%	5	11%	8	11%	17	11%
I neither agree nor disagree	4	11%	8	17%	6	8%	18	11%
I agree	17	45%	15	33%	31	41%	63	40%
I strongly agree	7	19%	11	24%	23	31%	41	26%
Invalid	0	0%	3	6%	3	4%	6	4%
Total	37	100%	46	100%	75	100%	158	100%

Chart 1.5

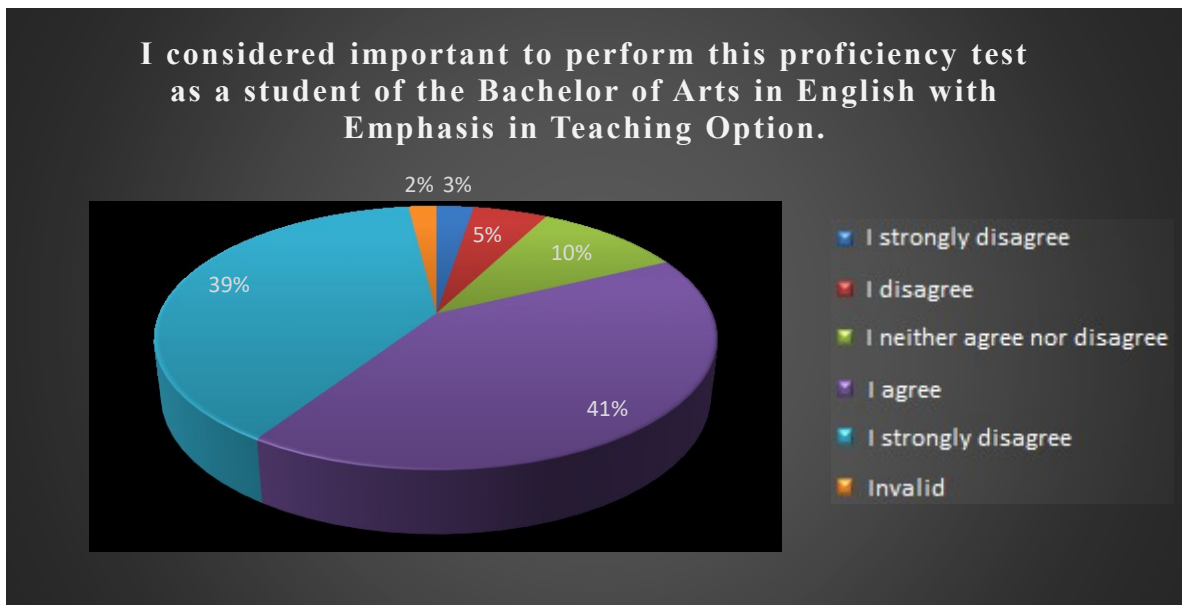


Analysis: As it is shown in the purple and light blue areas of the pie chart more than 60% of the students knew the importance to get a good score in the test, while 11% disagrees, 8% strongly disagrees, 11% neither agrees nor disagrees and 4% resulted as invalid responses. This means that about 40% of the students was not aware how relevant this proficiency test is for them as students and as future English teachers which prevents students from getting higher scores.

Table 1.6

Likert Scale Responses	Frequency/Percentage per year						Total	%
	2014		2015		2016			
I strongly disagree	1	3%	2	4%	1	1%	4	3%
I disagree	2	5%	4	9%	2	3%	8	5%
I neither agree nor disagree	2	5%	8	18%	6	8%	16	10%
I agree	15	42%	18	39%	32	43%	65	41%
I strongly agree	15	42%	12	26%	34	45%	61	39%
Invalid	1	3%	2	4%	0	0%	3	2%
Total	36	100%	46	100%	75	100%	157	100%

Chart 1.6

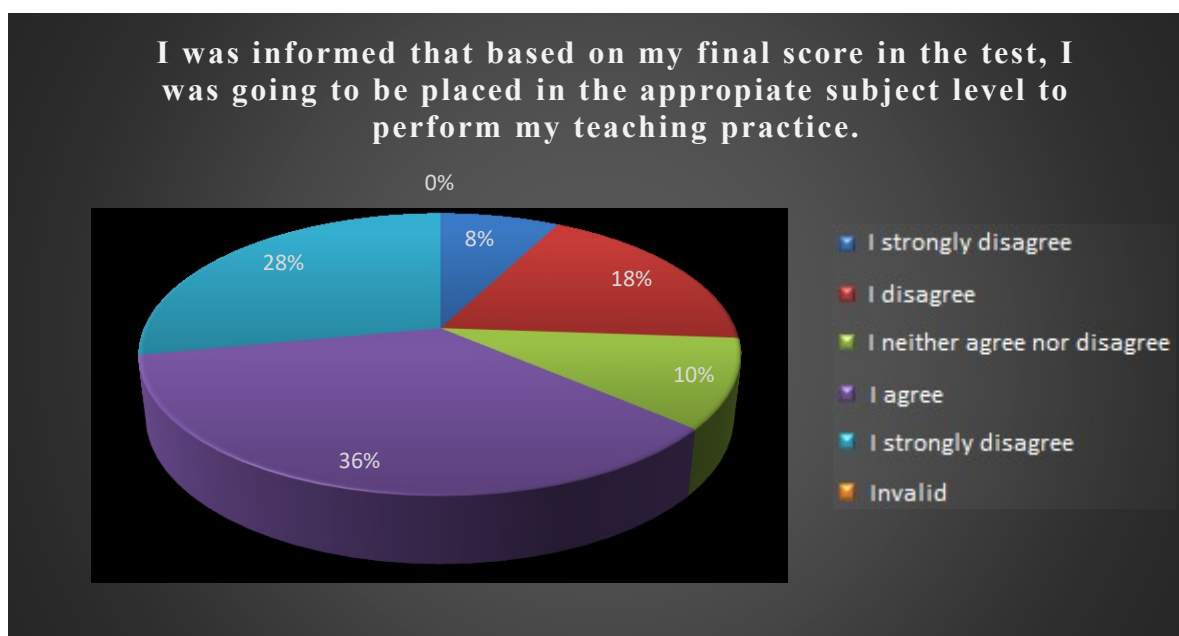


Analysis: From the information provided in this pie chart it is clear that 41% of the students agrees and 39% strongly agrees with the fact that they considered important to take the Sample TOEFL Test as students of the Bachelor of Arts in English with Emphasis in Teaching Option due to this is a proficiency test required by the Ministry of Education to perform as a teacher in public institutions. On the other hand, just 5% of the students disagrees, 3% strongly disagrees, 10% neither agrees nor disagrees, and 2% resulted as invalid responses.

Table 1.7

Likert Scale Responses	Frequency/Percentage per year						Total	%
	2014		2015		2016			
I strongly disagree	4	11%	6	13%	2	3%	12	8%
I disagree	8	22%	5	11%	16	21%	29	18%
I neither agree nor disagree	2	6%	6	13%	8	11%	16	10%
I agree	17	47%	15	33%	24	32%	56	36%
I strongly agree	5	14%	14	30%	25	33%	44	28%
Invalid	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	36	100%	46	100%	75	100%	157	100%

Chart 1.7



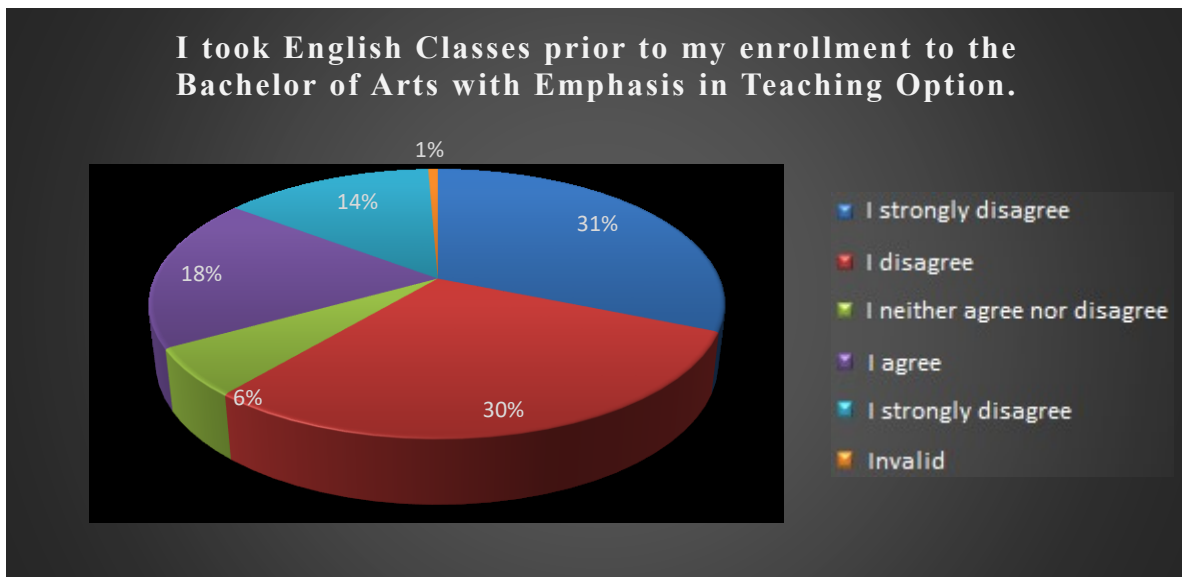
Analysis: As shown in this pie chart, most of the people who answered the survey were informed that based on their final scores in the test they were going to be placed in the appropriate subject level to perform their teaching practices. Therefore 36% of the students agrees, 28% strongly agrees, 10% neither agrees nor disagrees, 18% disagrees, and 8% strongly disagrees which means that being aware of this, causes low scores in the Sample TOEFL Test due to students prefer not to get good scores so they won't be placed in a challenged subject level for their teaching practices.

SECTION # 2: ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

Table 2.1

Likert Scale Responses	Frequency/Percentage per year						Total	%
	2014		2015		2016			
I strongly disagree	13	36%	15	33%	21	28%	49	31%
I disagree	5	14%	20	43%	22	29%	47	30%
I neither agree nor disagree	2	6%	0	0%	7	10%	9	6%
I agree	8	22%	6	13%	15	20%	29	18%
I strongly agree	8	22%	4	9%	10	13%	22	14%
Invalid	0	0%	1	2%	0	0%	1	1%
Total	36	100%	46	100%	75	100%	157	100%

Chart 2.1

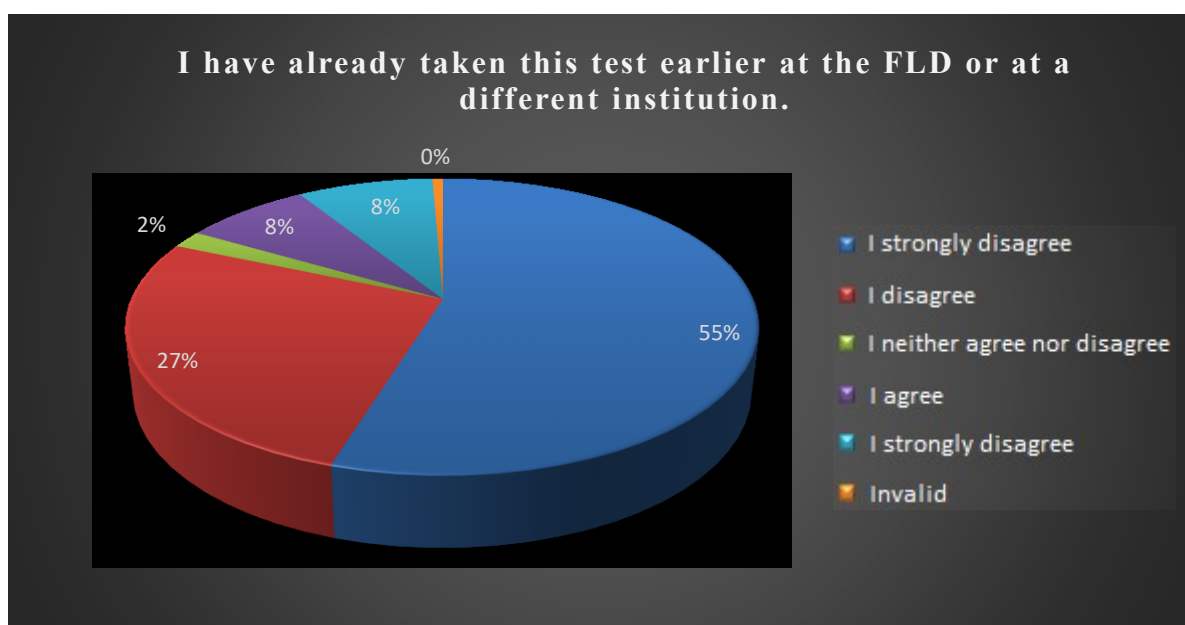


Analysis: This pie chart shows that a total of 31% of the students strongly disagrees and 30% disagrees with the fact of taking English classes prior their enrollment in the bachelor degree which should have increased their possibilities to get higher scores. In contrast, there are a 6% that neither agrees nor disagrees, an 18% that agrees, a 14% that strongly agrees, and just a 1% resulted as invalid responses. In other words, the students' English background has to do with their good or bad performance in the Sample TOEFL Test, so this could be taken as a causative factor of low scores in it.

Table 2.2

Likert Scale Responses	Frequency/Percentage per year						Total	%
	2014		2015		2016			
I strongly disagree	20	56%	20	43%	46	62%	86	55%
I disagree	9	25%	17	37%	16	21%	42	27%
I neither agree nor disagree	1	3%	2	4%	0	0%	3	2%
I agree	2	5%	4	9%	6	8%	12	8%
I strongly agree	3	8%	3	7%	7	9%	13	8%
Invalid	1	3%	0	0%	0	0%	1	0%
Total	36	100%	46	100%	75	100%	157	100%

Chart 2.2

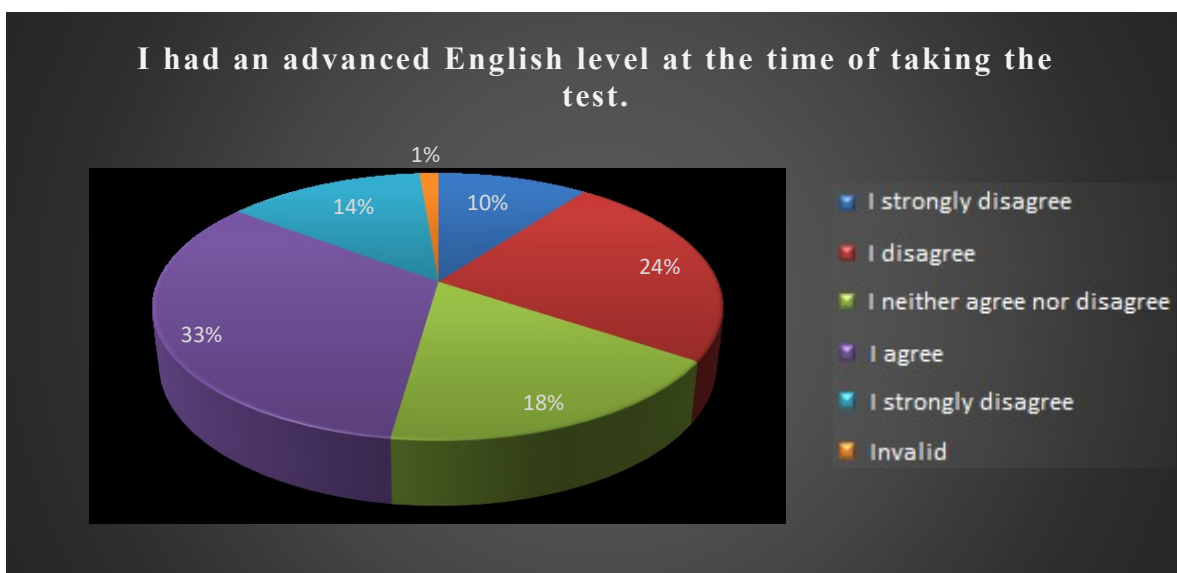


Analysis: From the information shown in this pie chart there is a big percentage of students that strongly disagrees with the fact of having taken the TOEFL test before which makes clear the need of educating people on how to succeed when taking it. As represented by the purple area just 8% of the students agrees, another 8% strongly agrees, and 2% neither agrees nor disagrees. Consequently, this factor has been classified as one of the causative factors of low scores in the Sample TOEFL Test.

Table 2.3

Likert Scale Responses	Frequency/Percentage per year						Total	%
	2014		2015		2016			
I strongly disagree	2	6%	6	13%	8	10%	16	10%
I disagree	14	39%	13	28%	11	15%	38	24%
I neither agree nor disagree	7	19%	7	15%	14	19%	28	18%
I agree	9	25%	15	33%	28	37%	52	33%
I strongly agree	4	11%	5	11%	12	16%	21	14%
Invalid	0	0%	0	0%	2	3%	2	1%
Total	36	100%	46	100%	75	100%	157	100%

Chart 2.3

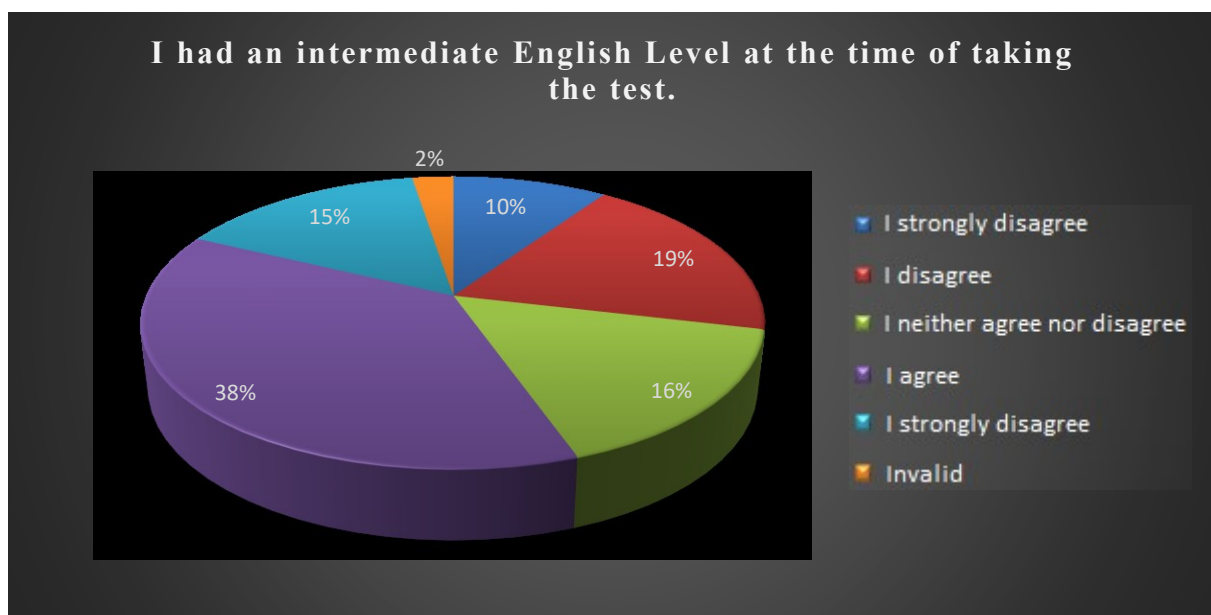


Analysis: This chart shows that 33% of the sample agrees and a 14% strongly agrees that they were in an advanced English level when they took the test. On the other hand, some students considered they were not in an advanced English level where the 24% disagrees and 10% strongly disagrees, and just a 18% neither agrees nor disagrees where students did not know what their English level was at that time, the other 1% represents invalid answers. Even though almost 50% of the sample considered they were in an advanced English level when taking the test, the results showed the opposite due to low scores.

Table 2.4

Likert Scale Responses	Frequency/Percentage per year						Total	%
	2014	2015	2016	2014	2015	2016		
I strongly disagree	2	6%	2	4%	11	14%	15	10%
I disagree	3	8%	10	22%	17	23%	30	19%
I neither agree nor disagree	4	11%	12	26%	9	12%	25	16%
I agree	23	64%	14	31%	22	29%	59	38%
I strongly agree	4	11%	6	13%	14	19%	24	15%
Invalid	0	0%	2	4%	2	3%	4	2%
Total	36	100%	46	100%	75	100%	157	100%

Chart 2.4

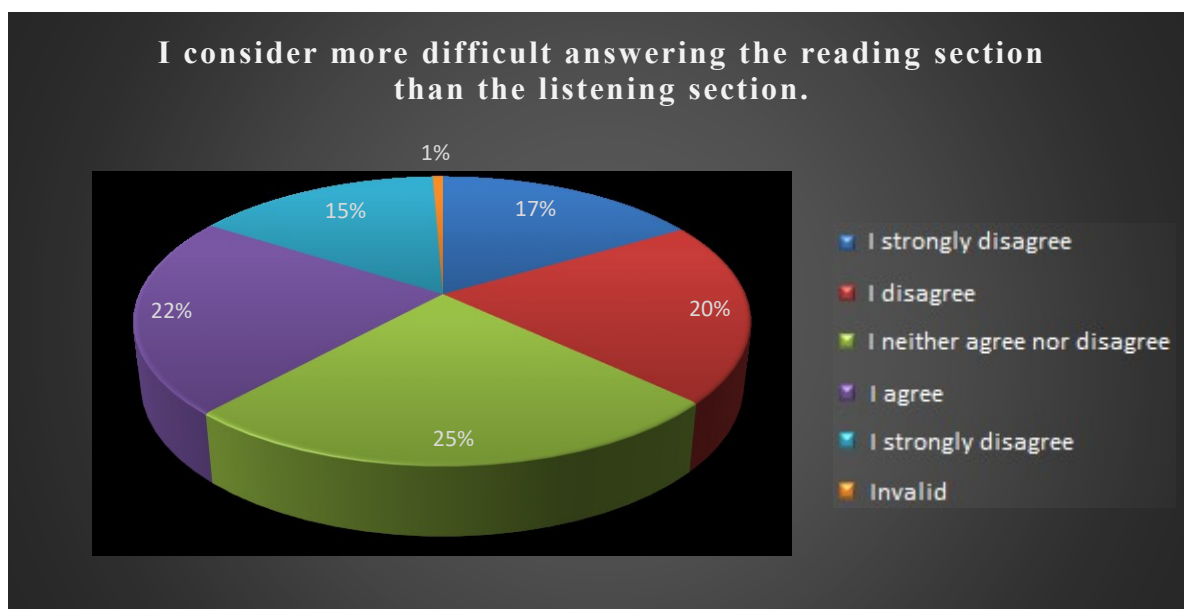


Analysis: In this chart a big part of the sample considered they were in an Intermediate English level when taking the test, where 38% agrees and 15% strongly agrees with the statement. In contrast, the rest considered they were not in that English level, where just a 10% strongly disagrees and a 19% disagrees. There is a 2% of the answers that were invalid since students did not answer properly. This pie chart shows that half of the students considered they did not have an advanced English level as required by the syllabus to be enrolled in the subject Teaching Practice I, thus, this is a causative factor of low scores in the Sample TOEFL Test.

Table 2.5

Likert Scale Responses	Frequency/Percentage per year						Total	%
	2014		2015		2016			
I strongly disagree	9	25%	7	15%	10	13%	26	17%
I disagree	2	5%	14	30%	16	21%	32	20%
I neither agree nor disagree	9	25%	10	22%	20	27%	39	25%
I agree	11	31%	10	22%	14	19%	35	22%
I strongly agree	5	14%	5	11%	14	19%	24	15%
Invalid	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%	1	1%
Total	36	100%	46	100%	75	100%	157	100%

Chart 2.5



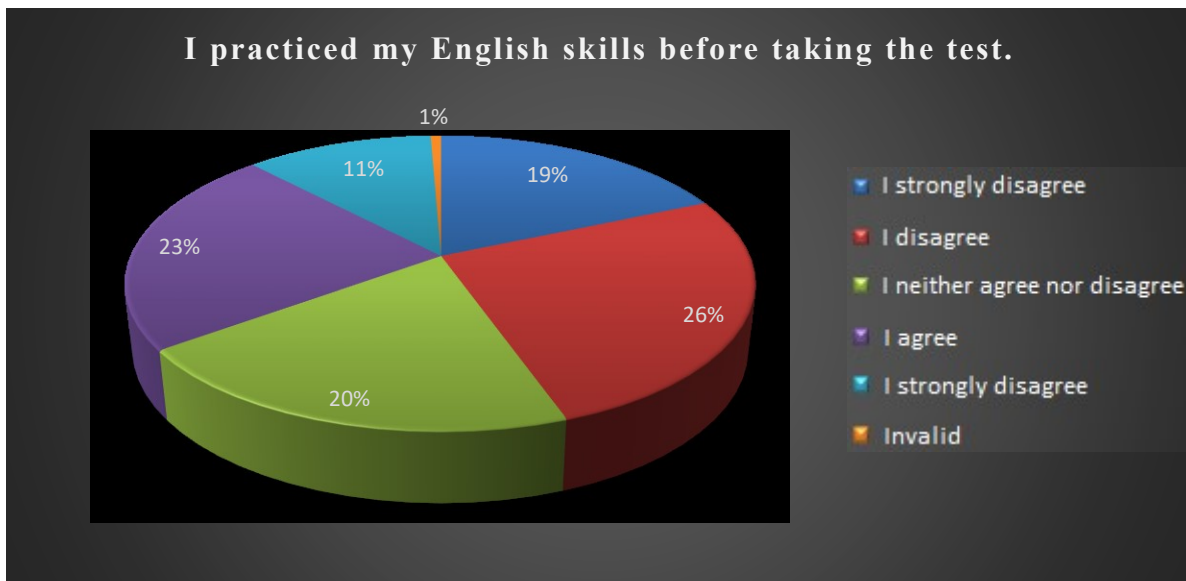
Analysis: This pie chart shows that 25% of the sample neither agrees nor disagrees with the fact of considering more difficult the reading section than the listening section. A 22% of the students agrees with the statement and 15% strongly agrees. The rest of the sample did not consider more difficult the reading section than the listening as the 17% strongly disagrees and a 20% disagrees. With the results in this statement it could be said that a third part of the sample considered the reading section was more difficult than the listening one, and on the other hand, the rest considered it was the opposite.

SECTION # 3: TOEFL TEST PREPARATION

Table 3.1

Likert Scale Responses	Frequency/Percentage per year						Total	%
	2014		2015		2016			
I strongly disagree	6	17%	11	24%	12	16%	29	19%
I disagree	8	22%	12	26%	21	28%	41	26%
I neither agree nor disagree	7	20%	9	20%	16	21%	32	20%
I agree	12	33%	5	11%	19	25%	36	23%
I strongly agree	3	8%	8	17%	7	10%	18	11%
Invalid	0	0%	1	2%	0	0%	1	1%
Total	36	100%	46	100%	75	100%	157	100%

Chart 3.1

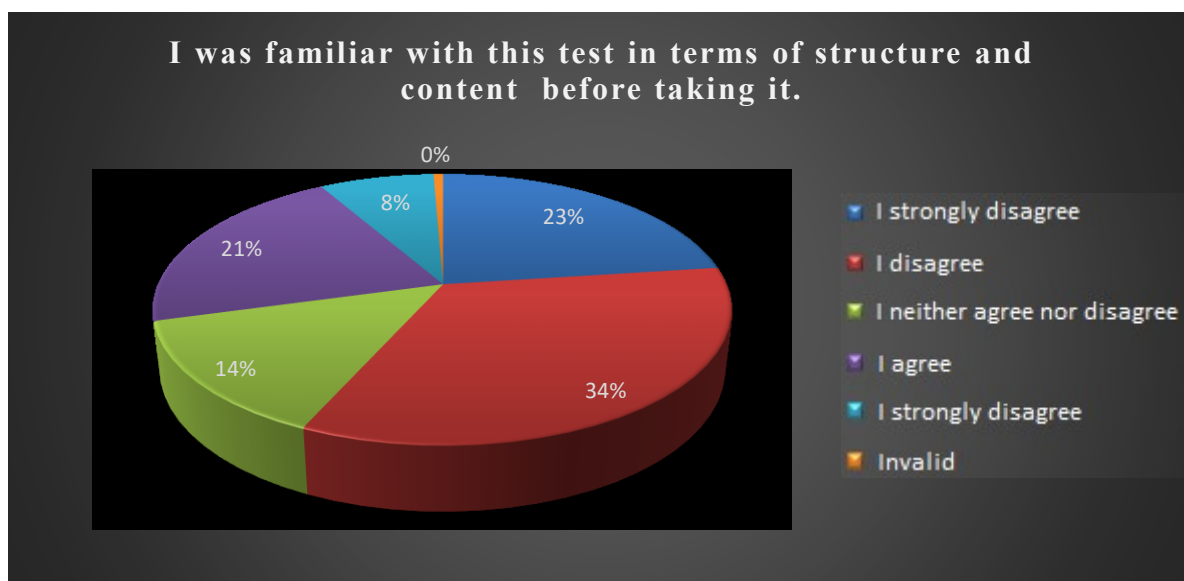


Analysis: The evidence in this pie chart shows that the students did not practice their English skills before taking the test, with a 26% that disagrees with the statement, and a 19% that strongly disagrees. On the other hand, 23% of the students agrees that they practiced before the test and a 11% strongly agrees as well. A 20% neither agrees nor disagrees with the fact of having practiced and a 1% did not respond properly. This chart clearly shows that the lack of practice is one of the causative factors of low scores in the Sample TOEFL test.

Table 3.2

Likert Scale Responses	Frequency/Percentage per year						Total	%
	2014		2015		2016			
I strongly disagree	7	20%	12	26%	17	23%	36	23%
I disagree	13	36%	16	35%	24	32%	53	34%
I neither agree nor disagree	4	11%	5	11%	13	17%	22	14%
I agree	9	25%	11	24%	13	17%	33	21%
I strongly agree	3	8%	1	2%	8	11%	12	8%
Invalid	0	0%	1	2%	0	0%	1	0%
Total	36	100%	46	100%	75	100%	157	100%

Chart 3.2

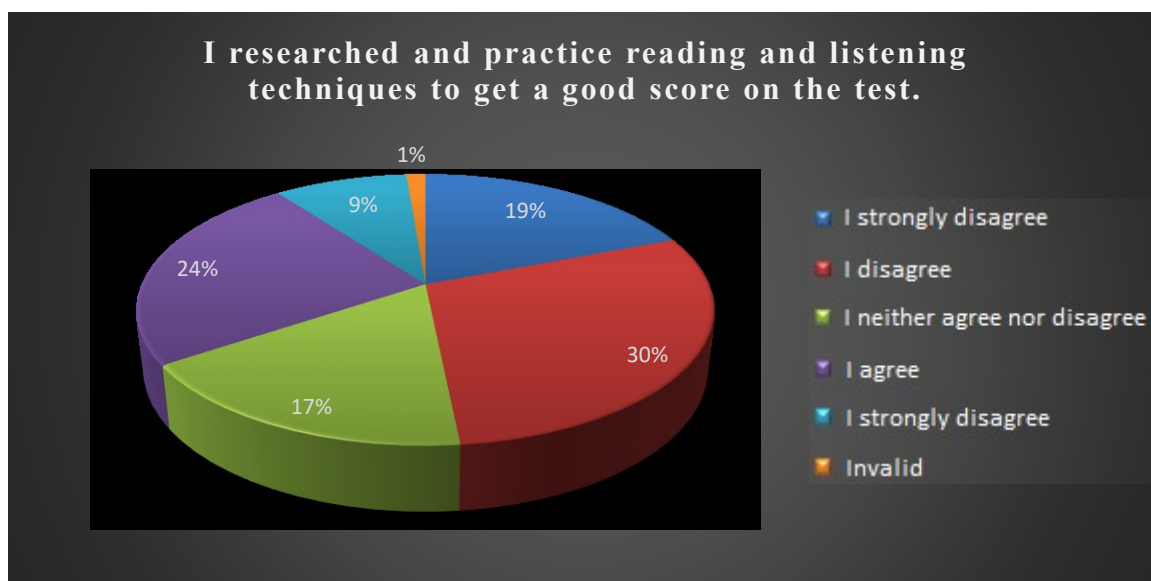


Analysis: Students were not familiar with the test in terms of structure and content before taking it, since 34% of the students disagrees, and a 23% strongly disagrees with the fact of being familiar with the test. In contrast, another 21% agrees, an 8% strongly agrees, and a 14% neither agrees nor disagrees. This helps to clearly conclude that the lack of familiarity with the test is another causative factor of low scores.

Table 3.3

Likert Scale Responses	Frequency/Percentage per year						Total	%
	2014		2015		2016			
I strongly disagree	5	14%	10	22%	15	20%	30	19%
I disagree	12	33%	15	33%	19	25%	46	30%
I neither agree nor disagree	4	11%	6	13%	17	23%	27	17%
I agree	14	39%	6	13%	18	24%	38	24%
I strongly agree	1	3%	7	15%	6	8%	14	9%
Invalid	0	0%	2	4%	0	0%	2	1%
Total	36	100%	46	100%	75	100%	157	100%

Chart 3.3

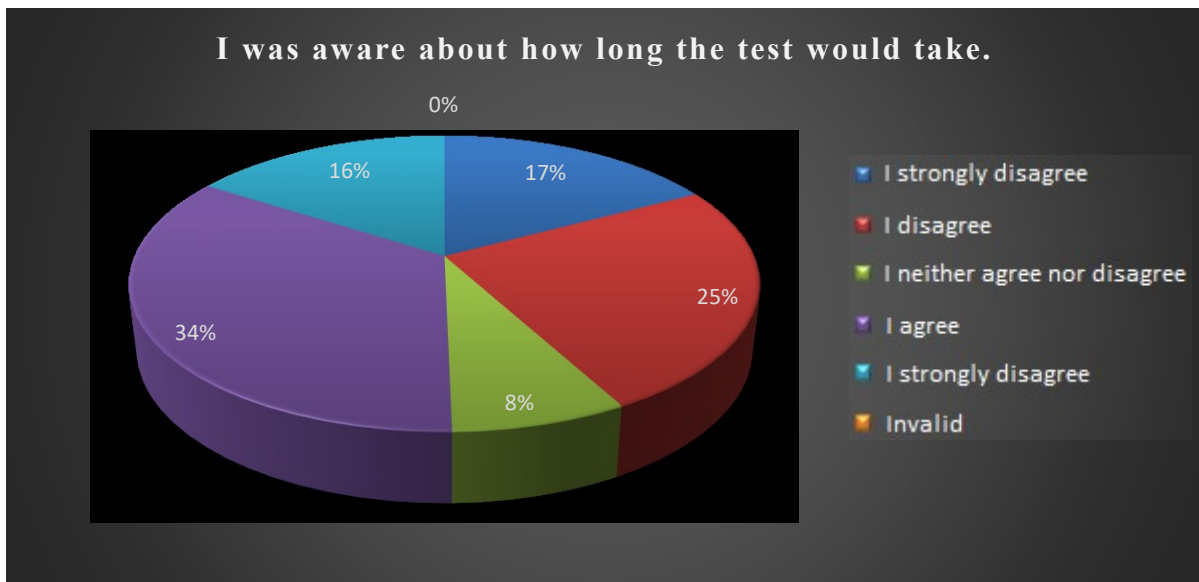


Analysis: From the information shown in this pie chart, there is a big percentage of students that did not get prepared for the test since the 30% disagrees and another 19% strongly disagrees having researched or practiced some techniques to get a good score. Other students answered positively by agreeing with a 31% with the statement. A 17% of the sample neither agrees nor disagrees meaning that they did not even think about getting ready for the test. Lack of preparation with no doubt becomes a causative factor of low scores for the Sample TOEFL test.

Table 3.4

Likert Scale Responses	Frequency/Percentage per year						Total	%
	2014		2015		2016			
I strongly disagree	7	19%	11	24%	9	12%	27	17%
I disagree	9	25%	10	22%	20	27%	39	25%
I neither agree nor disagree	2	6%	3	6%	7	9%	12	8%
I agree	14	39%	17	37%	23	31%	54	34%
I strongly agree	4	11%	5	11%	16	21%	25	16%
Invalid	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	36	100%	46	100%	75	100%	157	100%

Chart 3.4

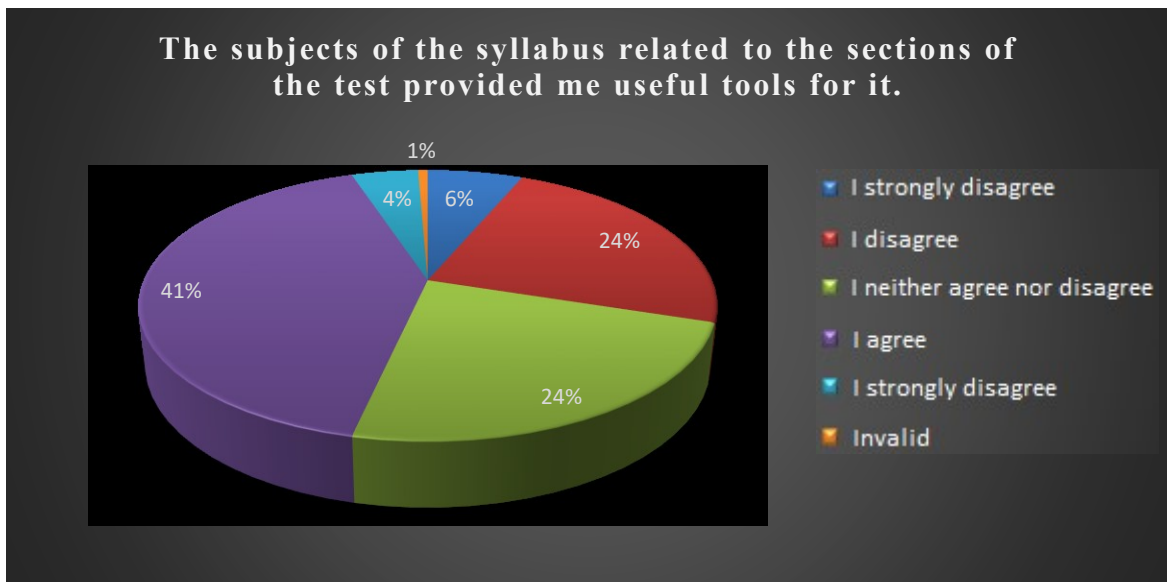


Analysis: As shown in this pie chart, a 34% agrees and a 16% of students strongly agrees with the fact of being aware about how long the test would take. On the other hand, 25% of the students disagrees, 17% strongly disagrees, and a small percentage neither agrees nor disagrees. Therefore, it could be said that students were aware about the time the test takes so it is not a causative factor of low scores in the Sample TOEFL Test.

Table 3.5

Likert Scale Responses	Frequency/Percentage per year						Total	%
	2014		2015		2016			
I strongly disagree	1	3%	5	11%	4	5%	10	6%
I disagree	13	36%	10	22%	14	19%	37	24%
I neither agree nor disagree	5	14%	11	24%	21	28%	37	24%
I agree	15	42%	19	41%	31	41%	65	41%
I strongly agree	2	5%	0	0%	5	7%	7	4%
Invalid	0	0%	1	2%	0	0%	1	1%
Total	36	100%	46	100%	75	100%	157	100%

Chart 3.5

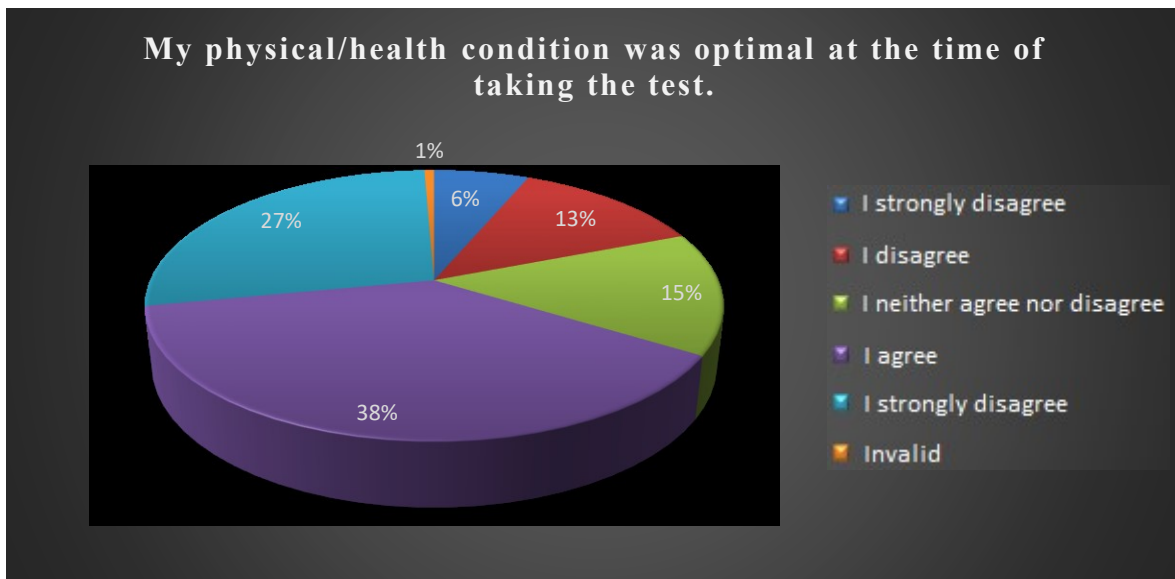


Analysis: This pie chart shows that half of the students considered that the subjects in the major provided them tools to get good scores in the test. A 41% agrees and a 4% strongly agrees that the subjects helped them in the test. However, a 24% of the sample considered subjects of the syllabus were not helpful and a 6% strongly disagrees, a 24% neither agrees nor disagrees with the statement so, it can be said that some of the subjects were helpful and some others not. Can be concluded that since just a small part of the students considered subjects belong to the syllabus provided them useful tools for the test, it is highly important to improve them so can be useful subjects to take the test.

Table 3.6

Likert Scale Responses	Frequency/Percentage per year						Total	%
	2014		2015		2016			
I strongly disagree	1	3%	1	2%	8	11%	10	6%
I disagree	6	16%	6	13%	8	11%	20	13%
I neither agree nor disagree	5	14%	4	9%	14	19%	23	15%
I agree	18	50%	14	30%	28	36%	60	38%
I strongly agree	6	17%	20	44%	17	23%	43	27%
Invalid	0	0%	1	2%	0	0%	1	1%
Total	36	100%	46	100%	75	100%	157	100%

Chart 3.6

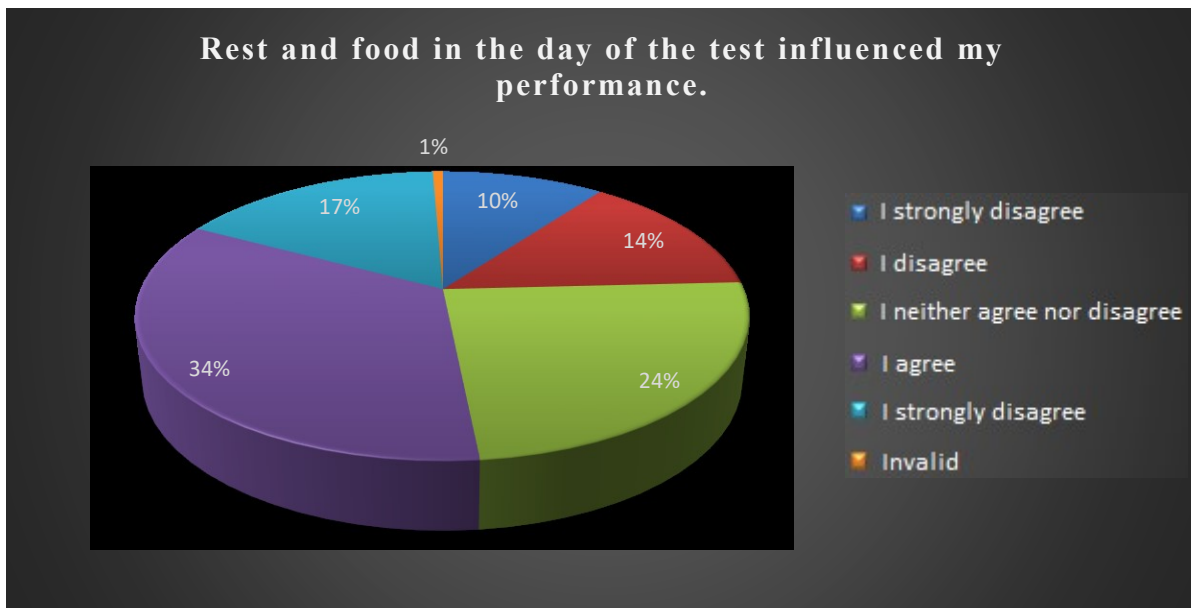


Analysis: This pie chart shows that 38% of the students agree, and 27% strongly agree with the fact that physical/health condition was optimal at the time of taking the test. On the other hand, 13% disagrees, a 6% strongly disagrees, and 15% of the students neither agree nor disagree. This information proves that more than half of the students agreed that their physical/health condition was excellent at the time of taking the Sample TOEFL Test.

Table 3.7

Likert Scale Responses	Frequency/Percentage per year						Total	%
	2014	2015		2016				
I strongly disagree	5	14%	2	4%	9	12%	16	10%
I disagree	5	14%	4	9%	13	17%	22	14%
I neither agree nor disagree	6	16%	9	20%	23	31%	38	24%
I agree	14	39%	17	37%	23	31%	54	34%
I strongly agree	6	17%	13	28%	7	9%	26	17%
Invalid	0	0%	1	2%	0	0%	1	1%
Total	36	100%	46	100%	75	100%	157	100%

Chart 3.7

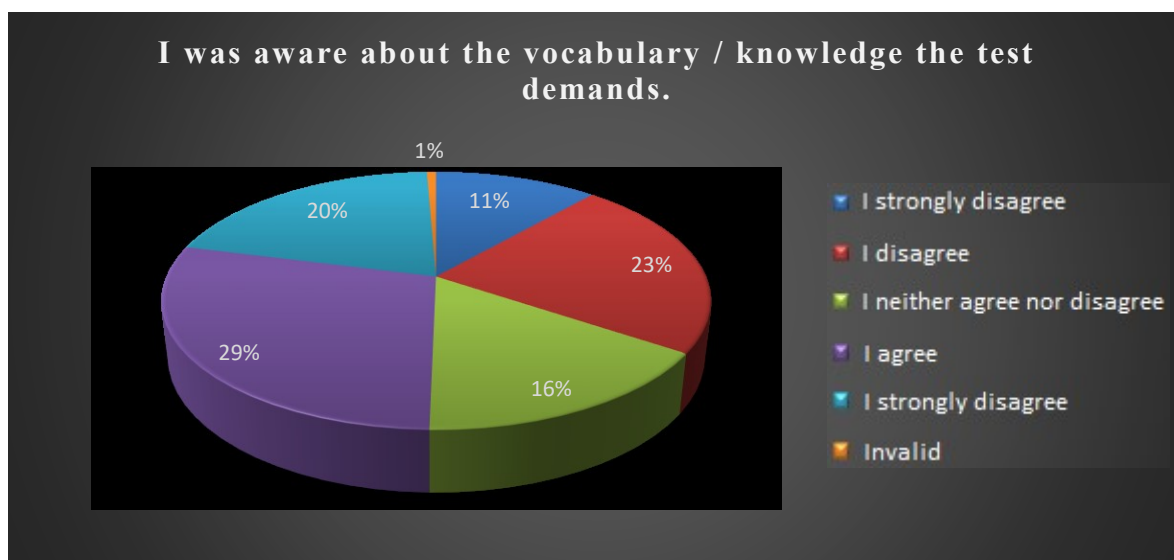


Analysis: From the information shown in this pie chart there is a big percentage of students that agrees with a 34%, and strongly agrees with a 17% with the fact that rest and food in the day of the test influenced their performance. On the contrary, 14% of the students disagrees, 10% strongly disagrees, 24% of the students neither agrees nor disagrees, and a 1% in the pie chart represents invalid responses. Overall, more than half of the students believed that rest and food in the day of taking the Sample TOEFL test affected their performance and hence their results.

Table 3.8

Likert Scale Responses	Frequency/Percentage per year						Total	%
	2014	2015		2016				
I strongly disagree	4	11%	8	17%	6	8%	18	11%
I disagree	9	25%	9	19%	18	24%	36	23%
I neither agree nor disagree	2	6%	9	20%	14	18%	25	16%
I agree	16	44%	9	20%	20	27%	45	29%
I strongly agree	5	14%	10	22%	17	23%	32	20%
Invalid	0	0%	1	2%	0	0%	1	1%
Total	36	100%	46	100%	75	100%	157	100%

Chart 3.8



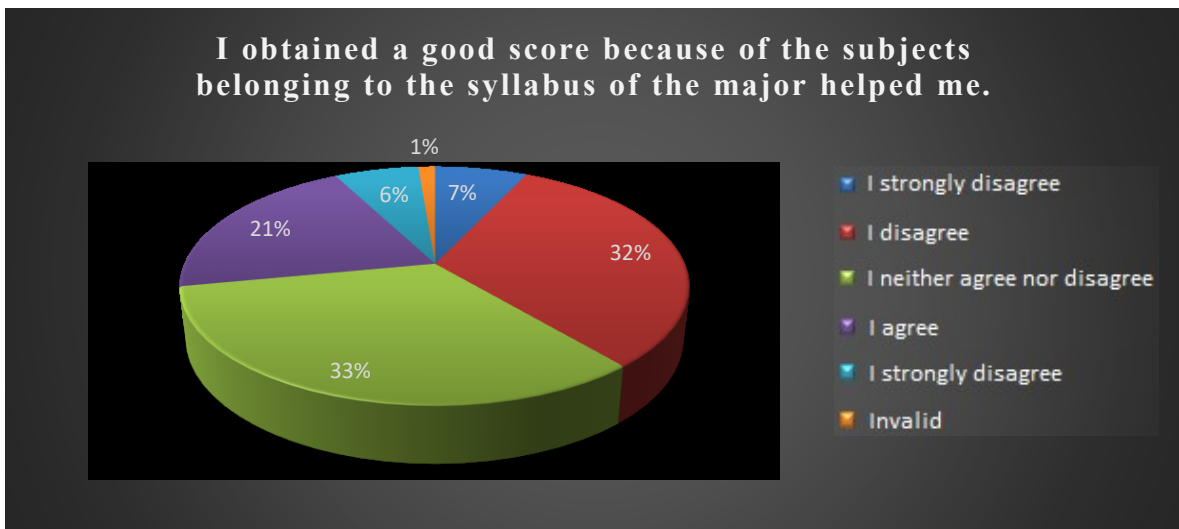
Analysis: The purple area resembles the 29% of the students that agrees, and the light blue area the 20% that strongly agrees with the fact they were aware about the vocabulary/knowledge the test demands. On the other hand, 23% disagrees, 11% strongly disagrees, and 16% of the students neither agrees nor disagrees. The 1% in the pie chart represents invalid responses, meaning that the students did not select any of the five given options. It could be concluded that almost half of the students were aware of the vocabulary or knowledge the Sample TOEFL test demands.

SECTION # 4: TOEFL SAMPLE TEST RESULTS

Table 4.1

Likert Scale Responses	Frequency/Percentage per year						Total	%
	2014	2015	2016					
I strongly disagree	1	3%	3	6%	7	20%	11	7%
I disagree	14	39%	9	20%	27	36%	50	32%
I neither agree nor disagree	9	25%	18	39%	25	34%	52	33%
I agree	10	28%	11	24%	11	15%	32	21%
I strongly agree	2	5%	4	9%	4	5%	10	6%
Invalid	0	0%	1	2%	1	1%	2	1%
Total	36	100%	46	100%	75	100%	157	100%

Chart 4.1

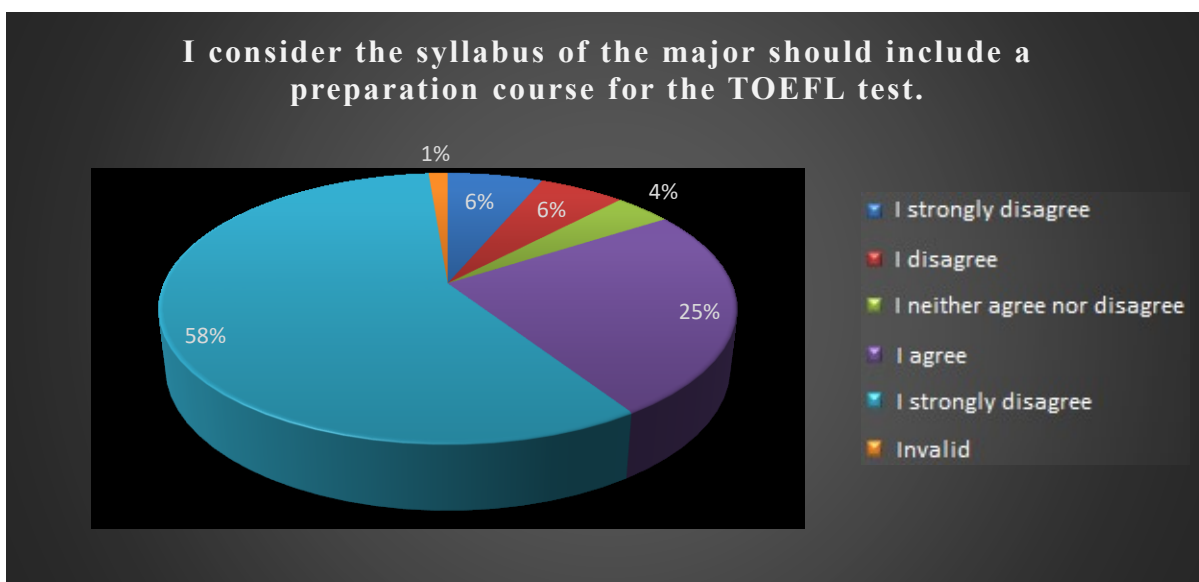


Analysis: This pie chart shows that the 32% of the students disagrees and the 7% strongly disagrees with the fact of obtaining a good score because of the subjects belonging to the syllabus of the major helped. However, 21% agrees, 6% strongly agrees and 33% of the students neither agrees nor disagrees. The 1% in the pie chart represents an invalid response meaning that the students did not select any of the five given options. Even though some students agreed claiming that they got a good score because the content of the syllabus help them, a higher percentage disagreed or neither agreed nor disagreed.

Table 4.2

Likert Scale Responses	Frequency/Percentage per year						Total	%
	2014		2015		2016			
I strongly disagree	2	5%	3	7%	5	7%	10	6%
I disagree	2	6%	5	11%	2	3%	9	6%
I neither agree nor disagree	0	0%	1	2%	5	7%	6	4%
I agree	12	33%	12	26%	15	20%	39	25%
I strongly agree	20	56%	24	52%	47	62%	91	58%
Invalid	0	0%	1	2%	1	1%	2	1%
Total	36	100%	46	100%	75	100%	157	100%

Chart 4.2

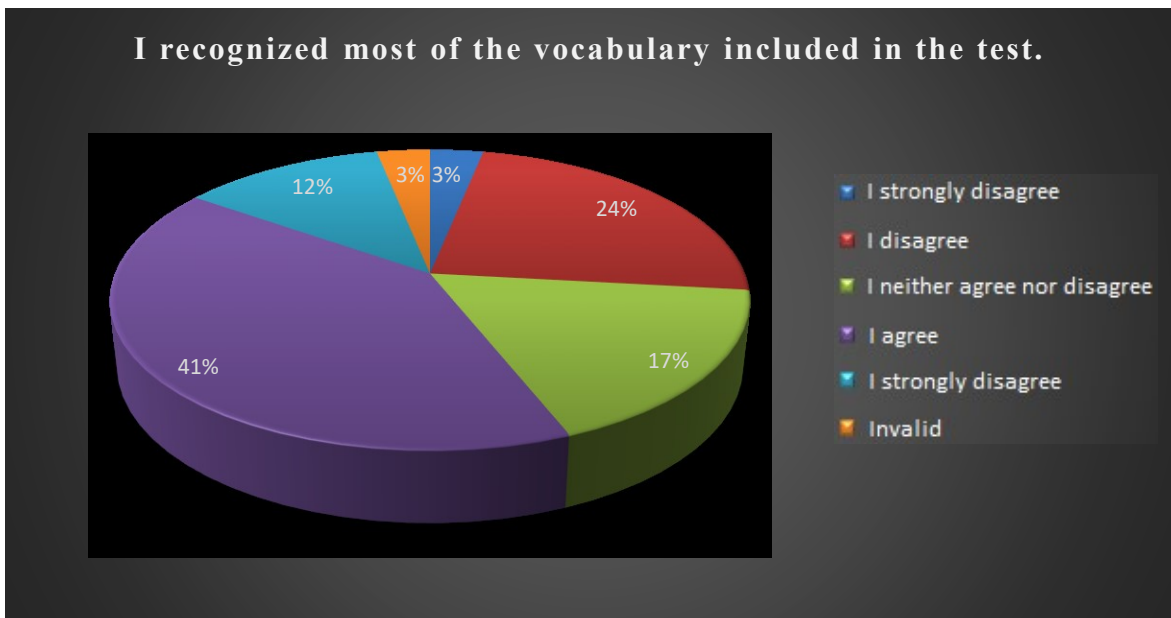


Analysis: It is clear from the information given in this pie chart that 58% of the students strongly agree, and 25% agrees with the fact that the syllabus of the major should include a preparation course for the TOEFL test. On the other hand, 6% of the students disagrees, another 6% strongly disagrees, and only 4% of the students neither agrees nor disagrees. The 1% in the pie chart represents invalid responses. Thus, most of the students considered that there should be a preparation course for the TOEFL test due to this will improve their scores.

Table 4.3

Likert Scale Responses	Frequency/Percentage per year						Total	%
	2014		2015		2016			
I strongly disagree	0	0%	3	7%	2	3%	5	3%
I disagree	16	45%	8	17%	13	17%	37	24%
I neither agree nor disagree	3	8%	8	17%	16	21%	27	17%
I agree	16	44%	17	37%	31	42%	64	41%
I strongly agree	1	3%	6	13%	12	16%	19	12%
Invalid	0	0%	4	9%	1	1%	5	3%
Total	36	100%	46	100%	75	100%	157	100%

Chart 4.3

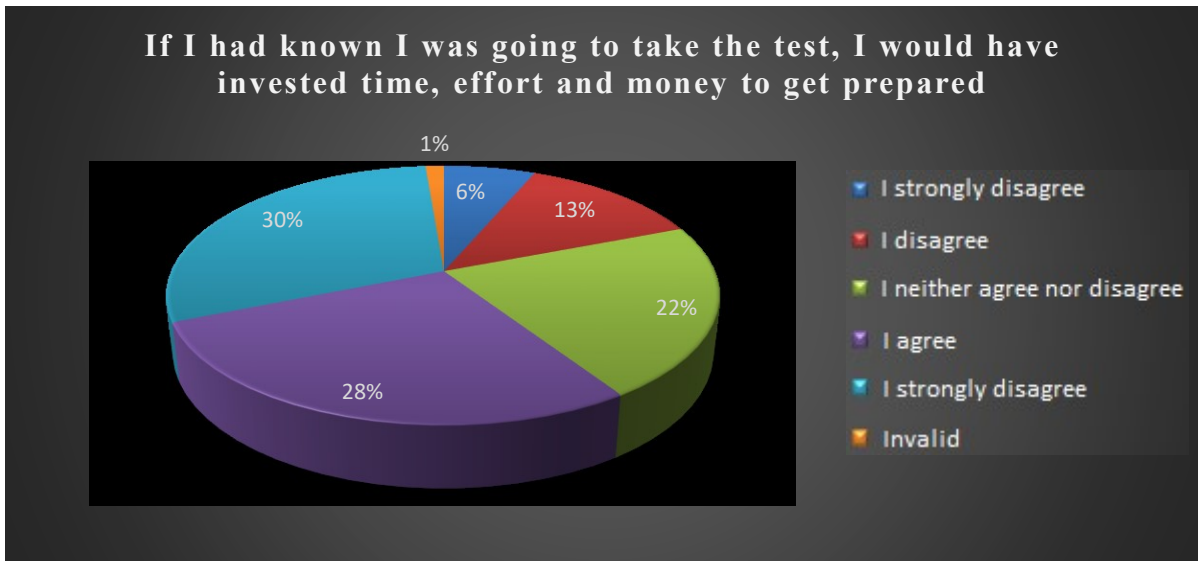


Analysis: According to this pie chart 41% of the students agrees and 12% strongly agrees with the fact that they recognized most of the vocabulary included in the Sample TOEFL Test. In addition, 24% disagrees, 3% strongly disagrees, and 17% of the students neither agrees nor disagrees. There is a 3% that represents invalid responses, meaning that the students did not select any of the five given options. Overall, more than half of the students recognized the vocabulary presented in the Sample TOEFL Test which makes clear that the lack of vocabulary did not affect their scores in the test.

Table 4.4

Likert Scale Responses	Frequency/Percentage per year						Total	%
	2014		2015		2016			
I strongly disagree	3	8%	2	5%	5	7%	10	6%
I disagree	6	17%	6	13%	8	11%	20	13%
I neither agree nor disagree	5	14%	7	15%	22	29%	34	22%
I agree	12	33%	13	28%	19	25%	44	28%
I strongly agree	10	28%	17	37%	20	27%	47	30%
Invalid	0	0%	1	2%	1	1%	2	1%
Total	36	100%	46	100%	75	100%	157	100%

Chart 4.4

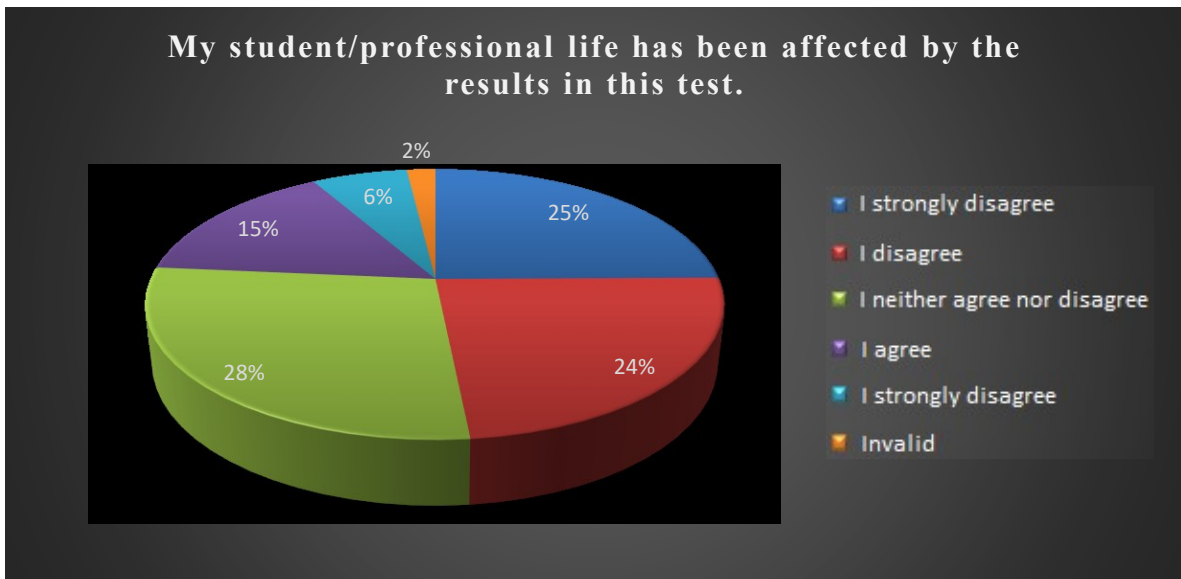


Analysis: As shown in this pie chart 30% of the students strongly agrees, and 28% agrees, with the fact that if they had known they were going to take the test, they would have invested time, effort, and money to get prepared. On the other hand, a 13% disagrees, a 6% strongly disagrees and a 22% of the students neither agrees nor disagrees. There is also 1% in the pie chart that represents invalid responses, meaning that the students did not select any of the five given options. Therefore, most of the students said they would get prepared for the TOEFL test if they had known they were going to take it.

Table 4.5

Likert Scale Responses	Frequency/Percentage per year						Total	%
	2014		2015		2016			
I strongly disagree	10	28%	9	20%	20	27%	39	25%
I disagree	10	28%	12	26%	15	20%	37	24%
I neither agree nor disagree	7	19%	11	24%	26	34%	44	28%
I agree	6	17%	8	17%	10	13%	24	15%
I strongly agree	3	8%	5	11%	2	3%	10	6%
Invalid	0	0%	1	2%	2	3%	3	2%
Total	36	100%	46	100%	75	100%	157	100%

Chart 4.5

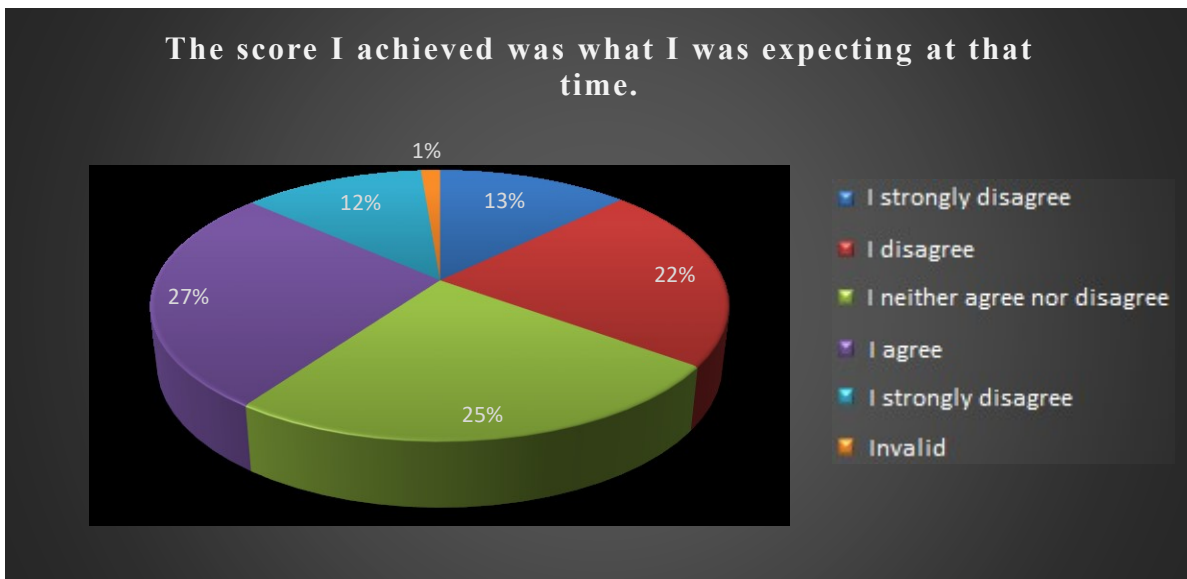


Analysis: This pie chart shows that 24% of the students disagree and a 25% strongly disagree with the fact that their student or professional life has been affected by the results in the Sample TOEFL Test. On the other hand, 15% agrees, 6% strongly agrees and 28% of the students neither agrees nor disagrees. The rest 2% represents invalid responses meaning that the students did not select any of the five given options. The results reveal that more than half of the students believed their student/professional life has not been affected by the result gotten in the Sample TOEFL test.

Table 4.6

Likert Scale Responses	Frequency/Percentage per year						Total	%
	2014		2015		2016			
I strongly disagree	2	6%	5	11%	13	17%	20	13%
I disagree	11	31%	9	19%	15	20%	35	22%
I neither agree nor disagree	8	22%	9	20%	22	29%	39	25%
I agree	12	33%	15	33%	15	20%	42	27%
I strongly agree	3	8%	7	15%	9	12%	19	12%
Invalid	0	0%	1	2%	1	2%	2	1%
Total	36	100%	46	100%	75	100%	157	100%

Chart 4.6



Analysis: According to this pie chart a 27% of the students agrees, and a 12% strongly agrees with the scores gotten. However, it also shows that a 22% disagrees, a 13% strongly disagrees and 25% of the students neither agrees nor disagrees with the results they got. The orange area with 1% represents invalid answers. Hence, by seen these percentages some students were glad, some others were unhappy with the scores gotten, and there is a group of students that probably doesn't even recall the scores they got so they cannot say if the scores they achieved were what they were expecting in the Sample TOEFL test at that time.



3.7 INTERPRETATION

After examining the data collected from teachers and students (See Appendixes F & G) the team determined the causative factors of low scores in the Sample TOEFL test were:



1. **Lack of official information from the FLD:**

Ngafifudin (2016) agrees that one of the reasons why students get low scores is because of the lack of understanding of the TOEFL itself, as a result of the few information given about the test and its importance.

The data gathered from charts 1.1 to 1.7 from the students' survey reveals that many students did not receive any information about the test before taking it from either their teachers or any other person in charge of administrating it, but they did were conscious about it. Students claimed they got to know about why they had to take the Sample TOEFL Test as well as when and where, although it was not from an official source but because they heard about it from other classmates.

The lack of information is one of the factors why students from the Teaching major from the Foreign Languages Department have been getting low scores in the Sample TOEFL Test. Students did not know sufficiently about the test in terms of structure, time, content, and the level of difficulty it involves, so they did not know what to expect at the moment of taking the test.

Moreover, interviewed teachers stated that the lack of information in terms of time, structure and content related to the test has a big impact in students' scores and the worst part is that some teachers assume that their students have all the information about it and that they



are familiarized with this test so teachers did not provide the needed guidance to prepare students for it. Here are some interviewees' opinions from questions 6 and 7:

“I have never thought about it (providing all the information to students about the test), but it is necessary because as I told you, there are many of them that do not know, they have no idea what the test is about, to visit them and tell them that the ones that are interested in taking the Practice Teaching I course they should take this test.”

Professor Grace Gomez.

“Students should be familiarized with the structure, because they do not know how the test works and even though we explain it to them at the beginning of the test they fail because they do not pay attention.”

Professor Ricardo Cabrera.

Therefore, the main objective was achieved, finding out that the lack of official information from the FLD was one of the causative factors of low scores in the Sample TOEFL test according to students who took the test during the years 2014-2016. There is then a need that students get emerged in this matter and know everything about the test not only because this will serve as a preparation for them but also because they should know about all the advantages that getting a high score in this test brings.





2. Lack of willingness:

It was confirmed that not only a skill-based issue has been categorized as causative factor of low scores in the Sample TOEFL Test, but also it has been found a willingness-based issue due to not only the researchers but also teachers, students, the theory and the data collected concluded the same idea. According to Mark, (2012.) the lack of willingness or enthusiasm to succeed in the test is a factor of low scores since many students do not take it seriously.

The majority of scores were considered low and students were expecting them since they knew they did not get any preparation or were self-study to get higher scores or to show a good performance in the test because of the lack of willingness. It was discovered that being placed in the FLD is not considered an advantage for students; it is in fact a disadvantage since they considered being there is more challenging and they had to do extra work as Teacher's Assistants than being placed in another school.

In addition, students reported that if they had known they were going to take the test, they would have invested more time, effort and money to get a higher score (graphic 4.4), but unfortunately by analyzing other items from the survey and the scores they got in 2014, 2015 and 2016 respectively, it can be demonstrated that students were not interested in having a good performance or willing to improve their skills due to the fact that they thought that neither their student or professional life could be affected by the Sample TOEFL Test scores.

Furthermore, this willingness issue was not only recognized by students but also by teachers who agreed the same. Teachers expressed that low grades do not mean students are bad students, sometimes they are closed to get any feedback or something alike. Sometimes





teachers are willing to help students but as in this case, the bad attitude and the lack of importance in this matter were some of the causes why many students did not show an outstanding job.

Even though the graphic 1.6 showed that students considered important to perform well in the test, they actually did not take it seriously because they expressed that they did not take the time to get prepared or make any research regarding the test. Thus, the test results have shown a different situation since most of the scores were under the minimum score required.

3. No English Background:

This was found as another causative factor of low scores. English background had an impact with students' performance in the Sample TOEFL Test. Brown and Yule (1983) expressed that "students are not able to show a good performance since they have not had a sufficient background and have not developed their English skills. A weak background may be since English is not students' mother tongue so they do not have a strong basis on it."

Besides that, when students were asked if they took English classes prior their enrollment to the Bachelor of Arts with Emphasis in Teaching Option, it resulted that, according to chart 2.1, a 61% of the students did not take English classes before their enrollment and just a 32% did. This clearly stated that students background was not strong enough or students did not have any English basis so that reduced their opportunities of getting a higher proficiency level. As well, based on chart 2.2 they did not have any background knowledge about the test since the majority of them have no previous experience taking it.





Professors Grace Gomez and Ricardo Cabrera stated that English Background had a big incidence in the low scores in the Sample TOEFL Test. They said it is directly related with the students' competences and results.

In consequence, not having the appropriate English background was clearly one of the causative factors of low scores in the test. Then, not only teachers but also students recognized that English background was an issue in this matter, and researchers wonder what if students would have at least a basic English level background when enrolling in the major will provide a different outcome in the Sample TOEFL test in the FLD.

4. Low and inconsistent students' English Proficiency:

Throughout the data obtained it has been discovered that students did not have the same English proficiency at the moment they took the Sample TOEFL test. This has to do with the fact that some students had not taken all the English subjects. According to the information provided by Professor Grace the most appropriate time for students to take this test would be after approving the Advanced English subjects, by doing such thing, students would have the chance of increasing their knowledge and improving the necessary skills such as listening and reading to get ready in order to take the Sample TOEFL Test.

Furthermore, this would have allowed them to grow their vocabulary, because even though the statistics showed on the chart 3.8 most students recognized the vocabulary included on the test, it was clear that the lack of this affected the final score.

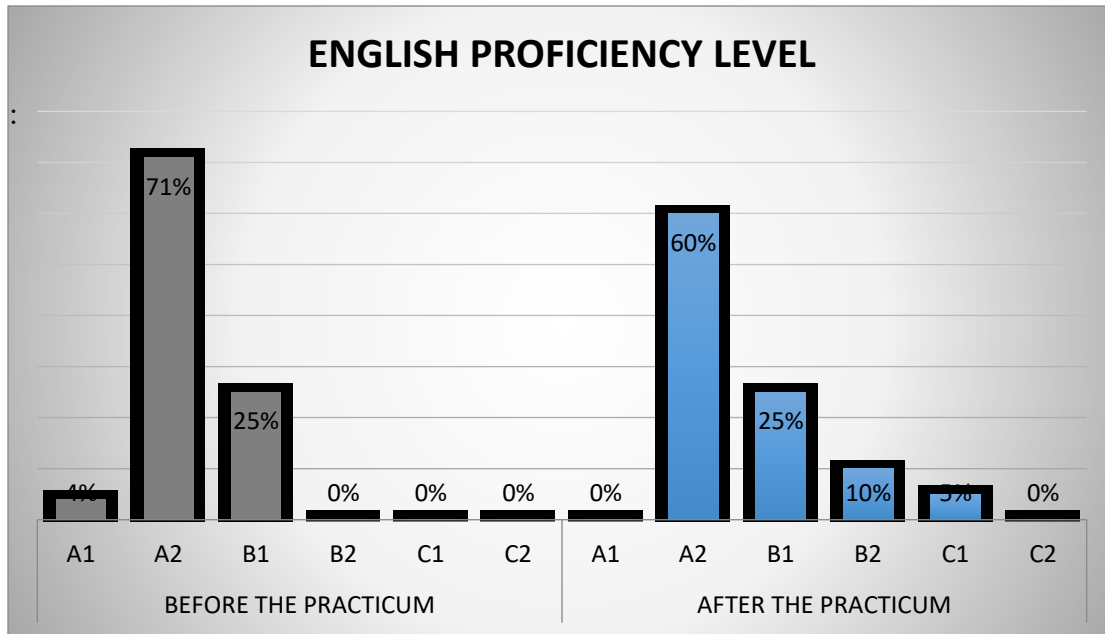


The interviewers also expressed that there were some cases in which students without approving the Advanced English subject took the Sample TOEFL Test, since there was not a restriction to do such a thing, this led them to be at a disadvantage with those who have completed the English subjects.

Also, the data shown that, the English level varied among students. According to the results gotten from the survey administered to students almost the 50% answered they were placed at the Advanced level, while, more than that percentage expressed they had an intermediate one and others just said they were not at the appropriate English level as it should be, meaning that they did not even know at what level they were at the moment of taking the test, this information was gotten from charts 2.3 and 2.4.



But according to the scores got during the years 2014 through 2016 most students failed, meaning that they did not reach the minimum score to approve the Sample TOEFL Test. This just demonstrated that students were not at the English level they were supposed to be by then.

As well, it is important to mention that according to the results obtained on a previous research carried by William Moisés Gálvez Canjura and Lucero Yamileth Vides López, they looked for the English proficiency level in students belonging to the Foreign Languages Department, and they found out the following:



“This graph shows the proficiency results that were gotten by both samples; the previous research with 24 students and 20 of the same students (except for 4, due to they dropped out) for the follow up research. In the first research, there was a 4% of students that got the level A1. A 71% of students that got an A1 level of proficiency and a 25% of students that got a B1 level. Nonetheless, a notable improvement is seen in the follow up research. A 60% of the students got an A2 level, a 25% of the got the B1 level, a 10% got the B2 level, and 5% went up to the C1 level.” (Vides Lopez & Galvez Canjura, 2015, p. 36).

This chart revealed that the level of proficiency students at the Foreign Languages Department had was even lower than the one they considered they had, meaning that students at this point of the major had not reached the English proficiency level that they were supposed to have by then. But nevertheless, it can be seen that after taking their practicum the English proficiency was improved.



By taking into account the previous excerpt from a 2015 research and the data taken from this current research, the team has concluded that Low and inconsistent students' English Proficiency was one of the main factors that has a big incidence in the low scores in the Sample TOEFL Test, and there is a need to go deeper in this matter, so, if students were at the appropriate English level, the results gotten would be even higher before their practicum.

5. Lack of preparation for the test:

By studying the information gathered, it can be said that students were not well prepared for taking the Sample TOEFL Test. According to the response given by Professor Grace some of the students did not even know or had an idea about this test. Also, it can be added that the results gotten from the survey administered to students the 57% said they were not aware with the test in terms of structure and content, this can be seen reflected on chart 3.2 Since students never take the test before, they were not familiar with it and did not study the strategies needed to be able to get a high score so they ended up failing the test with a poor preparation.

Being prepared not only concerns to the teachers who are in charge of administering the TOEFL test since students had to investigate, to know or to look for some information related to the test to prepare themselves and thus obtain a good result. Based on the information gotten from chart 3.1 almost 50% of students expressed they did not practice their English skills such as reading and listening before taking the test neither took the time for researching about them. Without practicing these important skills, the opportunity to have good results in these sections were reduced.





6. Equipment and Test environment issues:

Both teachers who were interviewed said that even though the equipment was the appropriate in order to take the Sample TOEFL Test, not all of it was either in good conditions or working properly. Students confirmed this information by saying that the equipment was generating a lot of issues. Some students claimed that the computers they were using were suddenly turning off, which still generates a waste of time and produces loss of concentration on students as well.

Besides that, students reported in the open question section (See Appendix H) that they had problems with the earphones, so this caused students not to listen to the tracks in a clear way or not to understand the information, the instructions or directions given in the listening section and hence, not allowing them to perform the exercises presented correctly. Also, they stated that the place where the test was administered was not 100% appropriate, there was a lot of noise outside the room and there was not enough space for the number of students who took the test, which made them feel uncomfortable. In conclusion, there were multiple aspects that influenced on students' scores at the moment of taking the test and definitely, these were taken as factors of low scores in the Sample TOEFL Test.

7. Syllabus or curricula does not include a TOEFL test preparation course:

The data collected showed that most of the students agreed about the necessity of having a preparation course for the TOEFL Test, either for the sample test administered in the Foreign Languages Department or the authentic one, because even though some of them





think subjects in the current curricula provide them the skills to get an advanced English proficiency level, they actually need to get to know about the structure and content of this kind of tests to learn how to manage their time, how to address the different sections and how to deal with the academic content.

Hence, teachers' opinions differed from one to another when asked about the idea of creating a project that helps students to get prepared looking forward to the real TOEFL and the improvement of students' scores at the sample test. One professor considered it is a great idea to support students in this area but on the other hand, other professor stated that this will generate a cost and students would not want to pay for it.

In contrast, other universities in the metropolitan area of San Salvador are offering to their students a TOEFL preparation course as part of their curricula at no extra cost. For example, in the University Francisco Gavidia this course is part of their optional subjects which are taken in the last year of the major, and there is also a graduation requirement regarding students must accredit the Level B2 of English, at least, through a standardized test with minimum scores set as it follows: TOEFL-ITP (520), TOEFL-iBT (86), TOEIC (751). If any student cannot reach the minimum level of proficiency they cannot graduate.

Besides that, there are some students that although they are still taking the Intermediate English II, they can also take the Teaching Practice courses due to it is not illegal for the syllabus or curricula of the major. According to Professor Grace the only thing they can do as teachers is to suggest those students that it is not the appropriate moment to take the subjects because they are still in the moment where they are developing their skills of the English language.





But, in most of the cases students don't care about it, they think that if the syllabus allows it they can just take it, so they do it, and hence they do not have yet the competences to get outstanding scores in the Sample TOEFL Test and to perform their teaching practices. In addition, it is important to highlight that the University of El Salvador is currently using a 1999 curricula while private universities are applying a 2011 curricula for the same major (e.g. Universidad Tecnológica) which leaves students from the University of El Salvador behind.

In conclusion, the curricula of the major needs to be updated and improved as soon as possible so students will be able to get informed, prepared, and reduce the anxiety, stress and other factors that have been causing low scores in the Sample TOEFL Test.

8. Teachers' methodology:

Interviewed experts concluded that not only the current curricula of the major need a big improvement in the different areas but also the teachers' methodology needs to be changed or modified in some academic aspects that will challenge students to develop their language skills and have them to get the proficiency level they need in order to graduate.

According to some students, teachers at the Foreign Languages Department need to provide them a follow up and get them prepared for this test by implementing new activities that reflect enhancement in their scores. "Maybe the teachers in general have limitations as well, we are not native speakers of the language, and that is probably reflected in the student's competences. The TOEFL test is originally design for those foreign students who want to or





would like to study at the Universities of the U.S.” said professor Cabrera when asked about the causative factors of low scores in the Sample TOEFL Test.

In addition, some students thought that there is no commitment neither from the FLD authorities nor from teachers in this matter. They expressed that it would be important to consider a preparation course for the TOEFL test and that it should be implemented by the department in the semester before students have to take the test; for example, in the Didactics III it should be implemented a course that prepares them to take this test or if students get low scores that there should be a follow-up course that helps them to improve or provide supporting material since there is a lack of practice in either skill.

Overall, teachers’ methodology has been considered a causative factor of low scores by both experts interviewed and students not only because it is part of their responsibility as professionals to own their students’ accomplishments or failures but also because if they improve students will do it as well.

9. Other factors.

By analyzing the information collected it can be said that more than half of the students believes that other factors caused by stress in the day of taking the Sample TOEFL test affected their performance and hence their results. According to Nicky Hayes, editor of Foundations of Psychology, common responses to “exam stress” include disturbed sleep patterns, tiredness, worry, irregular eating habits, increased infections, and inability to concentrate.



As mentioned by several students, personal problems, and the lack of information and practice regarding the Sample TOEFL Test have also unchained a series of other factors like stress so they could not manage to get enough rest and food prior the exam which made them feel tired, bored, hungry, anxious, and even desperate to finish the test, so they did it in a hurry and ended up getting low scores.

As shown above the other factors like rest and food in the day of taking the Sample TOEFL test affected students' performance due to the stress provoked by the uncertainty of what the test was about.



3.8 CONCLUSIONS



With this research paper the team provided valuable, efficient, and reliable information not only to know where the issue is coming from, but also to provide recommendations to have a crucial improvement in students' scores. In the last years, the Foreign Languages Department students from the Bachelor of Arts in English with Emphasis in Teaching option have been getting low scores.

Hence, this research focused on the last three years' scores gotten with the main purpose of finding out the causative factors of low scores in the Sample TOEFL Test. After examining the data collected from teachers and students, the team determined the causative factors of low scores in the sample TOEFL test were:

Lack of official information from the FLD, no English Background, lack of willingness from students, no preparation for taking the test, English proficiency issues, equipment and test environment issues, lack of a preparation course included in the curricula, teachers' methodology, and other factors caused by exam stress.

Besides, according to the findings obtained from the data analysis and interpretation, the team concluded that the most common causative factors in the Sample TOEFL Test that students faced during the years 2014-2016 are: lack of preparation for the test, low and inconsistent students' English proficiency, lack of official information from the FLD, and lack of willingness.

Furthermore, it was discovered that getting low scores in the Sample TOEFL Test is not only a skill-based issue, but also a willingness-based issue. In spite of the deficiencies students have in the English language, that affected in a serious manner their performance in



the test, they did not give enough importance to show an outstanding job. Consequently, they did not take the time to get prepared or well-informed about it and avoid getting a high score to prevent being placed in a challenged level to perform their practicum.

In addition, researchers state that although the percentage of skill issues and willingness issues is the same, if students are committed or motivated to show an outstanding performance, scores can improve and get awesome results even though students' language competences are not so good, but teachers' encouragement can play a crucial role in motivating them.

By doing such a thing, teachers can take students to a higher level and place them in the appropriate one. However, if students have great English competences, but are not willing to show a good performance, changes would not be possible. A good preparation for this test and a great attitude are basically the keys to success in this matter.





3.9 RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering the interviewed teachers and students' opinions, the researchers suggest the following recommendations which are intended to improve the future scores in the Sample TOEFL Test administered to the students of the Bachelor in Arts with Emphasis in Teaching option of the Foreign Languages Department before taking Teaching Practice I subject:

To the FLD Authorities:

- To create and include in the curricula a project that prepares students with helpful techniques and tools to get a high score or, at least, reach the minimum score not only for taking this sample test, but also the certified TOEFL test. This will be for sure a great way to improve students' scores and the University of El Salvador will be graduating students that will have an outstanding performance taking the real test.
- As a main request, students must take a diagnostic exam before their enrollment in the Bachelor of Arts with Emphasis in Teaching Option. This will help FLD authorities and teachers to know the level of proficiency students have, and if there is a need of reinforcement, they can take an English course that will help them improve their English knowledge prior their enrollment in the major.
- As it is known, teachers and the FLD authorities are working in the enhancement of the curricula, and as a recommendation from the students can be said that including reading techniques as in Readings and Conversation subjects is helpful, but could be







better if other skill techniques are included in the rest of the subjects with exercises that help students to get familiar with this kind of tests.

- To examine students in smaller groups and with a better arrangement of teachers and students time, so test scores could improve since students would be fully focused when taking the test and they would feel comfortable as well. For example, this year the test was administered to groups of 20 students but even doing so there was not enough space for all of them.
- To improve the lab conditions where the Sample TOEFL test is administered. The place should be an appropriate room where students can be focused on the test and there should not be any interferences, issues with the equipment, and/or interruptions of any kind. The researchers consider it would be very helpful for students so they can feel comfortable while taking the test.

To the professors in charge of administering the test:



- To have a brief meeting with students enrolled in the subject Didactics III to make sure they know everything about the test, and not just the fact why or when they will take it but to take the time to inform them in a timely manner about what to expect, the type of material that can be studied, and the most important thing, to let them know how important this test is, by just mentioning the advantages that getting a high score can bring and motivate them to start practicing.

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- Since some students still believe the score in the Sample TOEFL Test is not so important for teachers to place them to develop their teaching practice, it is advisable to take the score as a part of the evaluations of the subject Teaching Practice I, so they will care about it. This is because teachers not only consider the score but also students' schedules, and place of living, so students ended up believing it is not so important and take the test just because it is a request.
 - To make sure the lab equipment is working properly, so that students would not lose priceless time in trying to make the computers or the headsets work, or in the worst scenario to prevent losing their answers in the middle of the test. Thus, teachers can make some testing before administering the Sample TOEFL Test to check how many computers and accessories are not working fine. This will make a more organized administration of the test.
 - If students get low scores in the Sample TOEFL Test, provide feedback and a follow up to help them improve their English Skills with extra material, assessments, or any other resources available. Since professors Grace Gomez and Ricardo Cabrera work with an online platform, it would be great to upload some extra material that help students to improve their scores, and to create some assessments to make sure students are taking advantage of that material as well.

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- To run a different test other than the Sample TOEFL Test that not only measures English Proficiency but also to know how well prepared a student is for teaching a foreign language.
 - Along the years, the students with the highest scores are placed in the FLD to develop the Teaching Practice I and II. However, nowadays students do not want to be placed in a challenged level so they just get low scores on purpose to avoid it. It is recommended to change the roles and to place the students with the lowest scores within the FLD so students would be in a challenging level and what they probably never learnt by then, they are going to learn it by the time to perform the teaching practices, which would be a perfect time to improve themselves.



To the professors belonging to the FLD in general:

- To provide students with backup material related to the test in terms of content and structure and let them know its importance, so that they can start being familiar with the test and practice as well. Hence, by the time students take the test they will know what to expect.
- To get students to know the different TOEFL test techniques and make them to practice with exercises similar to the ones they will encounter in the Sample TOEFL Test. It is very important students realize how effective can be to use test techniques since success in this kind of proficiency tests depends greatly on time management.

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- To apply different teaching techniques that help students to improve their language competences since they have expressed that some teachers need an improvement in the methodology they apply. Students will get motivated with a learning process not only enjoyable and friendly but also meaningful.

To the students of the FLD Teaching Major:

- To be committed with the major and appreciate the FLD as a place to become great professionals and not as just an academy to learn a second language. Teaching is one of the most rewarding careers and it is important they realize about it.
- To give importance, learn to be self-study and have a positive attitude towards the language and major that are being studied. If students are willing to get a high score and improve themselves, high scores can be reached easily.
- To take the time to get prepared for the test. Students need to look by themselves all information related to the test that help them out to get a high score and get fully prepared. Preparation is one of the keys to success in this test.
- To get self-control out of their emotional problems, work issues, and/or stress. They need to know the importance of being focused on the test. The lack of self-control is





something that really affects students' performance, and it is advisable they are relaxed before taking the test and leave off their personal problems aside.

- To try to improve themselves by practicing their English skills along the major with their teachers and classmates. Just by practicing their language competences they will know how rewarding is to improve themselves since there is always an area of enhancement.



CHAPTER IV

“TIMETABLE”



CHAPTER V

“GLOSSARY”



GLOSSARY

**Accurate:**

Correct, exact, and without any mistakes.

Administer:

Manage and be responsible for the running of something in particular.

Advisor:

A teacher responsible for advising students on academic matters.

Approach:

The method used or steps taken in setting about a task, problem, etc.

Assessment:

Refers to the wide variety of methods or tools that educators use to evaluate, measure, and document the academic readiness, learning progress, skill acquisition, or educational needs of students.

Background:

One's origin, education, experience, etc., in relation to one's present character, status, etc.

Causative:

Causing things to happen.

Communicative Competences:

A speaker's internalized knowledge both of the grammatical rules of a language and of the rules for appropriate use in social contexts.

Correlation:

Mutual relation of two or more things, parts, etc.

Curricula:

See definition under the term syllabus.

**Data:**

Information, especially facts or numbers, collected to be examined and considered and used to help decision-making, or information in an electronic form that can be stored and used by a computer.

English Proficiency:

The ability to speak, read and/or write in English.

Enroll:

To put yourself or someone else on an official list for an activity or for membership in a group, or to accept someone in such a list.

Factor:

One of the elements contributing to a particular result or situation.

FLD:

Acronym used for Foreign Languages Department.

Lack:

Deficiency or absence of something needed, desirable, or customary.

Language:

Body of words and the system for their use common to a people who are of the same community or nation, the same geographic area, or the same cultural tradition.

Likert Scale:

It is a psychometric scale commonly involved in research that employs questionnaires. It is the most widely used approach to scaling responses in survey research, such that the term (or more accurately the Likert-type scale) is often used interchangeably with rating scale, even though the two are not synonymous.

Literature:

All the information relating to a subject, especially information written by experts.

Longitudinal study:

It is done on people or groups over a long period of time.

**Major:**

A subject or field of study chosen by a student to represent his or her principal interest and upon which a large share of his or her efforts are concentrated.

Methodology:

A system of ways of doing, teaching, or studying something.

Practicum:

The part of a course consisting of practical work in a particular field.

Population:

The number or body of inhabitants in a place belonging to a specific social, cultural, socioeconomic, ethnic, or racial subgroup.

Rank:

To have a position higher or lower than others, or to be considered to have such a position.

Reliable:

Someone or something that is reliable can be trusted or believed because he, she, or it works or behaves well in the way you expect.

Skill:

The ability, coming from one's knowledge, practice, aptitude, etc., to do something well.

Sponsor:

To support a person, organization, or activity by giving money, encouragement, or other help.

Statement:

Something that someone says or writes officially, or an action done to express an opinion.

Survey:

An examination of opinions, behavior, etc., made by asking people questions.

**Syllabus:**

The subjects or books to be studied in a particular course, especially a course that leads to an exam.

TOEFL:

Test of English as a Foreign Language is a standardized test to measure the English language ability of non-native speakers wishing to enroll in English-speaking universities.

Undergraduate:

A student who is studying for their first degree at a college or university.

Willing:

To be happy to do something if it is needed.



CHAPTER VI



“REFERENCES”

REFERENCES

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CHAPTER VII

“APPENDIXES”

APPENDIX A

TEST RESULTS 2014

#	STUDENTS' NAME	SCORE
1	C.S	537
2	J.C	508
3	A. G	508
4	O. G	505
5	C.Q	500
6	C.P	500
7	D.F	500
8	M.M	497
9	O. F	492
10	C.A	490
11	H. A	490
12	E. V	488
13	M. S	483
14	E. M	482
15	A.H	477
16	B. C	468
17	Y. A	465
18	R. N	463
19	I.M	460
20	L. A	458
21	F. P	457
22	I.Z	457
23	J. S	457
24	N. M	457
25	B. M	453
26	M. C	453
27	J. A	452
28	K. V	452
29	M.L	452
30	A. A	450
31	S. Q	450
32	V.M	450
33	G. G	448
34	C.P	445
35	N. P	443
36	S. G	443
37	H. A	442
38	J. F	442

39	M. A	442
40	D. G	440
41	N. A	437
42	H. M	435
43	C. N	428
44	M. M	428
45	M. C	428
46	A.M	422
47	I.N	422
48	R. P	422
49	G. F	417
50	J. Q	415
51	T. G	415
52	K.C	413
53	E. V	412
54	A R	408
55	E. T	408
56	E. O	408
57	F. C	408
58	Y. C	408
59	F. L	408
60	J. M	403
61	L. G	402
62	O. M	397
63	I.C	393
64	M.A	393
65	R.C	393
66	R. E	392
67	J. F	390
68	S. R	390
69	E. C	387
70	L. P	387
71	W. O	387
72	E. G	383
73	K. G	383
74	G. N	377
75	J. G	375
76	D. A	373
77	J. G	370
78	C. R	365
79	E. A	362
80	J. M	362
81	A.P	360
82	D. C	352

83	T. M	350
84	W. C	350
85	A. P	345
86	E. S	345
87	J. Q	345
88	R. U	343
89	B. A	338
90	R. C	337
91	L. R	328
92	L. C	323
93	K. C	320
94	M. A	310
95	V. M	302
96	M. R	298

TEST RESULTS 2015

#	STUDENT'S NAME	SCORE
1	A. R	528
2	J. H	518
3	V. P	513
4	S. B	508
5	M. C	497
6	C. L	485
7	A. F	483
8	N. L	483
9	P. G	482
10	G. A	478
11	I. A	475
12	D. T	472
13	Y. O	467
14	A. F	467
15	K. R	463
16	R. A	460
17	E. G	460
18	J. C	458
19	C. D	450
20	A. E	445
21	E. R	443
22	C. R	443
23	G. A	442



24	C. P	437
25	L. Q	437
26	W. P	437
27	R. H	435
28	C. M	433
29	A. D	430
30	C. A	428
31	A. G	428
32	S. N	428
33	G. P	425
34	A. O	425
35	C. C	422
36	M. L	422
37	E. L	422
38	A. D	418
39	R. B	415
40	I.S	415
41	E. A	415
42	J. E	415
43	E. R	415
44	A. A	413
45	E. S	412
46	J. V	407
47	O. S	405
48	X. A	403
49	I.Q	402
50	C. H	400
51	F. P	400
52	C. G	393
53	E. S	392
54	M. G	390
55	R. L	385
56	D. DL	383
57	G. R	383
58	M. M	383
59	D. C	380
60	M. C	377
61	M. M	375
62	E. L	373
63	C. G	373
64	A. G	370
65	E. F	363
66	O. P	355
67	R. A	350

68	F. R	350
69	M. L	345
70	P. S	303

TEST RESULTS 2016

#	STUDENT'S NAME	SCORE
1	A. D	540
2	J. C	537
3	R. G	522
4	Y. G	519
5	K. G	517
6	D. M	514
7	A. A	512
8	M. L	512
9	M. A	504
10	J. C	494
11	Y. F	494
12	M. F	490
13	H. N	490
14	E. H	490
15	D. H	487
16	G. R	487
17	G. B	485
18	A. L	479
19	L.C	474
20	S. M	474
21	S. V	474
22	A.M	472
23	C. H	470
24	A. S	470
25	F. D	467
26	C. M	464
27	G. V	465
28	R. M	462
29	A. P	460
30	H. R	460
31	J. V	460
32	O. P	460
33	M. B	457
34	M. P	450

35	J. DLP	450
36	D. N	450
37	R. O	450
38	B. G	450
39	E. A	444
40	C. A	444
41	L. A	444
42	V. M	442
43	I.E	440
44	H. L	440
45	S. E	437
46	M. Z	435
47	V. P	435
48	J. A	433
49	K. O	430
50	M. H	429
51	C. C	429
52	M. C	429
53	H. C	429
54	G. B	425
55	W. R	424
56	J. P	422
57	G. A	422
58	P. M	422
59	J. M	419
60	Y. C	419
61	J. G	419
62	S. G	415
63	M. C	415
64	M. M	415
65	O. S	415
66	R. M	415
67	L. O	415
68	J. C	413
69	O. C	409
70	M. S	407
71	L. H	407
72	C. D	407
73	L. L	404
74	W. L	402
75	J. T	402
76	I.P	402
77	Y. A	400
78	C. DLC	399



79	M. A	395
80	V. R	395
81	K. D	394
82	M. R	393
83	J. M	390
84	K. C	387
85	K. M	387
86	F. L	385
87	W. A	384
88	N. M	380
89	M. M	377
90	C. M	377
91	E. G	377
92	M. A	374
93	F. F	373
94	D. P	368
95	D. N	367
96	R. J	363
97	J. A	359
98	S. R	357
99	M. P	352
100	A. R	350
101	W. L	350
102	R. L	338
103	C. O	335
104	M. S	327
105	P. C	308

APPENDIX B

TOEFL PBT (Paper Based Test) / CBT (Computer Based Test) / iBT (Internet Based Test) PUAN KARŞILAŞTIRMALARI

	Internet-based TOTAL	Computer-based TOTAL	Paper-based TOTAL
EXCELLENT	120	300	677
	120	297	673
	119	293	670
	118	290	667
	117	287	660-663
	116	283	657
	114-115	280	650-653
	113	277	647
	111-112	273	640-643
	110	270	637
	109	267	630-633
	106-108	263	623-627
	105	260	617-620
	103-104	257	613
	101-102	253	607-610
	100	250	600-603
	98-99	247	597
	96-97	243	590-593
94-95	240	587	
ADV 3	92-93	237	580-583
	90-91	233	577
	88-89	230	570-573
	86-87	227	567
	84-85	223	563
	83	220	557-560
	81-82	217	553
	79-80	213	550
ADV 2	77-78	210	547
	76	207	540-543
	74-75	203	537
ADV 1	72-73	200	533
	71	197	527-530
	69-70	193	523
	68	190	520
	66-67	187	517
INT 3	65	183	513
	62-63	177	503
	61	173	500
INT 2	59-60	170	497
	58	167	493
	57	163	487-490
	56	160	483
	54-55	157	480
	53	153	477
	52	150	470-473

INT 1	51	147	467
	49-50	143	463
	48	140	460
	47	137	457
	45-46	133	450-453
	44	130	447
	43	127	443
	41-42	123	437-440
	40	120	433
	39	117	430
	38	113	423-427
BEG	36-37	110	420
	35	107	417
	34	103	410-413
	33	100	407
	32	97	400-403
	30-31	93	397
	29	90	390-393
	28	87	387
	26-27	83	380-383
	25	80	377
	24	77	370-373
	23	73	363-367
	22	70	357-360
	21	67	353
	19-20	63	347-350
	18	60	340-343
	17	57	333-337
	16	53	330
	15	50	323-327
	14	47	317-320
	13	43	313
	12	40	310
		11	37
9		33	310
8		30	310
7		27	310
6		23	310
5		20	310
4		17	310
3		13	310
2		10	310
1		7	310
0	3	310	
0	0	310	

El TOEFL y la prueba ECAP deben ser aprobados en un período máximo de dos años posteriores a la finalización del plan de estudio, salvo en casos especiales que deberán ser justificados ante la Dirección Nacional de Educación Superior, quien determinará su pertinencia.

La aplicación ordinaria del TOEFL se realizará en el mes de febrero y la extraordinaria en julio de cada año académico o cuando el MINED lo determine, en las mismas condiciones que la ECAP.

- ii) Los estudiantes que se formen con planes de estudio emitidos por el MINED en la Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés para Tercer Ciclo de Educación Básica y Educación Media, deberán tomar la prueba TOEFL o la que el MINED designe, y obtener un puntaje mínimo de 551 o su equivalente. El número de veces de aplicación de la prueba será abierta, tres serán financiadas por el MINED y el resto por los estudiantes.
- iii) Las personas que se formen con planes de estudio de Licenciatura en Idioma Inglés, cuya estructura curricular se apegue a lo establecido en el Artículo 16 de la Ley de la Carrera Docente, cuando solicite autorización para inscribirse en el Registro Escalonario Docente, deberán presentar los resultados del examen TOEFL o su equivalente determinado por el MINED, con un puntaje mínimo de 551 (el primer punto del nivel superior).
- iv) Todos los docentes formadores de esta especialidad en las IES, deberán tener en su expediente laboral, constancia de resultados examen TOEFL con un puntaje mínimo de 551, emitido por una institución autorizada en El Salvador para la emisión de resultados oficiales TOEFL o su equivalente.

c) **Certificación Global de Notas.**

El MINED hará llegar a la administración académica de cada IES formadora el correspondiente informe de las calificaciones o obtenidas en la prueba ECAP por cada estudiante. Esta calificación deberá formar parte de la certificación global de notas que oficialmente extiendan las autoridades de cada IES.

d) **Duración de la calidad de egresado.**

Cada IES determinará el período de vigencia de la calidad de egresado de los estudiantes, de acuerdo a su Reglamento Interno.

CAPÍTULO II

REQUISITOS PARA LA IMPLEMENTACIÓN DE LAS CARRERAS

Art. 5.- De Cumplimiento Previo.

a) **Instituciones con autorización continua.**

Las instituciones de Educación Superior que a la entrada en vigencia del presente reglamento estén autorizadas para ofrecer carreras de Profesorado o Licenciatura, en alguna de las diferentes especialidades y disciplinas del Currículo Nacional o el Curso de Formación Pedagógica, deberán presentar a la DNES, previo a iniciar actividades de promoción e inscripción, lo siguiente:

- i) Evidencias de cumplimiento de observaciones de la evaluación correspondiente realizada por la DNES, si las hubiere.
- ii) Plan de práctica docente de Profesorado o Licenciatura que incluya los convenios de cooperación entre la institución centro de práctica y la institución de educación superior.
- iii) El plan anual de actualización profesional para formadores de docentes, con al menos un curso sobre la especialidad por cada semestre, con duración mínima de 40 horas efectivas.
- iv) En caso de nuevos Planes o actualizaciones de los mismos por parte del MINED, las IES deben presentar el Plan de implementación de los mismos.



APPENDIX D

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES FOREING LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT



INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

OBJECTIVE:

To identify the causative factors of failed scores in the Cambridge Sample TOEFL test administered to students of the FLD in the years 2014-2016.

DESCRIPTION: The following interview has been created to get to know your valuable opinion about the causative factors of failed scores in the sample TOEFL test due to your experience as a teacher of the subjects of Teaching Practice I and II, and as an administrator of the aforementioned test for the research team to be able to find solutions and recommendations in order to improve students' scores.

1. Based on your experience as a teacher of the subjects of Teaching Practice I and II and as an administrator of the test, why do results vary from one student to another?
2. Are students sufficiently prepared when taking the Sample TOEFL Test?
3. Do you think students have strong English basis at the moment of taking the test?
4. Do the students' English knowledge background have any incidence in students' test scores?
5. Is the English taught in the FLD limited compared to the world standards /that are used to elaborate the Sample TOEFL Test?
6. Are students sufficiently informed about the Sample TOEFL test in terms of structure, content, and time?
7. Do you think the lack of information about structure; content and time affect the students' scores?

- 
- 
8. What are the main causes that influence students to get low scores in the Sample TOEFL Test?
 9. Can you mention the most significant factors that interfere in students' low scores in the Sample TOEFL Test?
 10. Have you ever considered the possibility of creating a project where students not only get prepared to take this type of sample test but the real TOEFL, and thus to reduce the percentage of low scores?
 - YES/NO. Why?
 - If Yes: How should the FLD implement this project?
 - What students will be benefited with this project?
 11. Which means can be used to prepare students for the Sample TOEFL Test?
 12. What suggestions would you give to students to improve their test scores?
 13. Are students provided with all the required equipment at the time of taking the test?
 14. Do you think that the Foreign Languages Department authorities should give the appropriate importance to this research work and that they should follow it up in terms of taking into account the recommendations the research team will provide?

APPENDIX E



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

Objective: To know the factors that contributed to the TOEFL sample test final scores, which was administered from the *Cambridge Preparation for the TOEFL Test* book to students enrolled in the subjects Teaching Practice I and II in the Foreign Languages Department of the University of El Salvador during the years 2014-2016.

Instructions: Read the following statements and check (x) the box of the most accurate answer according to your own experience.

Year you took the TOEFL sample test: _____.

ITEMS	I strongly disagree	I disagree	I neither agree nor disagree	I agree	I strongly agree
TOEFL SAMPLE TEST AWARENESS					
I was given information about the test from my professors.					
I was aware I would take the test before performing my teaching practice.					
I was well-informed what the test is about.					
I was conscious about why I had to take the test.					
I knew the importance to get a good score on the test.					
I considered important to perform this proficiency test as a student of the Bachelor of Arts in English with Emphasis in Teaching.					
I was informed that, based on my final score in the test, I was going to be placed in the appropriate subject level to perform my teaching practice.					
2. ENGLISH PROFICIENCY					
I took English classes prior to my enrollment to the Bachelor of Arts in English with Emphasis in Teaching major.					
I have already taken this test earlier at the FLD or at a different institution.					
I had an Advanced English level at the time of taking the test.					
I had an Intermediate English level at the time of taking the test.					
I consider more difficult answering the reading section than the listening section.					

3. TOEFL TEST PREPARATION					
I practiced my English skills before the test.					
I was familiar with this proficiency test in terms of structure and content before taking it.					
I researched and practiced reading and listening techniques to get a good score on the test.					
I was aware about how long the test would take.					
The subjects of the syllabus related to the sections of the test provided me useful tools for it.					
My physical/health condition was optimal at the time of taking the test.					
Rest and food in the day of the test influenced my performance.					
I was aware about the vocabulary / knowledge the test demands.					

4. TOEFL SAMPLE TEST RESULTS					
I obtained a good score because the subjects belonging to the syllabus of the major helped me.					
I consider the syllabus of the major should include a preparation course for the TOEFL test.					
I recognized most of the vocabulary included in the test.					
If I had known I was going to take the test, I would have invested time, effort and money to get prepared.					
My student / professional life has been affected by the results in this test.					
The score I achieved was what I was expecting at that time.					

<p>OTHER ASPECTS</p> <p>List other factors that might cause students to get a low score in the TOEFL sample test.</p>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
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[THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!]

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS

Interviewee: Professor Grace Gomez

- 1. Based on your experience as a teacher of the subjects of Teaching Practice I and II and as an administrator of the test, why do results vary from one student to another?**

Well, definitely, not all students develop their language competences in the same way, in the same level, so even though all of them are supposed to be in the same level, taking into account the moment in which they are in the major, because most of them are in the fourth year I think, so they are not taking the same subjects. Most of them are in the correct place, they are in the semester where they should be, right? In most of the cases. But, even though we had had the experiences that based on the requirements this subject asks, there are some students that are still taking the Intermediate English II, and they can take the practice teaching courses. And that is something that it is not illegal according to our programs. What we can do is just to suggest those students that it is not the appropriate moment to take the subjects because they are still in the moment where they are developing their skills of the English language. But, in most of the cases students don't care about it, they think if it is in the program I can take it, this is not illegal, and they take it. Definitely they do not have the competences for this (for taking the test.)





2. **Are students sufficiently prepared when taking the Sample TOEFL Test?**

Not everybody, I will say that probably some of them. We have the case that some students finished their “profesorado” first, so they have the experience of taking the real TOEFL test, but in the case of the ones that are just for Licenciatura many of them don’t even know or they have no idea about the TOEFL, and when they hear the word TOEFL they imagine it is something terrible and they have to do it. I remember it as a test they have to take and it is almost impossible to get a good score. I remember at the beginning when I started working with these courses many students rejected taking this test and they said that it was not legal to take this test at the beginning and why they should take it. And well, we explained to them it was for us just to have some information to know about their competences in the language.

It did not mean that if they got a low score they could not register the subject, it was just based on information that we needed to be considered in order to assign them different levels and in that way students would be monitored more from a supervisor than others. It was just for us as internal for knowing the competences level in the language.

3. **Do you think students have strong English basis at the moment of taking the test?**



Not all of them, as I mentioned before the ones that are not in the appropriate level because if you have not finished at least the intensive English courses and you have not taken the advanced II at least you have reach some specific levels, but if you are just taking intermediate II, definitely you do not have that basis. So, I would say some of them yes and some others no. And even though if you have already taken and



passed the advanced courses you can see the results. For example, when they present the registration they have to attach a copy of the subjects they have registered in the semester just to check their schedules (to see) if it is true they (have) registered 3 or 4 subjects and there we can see the results for the previous semester ,and even though they have already taken and passed Advance English II subject but you can see different final grades as 8 point something 7.8 but we have many people that have 6.0, 6.2 so definitely the basis they have probably in this course are not really working to prepare them to take this test.


4. Do the students' English knowledge background have any incidence in students' test scores?

Definitely yes, many students that know (the language) have problems communicating because in this subject they have performed some presentations and there you can see the differences that some of them can express their ideas even tough (they have) to be in front of a group of people or audience, they don't have the appropriate presentation skills in order to manage the group so I can imagine how they can perform in front of a group of a class, so in those presentations I have the opportunity to see their attitudes, their skills and I talk to the students and I say, well, I cannot imagine to see you being in front of students, kids or adults and if you cannot, (then) imagine those situations in front of your classmates. So, it is very difficult, and I usually take notes about pronunciation mistakes, in some of them are very basic, and I say "work on this, work on that" but some of them you don't really have the attitude trying to improve themselves, not everybody but some of them.



5. Is the English taught in the FLD limited compared to the world standards that are used to elaborate the Sample TOEFL Test?

Probably, I think that what is missing here, it is that we are working on trying to get new curricula, because we think that the curricula that we are developing needs a lot of changes, it needs to improve in many areas. I think one of the needs in different areas that our program covers our major, we have to work in a more systematic way. I think we must have a clear idea that we talk about of the development skills area and we would work with basic, intermediate, advanced to have a clearer idea when, where we want our students at the end of the basic. And, I think there is no a specific test that we apply at the end of every semester just to check if they really got the level so they are ready to continue with intermediate, it is just to have numbers. But I think we need to work in a more systematic way. And in the different areas too, the methodological areas starting from the pedagogy, didactics, general didactics and then English didactics. It has to be a follow up. How we are preparing our students in the area. In the area of investigation, for example, there should be a follow up because at the end we want students to be competent in that area so for us we have a profile for our students, we want them to know this, to manage this, to develop skills and solve problems but I think we should work better in order to have at the end a better product and to be sure that the product we are getting at the end is very close or it is in the level we wanted them to be. So, I think we need to change or modify some academic aspects.



6. Are students sufficiently informed about the Sample TOEFL Test in terms of structure, content and time?

Probably not. This is something we have to include. Probably at the end, what we have to do now, well let me tell you, we have never thought about it, but it is necessary because as I told you, there are many of them that do not know, they have no idea what the test is about. So probably if it is necessary to take a course but at least during the semester or at the end of the semester that it is previous for taking the test or register the Practice Teaching courses to visit them and tell them that the ones that are interesting in taking the Practice Teaching I course they should take this test and now that we have that, it is easier to recommend them to go and practice because the practice is there, is available for everybody and if they want to get good result they can go there and practice to know about the exam and things like that so in that way they can do it individually. That would help a lot, probably I think this is something we can apply next year; it would be a good idea.

7. Do you think the lack of information about structure, content, and time affect the students' scores?

Yes, because they do not know how the test works and even though we explain them at the beginning but probably it is not the most appropriate moment to explain the structure of the test for this time because they are nervous, they are thinking about the test, thinking about results, and they are not really paying attention. I think being informed and having some practice before that would help a lot and they probably would get better results.

8. What are the main causes that influence students to get low scores in the Sample TOEFL Test?

Skills, different language skills, have already passed advance some of them on intermediate so this is a disadvantage for them, do not being informed about exam, nervousness.

9. Can you mention the most significant factors that interfere in students' low scores in the Sample TOEFL Test?

Not having knowledge about the test, not having the appropriate linguistics competences. I think those are the most important (same as previous.)



10. Have you ever considered the possibility of creating a project where students not only get prepared to take this type of sample test but the real TOEFL, and thus to reduce the percentage of low scores?

-YES/NO. Why?

-If Yes: How should the FLD implement this project?

-What students will be benefited with this project?

Well I don't think so because the real one, definitely, they have to pay for that. So, we cannot set as a rule that everybody has to present the original one, so in the case of Profesorados they do not take the test here because they have a certification that they have 500 or more when taking it at Centro Cultural because for them it is mandatory. But in our cases honestly, I do not know if there is a way to get this in a freeway by having the real test because the first thing that comes to my mind is that they have to pay for that. I do not know, probably with the department that has good relations with the US Embassy why not? Some of the plans we are thinking now




because we are in the process of working in this new curricula it is that students should search at the end of 3rd year to take this test and the ones that get a specific score, let's say 500 or more they are ready to take the Practice Teaching courses, if not they cannot register the subject, but this is something we have been mention and talk about the cost of this but probably taking into account the good relationship the Head of the Department can do something with the US Embassy and do this.

11. Which means can be used to prepare students for the Sample TOEFL Test?

Nowadays I would say just practice, going to the lab during semester's break. But sometimes students have different attitudes.

12. What suggestions would you give to students to improve their test scores?

To practice, Laboratory is there available for everybody (most students do not take adv. of this) the result, probably they show a low score but then when I see how students perform I see that it does not really match the score with the way they perform. So probably the results we have there are not reliable. I think the ones got low grades it does not mean they are bad students or things like that but they have something to improve of course we can tell them "work more in the area "and they definitely will improve. Well, I think it is something we are going to consider next year probably we are going to ask them to go and we are going to see the results on how many are interested in getting good results.



13. Are students provided with all the required equipment at the time of taking the test?

I will say yes, because we have around 25 computers but we do not work with all of them. Some are being used or not really working very well. We usually work with 15 or no more than 20. Most of them are in good conditions.

14. Do you think that the Foreign Languages Department authorities should give the appropriate importance to this research work and that they should follow it up in terms of taking into account the recommendations the research team will provide?

I think some because usually, when we are discussing about the curricula and we talk about the results in our students there are many teachers that really complain about the results and say “there are some students that don’t know how to do this and there are some others that we can notice this” Definitely the language department has to do with this.



Interviewee: Professor Ricardo Cabrera

- 1. Based on your experience as a teacher of the subjects of Teaching Practice I and II and as an administrator of the test, why do results vary from one student to another?**

It's about individual competence of students. Students are probably different in the way they prepare for taking the TOEFL, probably the individual characteristics deal with the answer. The way they have prepared for taking the test.

- 2. Are students sufficiently prepared when taking the Sample TOEFL Test?**


There is not a definite answer for this question, however in general I would say that most of the students are not, because of the results gotten in the last years, students usually get low grades.

- 3. Do you think students have strong English basis at the moment of taking the test?**

The answer cannot be generalized, probably we have some deficiencies in the structure that we have for the curricula at the Languages Department, and there are serious problems with probably most of the students.

- 4. Do the students' English knowledge background have any incidence in students' test scores?**

Yes, of course. It is directly related, the competences they have and the results are related.



5. Is the English taught in the FLD limited compared to the world standards /that are used to elaborate the Sample TOEFL Test?

Probably in a way, yes. Let me be honest with this: Maybe the teachers in general have limitations as well, we are not native speakers of the language, and that is probably somehow reflected in the student's competences. The TOEFL test is originally design for those foreign students who want to or would like to study at Universities in the U.S.

6. Are students sufficiently informed about the Sample TOEFL Test in terms of structure, content and time?



When students take Practice Teaching TOEFL (Sample TOEFL Test) in the Teaching Practice I subject, they are expected to have some experience taking the TOEFL. Teachers assume students are familiar with the structure test. Most students take the TOEFL somehow during the development of the English area.

7. Do you think the lack of information about structure, content and time affect the students' scores?

Yes, it does affect the results. Students should be familiarized with the structure, even if you are a teacher and you are not familiarized with the structure of the TOEFL test you can have problems.

8. What are the main causes that influence students to get low scores in the Sample TOEFL Test?

It might be difficult to detect the causes, maybe there should be a study about this, because it is a process, and the teaching learning process takes years, it goes through different levels: Basic, Intermediate I and II, Advance I and II, students supposed to



develop their skills and acquire knowledge and learn the necessary skills to get ready in order to take the TOEFL. Probably somewhere if students have problems at the end, it is not because they have problems with the advanced or intermediate courses, since it is a process they probably have problems with the system that we have, not with a particular subject or teacher.

9. Can you mention the most significant factors that interfere in students' low scores in the Sample TOEFL Test?

If we talk about listening for example, one of the main problems seems to be kind of “memoristic”. It does not really measure students' general ideas. It is probably that students need to remember specific data or information, among other factors.


10. Have you ever considered the possibility of creating a project where students not only get prepared to take this type of sample test but the real TOEFL, and thus to reduce the percentage of low scores?

-YES/NO. Why?

-If Yes: How should the FLD implement this project?

-What students will be benefited with this project?

Yes, we have given some ideas about the possibility of creating a project, especially when we work with the advanced courses, we do have some material, related to TOEFL preparation. Last semester (II-2015) students from Reading and Conversation subject had some specific activities related to the TOEFL preparation in the reading part. That was something related to this project.



11. Which means can be used to prepare students for the Sample TOEFL Test?

Maybe teachers working with Advanced levels should implement activities in order to prepare, evaluated activities in order to focus on preparation for the TOEFL test. Since we are talking about being prepared for this test as a process, it is not from one day to another, need to teach the structure of the test and probably work on specific items. There are books and one of these books should be taken as a text book in the advanced courses in order to help students get prepared for the TOEFL test.

12. Is it the place appropriate enough for taking this test?



The computer lab is not 100% appropriate, probably need more computers. Last semester (II-2015) we needed to use 25 computers and I only had the chance of using 12. I had problems in order to accomplish the objectives. We need to work on this for doing the practice.

13. Are students provided with all the required equipment at the time of taking the test?

I've already answer this question.

14. Do you think that the Foreign Languages Department authorities should give the appropriate importance to this research work and that they should follow it up in terms of taking into account the recommendations the research team will provide?

Definitely. Yes! A lot attention should be put on this research and the results, because it is convenient for the Foreign Language Department and it makes sense have students what they think in getting low scores in the TOEFL test. There is no



matching, students who graduate at the Foreign Language Department should get high average when they take the Sample TOEFL Test. Besides a lot of our students are interested of studying abroad, probably the possibilities to get scholarships and study at foreign universities would probably be higher for our students.

APPENDIX G

2014							
TOEFL SAMPLE TEST AWARENESS							
ITEMS	<i>I strongly disagree</i>	<i>I disagree</i>	<i>I neither agree nor disagree</i>	<i>I agree</i>	<i>I strongly agree</i>	<i>Invalid answers/ No response</i>	Total
<i>1. I was given information about the test from my teachers.</i>	9	13	4	6	4	0	36
<i>2. I was aware I would take the test before performing my teaching practice.</i>	2	6	0	21	7	0	36
<i>3. I was well-informed what the test is about.</i>	3	11	9	7	6	0	36
<i>4. I was conscious about why I had to take the test.</i>	3	7	5	16	5	0	36

5. I knew the importance to get a good score on the test.	5	4	4	16	7	0	36
6. I considered important to perform this proficiency test as a student of the Bachelor of Arts in English with Emphasis in Teaching.	1	2	2	15	15	1	36
7. I was informed that, based on my final score in the test, I was going to be placed in the appropriate subject level to perform my teaching practice.	4	8	2	17	5	0	36

ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

1. I took English classes prior to my enrollment to the Bachelor of Arts in English with Emphasis in Teaching major.	13	5	2	8	8	0	36
2. I have already taken this test earlier at the FLD or at a different institution.	20	9	1	2	3	1	36
3. I had an Advanced English level at the time of taking the test.	2	14	7	9	4	0	36
4. I had an Intermediate English level at the time of taking the test.	2	3	4	23	4	0	36
5. I consider more difficult answering the reading section than the listening section.	9	2	9	11	5	0	36

TOEFL TEST PREPARATION

1. I practiced my English skills before the test.	6	8	7	12	3	0	36
2. I was familiar with this proficiency test in terms of structure and content before taking it.	7	13	4	9	3	0	36
3. I researched and practiced reading and listening techniques to get a good score on the test.	5	12	4	14	1	0	36
4. I was aware about how long the test would take.	7	9	2	14	4	0	36

<i>5. The subjects of the syllabus related to the sections of the test provided me useful tools for it.</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>36</i>
<i>6. My physical/health condition was optimal at the time of taking the test.</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>36</i>
<i>7. Rest and food in the day of the test influenced my performance.</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>36</i>
<i>8. I was aware about the vocabulary / knowledge the test demands.</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>36</i>

TOEFL SAMPLE TEST RESULTS

1. I obtained a good score because the subjects belonging to the syllabus of the major helped me.	1	14	9	10	2	0	36
2. I consider the syllabus of the major should include a preparation course for the TOEFL test.	2	2	0	12	20	0	36
3. I recognized most of the vocabulary included in the test.	0	16	3	16	1	0	36
4. If I had known I was going to take the test, I would have invested time, effort and money to get prepared.	3	6	5	12	10	0	36
5. My student / professional life has been affected by the results in this test.	10	10	7	6	3	0	36

6. <i>The score I achieved was what I was expecting at that time.</i>	2	11	8	12	3	0	36
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2015

TOEFL SAMPLE TEST AWARENESS

<i>ITEMS</i>	<i>I strongly disagree</i>	<i>I disagree</i>	<i>I neither agree nor disagree</i>	<i>I agree</i>	<i>I strongly agree</i>	<i>Invalid answers/ No response</i>	<i>Total</i>
1. <i>I was given information about the test from my teachers.</i>	12	15	2	16	1	0	46
2. <i>I was aware I would take the test before performing my teaching practice.</i>	4	9	3	21	8	1	46
3. <i>I was well-informed what the test is about.</i>	8	15	8	10	4	1	46

4. I was conscious about why I had to take the test.	4	9	10	15	7	1	46
5. I knew the importance to get a good score on the test.	4	5	8	15	11	3	46
6. I considered important to perform this proficiency test as a student of the Bachelor of Arts in English with Emphasis in Teaching.	2	4	8	18	12	2	46
7. I was informed that, based on my final score in the test, I was going to be placed in the appropriate subject level to perform my teaching practice.	6	5	6	15	14	0	46

ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

1. I took English classes prior to my enrollment to the Bachelor of Arts in English with Emphasis in Teaching major.	15	20	0	6	4	1	46
2. I have already taken this test earlier at the FLD or at a different institution.	20	17	2	4	3	0	46
3. I had an Advanced English level at the time of taking the test.	6	7	13	15	5	0	46
4. I had an Intermediate English level at the time of taking the test.	2	10	12	14	6	2	46
5. I consider more difficult answering the reading section than the listening section.	7	14	10	10	5	0	46

TOEFL TEST PREPARATION

1. I practiced my English skills before the test.	11	12	9	5	8	1	46
2. I was familiar with this proficiency test in terms of structure and content before taking it.	12	16	5	11	1	1	46
3. I researched and practiced reading and listening techniques to get a good score on the test.	10	15	6	6	7	2	46
4. I was aware about how long the test would take.	11	10	3	17	5	0	46

<i>5. The subjects of the syllabus related to the sections of the test provided me useful tools for it.</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>46</i>
<i>6. My physical/health condition was optimal at the time of taking the test.</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>46</i>
<i>7. Rest and food in the day of the test influenced my performance.</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>46</i>
<i>8. I was aware about the vocabulary / knowledge the test demands.</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>46</i>

TOEFL SAMPLE TEST RESULTS

1. I obtained a good score because the subjects belonging to the syllabus of the major helped me.	3	9	18	11	4	1	46
2. I consider the syllabus of the major should include a preparation course for the TOEFL test.	3	5	1	12	24	1	46
3. I recognized most of the vocabulary included in the test.	3	8	8	17	6	4	46
4. If I had known I was going to take the test, I would have invested time, effort and money to get prepared.	2	6	7	13	17	1	46
5. My student / professional life has been affected by the results in this test.	9	12	11	8	5	1	46

6. <i>The score I achieved was what I was expecting at that time.</i>	5	9	9	15	7	1	46
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2016

TOEFL SAMPLE TEST AWARENESS

ITEMS	<i>I strongly disagree</i>	<i>I disagree</i>	<i>I neither agree nor disagree</i>	<i>I agree</i>	<i>I strongly agree</i>	<i>Invalid answers/ No response</i>	Total
1. <i>I was given information about the test from my teachers.</i>	13	30	10	13	9	0	75
2. <i>I was aware I would take the test before performing my teaching practice.</i>	3	7	9	35	21	0	75
3. <i>I was well-informed what the test is about.</i>	11	19	17	11	15	2	75

<i>4. I was conscious about why I had to take the test.</i>	7	6	11	32	19	0	75
<i>5. I knew the importance to get a good score on the test.</i>	4	8	6	31	23	3	75
<i>6. I considered important to perform this proficiency test as a student of the Bachelor of Arts in English with Emphasis in Teaching.</i>	1	2	6	32	34	0	75
<i>7. I was informed that, based on my final score in the test, I was going to be placed in the appropriate subject level to perform my teaching practice.</i>	2	16	8	24	25	0	75

ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

<i>1. I took English classes prior to my enrollment to the Bachelor of Arts in English with Emphasis in Teaching major.</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>75</i>
<i>2. I have already taken this test earlier at the FLD or at a different institution.</i>	<i>46</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>75</i>
<i>3. I had an Advanced English level at the time of taking the test.</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>75</i>
<i>4. I had an Intermediate English level at the time of taking the test.</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>75</i>
<i>5. I consider more difficult answering the reading section than the listening section.</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>75</i>

TOEFL TEST PREPARATION

1. I practiced my English skills before the test.	12	21	16	19	7	0	75
2. I was familiar with this proficiency test in terms of structure and content before taking it.	17	24	13	13	8	0	75
3. I researched and practiced reading and listening techniques to get a good score on the test.	15	19	17	18	6	0	75
4. I was aware about how long the test would take.	9	20	7	23	16	0	75

<i>5. The subjects of the syllabus related to the sections of the test provided me useful tools for it.</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>75</i>
<i>6. My physical/health condition was optimal at the time of taking the test.</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>75</i>
<i>7. Rest and food in the day of the test influenced my performance.</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>75</i>
<i>8. I was aware about the vocabulary / knowledge the test demands.</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>75</i>

TOEFL SAMPLE TEST RESULTS

1. I obtained a good score because the subjects belonging to the syllabus of the major helped me.	7	27	25	11	4	1	75
2. I consider the syllabus of the major should include a preparation course for the TOEFL test.	5	2	5	15	47	1	75
3. I recognized most of the vocabulary included in the test.	2	13	16	31	12	1	75
4. If I had known I was going to take the test, I would have invested time, effort and money to get prepared.	5	8	22	19	20	1	75
5. My student / professional life has been affected by the results in this test.	20	15	26	10	2	2	75

6. *The score I achieved was what I was expecting at that time.*

13

15

22

15

9

1

75

APPENDIX H

OPEN QUESTION ANSWERS

Facilities where the test was taken are not appropriate.
The conditions and the place in which the test was done were not the best ones.
Students do not realize they are in the University; bad attitude from them.
We are not being prepared to take the TOEFL exam. it needs practicing the four skills in an efficient way, and it would be great if we as students could have practices before doing it.
Not have done exercises for taking the test not seen test samples before taking it would be good to have TOEFL practices before taking it.
Environment, tiredness, lack of vocabulary and not interested on scoring well.
Lack of commitment from part of students to take the test. Lack of appropriate guidance in order to take the test.
A previous preparation
Not practice reading skills.
We are not really prepared at the time we take the test.
The lack of an adequate preparation from the department and from the students
Lack of interest, students do not take seriously the test and fail with intentionally it.
The vocabulary that the test contains is not the same than the one taught during the major.
There's no a preparation course.
Test is not the principal reason to place students in diff courses in which teaching practice is required, the score of the test is not taken into acct when placing students to the courses, teachers care about address, schedules other things and no for scores.
Time is not enough
Personal problems
Grades gotten in other Intensive English courses
Lack of information due to teachers did not informed us
I did not know my results
I did not know we need to do this test
Pressure students get when taking the test
Lack of interest when taking the test
Lack of practice before the real one
Lack of info of the given time
Teachers don't show interest you can see it because they do not even show results
Teachers are not well prepared, they do not teach at a way that all sts understand and learn.
The lack of knowledge of the test
The lack of information provided to sts related with the exam

The noise outside the classroom
Language department doesn't give a previous course
Teachers need to explain to students the importance about the TOEFL exam and how it can help them.
There is no need to create a "preparation course", students need to improve and work harder while they course English subjects
For me the principal factor that make us get a low score is that we are not prepared enough to take it, we do not have the correct level, well, at least some of us
Lack of preparation
Time
Lack of preparation in the classrooms
The time is not enough for the complete test
The time is not enough
They don't pay the attention needed during the test
Students didn't care the necessary about the test
There is no preparation before the TOEFL
Students do not get prepared
The lack of previous information
Optional TOEFL course for those who didn't get a good grade (Five days' course one week before)
A bad equipment (computer and headphones)
Students get nervous when having the test because sometimes they fail test
They can't listen or read really well the instructions
Lack of knowledge of TOEFL structure
If Didactics III had a unit about TOEFL test sts would have a better result or score in the final score of TOEFL test
The lack of information about the TOEFL
Lack of vocabulary
When they don't practice the speaking obviously, the lack of vocabulary, fluency and confidence when using the language
Sts know few about the text
The university doesn't provide "training" to be ready to take the test
Sts do not possess an acceptable English background
Lack of reading task during the major
Lack of information
Both, sts and professors might have more responsibility about the subjects for this kind of test
Not enough time
It's too long and stressful
Many of the sts didn't take care about the exam, not until two or three days before the day were going to take the exam
The lack of practice materials adequate (indirectly conducted) specially for the test

Anxiety because of the time
Stress
Student should get informed about the TOEFL test before taking it
Time
Maybe the lack of preparation form teachers to students to require the level of English required to the moment of taking the test
Lack preparation of listening skill
Not receive a brief example on how to do the TOEFL test
Anxiety
TOEFL is not important, it's not important for the department
The computer turns off and have to begin again
No indications were provided
Work
Not enough time
Sight problems
Awareness about difficulty
They don't pay the attention needed during the test
They don't give the importance that it means to that exam
The lack of interest of some sts when taking the examination
Lack of previous preparation
Sts don't practice first
Conditions (environment)
Students do not study before the exam
The pressure to do it fast
Sts feel bored taking this test for a long time
Sts are not used to do long tests
Sts don't have the appropriate level at that time
The computers were having problems
Some teachers aren't good enough to teach English
The breakfast is important to be at a 100%
Lack of supporting materials and information
Work
Space
Lack of a source that should be provided by the Foreign L. D in order to enhance better results
In my case, I got bored because of a lot of information
During the English intensive courses, the topics and vocabulary are different from the ones showed in the TOEFL test
Skill issues