CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 The TOEFL Test

The TOEFL, or Test of English as a Foreign Language, evaluates the English proficiency of individuals who do not speak English as their first language. It is commonly required by universities and other English-language institutions. Additionally, various organizations, including government agencies, businesses, and scholarship programs, may also mandate this test. At present, TOEFL is available in both paper-based and computer-based formats (Deborah in Asnawati et al., 2022).

Developed by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) in New Jersey, TOEFL is a standardized assessment designed to measure English language skills. Initially, its use was limited to the local community, primarily serving as a tool for assessing English proficiency among those seeking to pursue higher education (Tumijo & Riyanto, Yoestara and Putri, 2019).

The primary purpose of TOEFL is to assess the English proficiency of non-native speakers. More than 6,000 academic institutions, licensing agencies, and universities across 110 countries recognize TOEFL scores. Moreover, this test is widely utilized by governments, scholarship providers, and international exchange programs (www.ets.org/toef, 2007).

As one of the two most widely recognized English proficiency tests globally, TOEFL plays a crucial role in both academic and professional settings. While it is primarily used for university admissions, many employers in English-speaking countries also consider TOEFL scores during the hiring process. Prospective students must check the required TOEFL score for their chosen institution and submit their results along with their university applications (Ellet, 2022).

1.2 Types of TOEFL

There are three different formats of the TOEFL exam, each utilizing a distinct method of administration: the Paper-Based Test (PBT), the Computer-Based Test (CBT), and the Internet-Based Test (IBT) (https://baraka.uma.ac.id/, 2024).

A. Paper-Based Test (PBT)

As the name implies, the Paper-Based Test (PBT) is conducted using physical test booklets and answer sheets. It is structured into three sections: Listening Comprehension, Structure and Written Expression, and Reading Comprehension. This version of the TOEFL follows a scoring scale ranging from 310 to 677, with the highest possible score being 677. The test duration typically falls between two and two and a half hours. While the PBT format has been largely phased out on an international scale, it remains available in certain regions, particularly in Indonesia, where many institutions still accept PBT scores (https://baraka.uma.ac.id/., 2024).

Despite being largely replaced by newer versions, the PBT-TOEFL is still administered in select locations where access to the Internet-Based Test is limited. The test consists of three separately timed sections, each featuring multiple-choice questions with four answer options. Responses are recorded on an answer sheet, which is later graded electronically.

The three main components of the PBT include Section 1: Listening Comprehension, Section 2: Structure and Written Expression, and Section 3: Reading Comprehension. Designed to assess the English proficiency of non-native speakers, the TOEFL is recognized by more than 6,000 institutions across 110 countries. The PBT version continues to serve as an option for individuals in areas with restricted internet access.

B. Computer-Based Test (CBT)

The Computer-Based Test (CBT) is administered digitally using official software developed by ETS. Test-takers complete the exam on a computer rather than using paper-based materials. The CBT consists of four sections: Listening, Structure, Reading, and Writing. The test takes approximately two to two and a half hours to complete, and scores range from 0 to 330, with 330 being the highest possible score (https://baraka.uma.ac.id/, 2024).

C. Internet-Based Test (IBT)

The most widely recognized version of the TOEFL is the Internet-Based Test (IBT), which has been in use globally since its introduction in 2005. Unlike the CBT, which relies on specific software, the IBT is conducted entirely online and is administered directly by ETS. Participants take the exam via the internet, completing tasks in four sections: Listening, Writing, Reading, and Speaking. The IBT follows a scoring system with a maximum of 120 points, and the test duration extends to approximately four hours.

Additionally, the IBT is divided into two key components: the Individual Test and the Integrated Test. This version is the preferred choice for those planning to study abroad, as most universities worldwide require IBT scores for admission (https://baraka.uma.ac.id/, 2024).

1.3 The Sections in TOEFL Test

A. Listening Comprehension Section of TOEFL

Understanding spoken language plays a crucial role in grasping key ideas and information. However, comprehending a foreign language, particularly English, can be quite challenging due to its irregular pronunciation. Buck, as cited in Sa'diyah (2016), describes listening as a multifaceted process where the listener processes incoming

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sounds and deciphers them using a combination of linguistic and non-linguistic knowledge.

As a receptive skill, listening requires individuals to identify and interpret dialogues, expressions, sentence structures, and vocabulary from an audio source. The cognitive process involved in listening is fundamental to language acquisition. In order to comprehend spoken language, listeners must decode auditory signals, break them down into linguistic elements, and retrieve their meanings from long-term memory. Furthermore, Rost (as referenced in Rahma et al., 2002) explains that listening comprehension involves transforming auditory input into meaningful information and comparing it with prior knowledge.

Lawson (in Aprino, 2022) emphasizes that listening is a foundational language skill through which individuals acquire most of their knowledge, understanding, and perception of the world, human interactions, cultural values, and personal ideals. Similarly, Vandergrift (cited in Rahmi and Soleymani, 2015) asserts that listening significantly contributes to internalizing language rules and fosters the development of other language skills. Though often perceived as passive, listening is actually a dynamic and active process that requires interpretation and integration of new and existing knowledge. It involves recognizing, perceiving, and comprehending spoken input.

According to O'Malley, Chamot, and Kupper (as cited in Cupurdija, 2012), listening comprehension is an active endeavor where listeners extract relevant information from auditory and visual cues, linking it with their prior knowledge stored in long-term memory to enhance understanding. The TOEFL Listening Comprehension section evaluates a candidate's ability to understand spoken English as used in North America. This test emphasizes oral language features, including vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and unique grammatical structures commonly found in spoken English. The

test materials are recorded in standard North American English, and while the questions are spoken, the response choices appear in the test booklet (www.ets.org/toef, 2007).

Furthermore, as outlined on www.ets.org/legal (2020), the Listening section features recordings containing vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and grammatical patterns typical of spoken English. The section assesses comprehension of both brief and extended conversations, as well as academic discussions. Engaging with media, such as movies, TV programs, and podcasts, can be an effective way to develop listening skills. Likewise, recorded lectures and presentations serve as valuable resources for improving comprehension (www.ets.org/legal, 2020). Stirling, cited in Fitria (2021), highlights that this section evaluates the ability to understand authentic speech patterns used in both formal academic settings and informal everyday conversations. The Listening Comprehension section consists of 50 questions, with a time limit of 30-40 minutes. According to Fitria & Prastiwi (2020), this section examines the ability to comprehend English through short dialogues, extended conversations, and monologues. Additionally, the Structure and Written Expression section comprises 40 questions, to be completed within 25 minutes.

In summary, the TOEFL Listening Comprehension section evaluates one's ability to understand spoken North American English. It primarily focuses on oral language components such as vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and commonly spoken grammatical structures. The test includes recorded conversations and lectures, with response choices provided in the test book. To enhance listening skills, learners are encouraged to watch films, listen to podcasts, and engage with recorded lectures and presentations.

B. Structure and Written Expressions

The Structure and Written Expression section consists of 40 multiple-choice questions, which must be completed within 25 minutes. This section is divided into two distinct parts. The first 15 questions belong to the "structure" category, requiring test-takers to select the most appropriate word or phrase to complete a given sentence. Meanwhile, questions 16 to 40 fall under the "written expression" category, in which test-takers identify the least suitable word or phrase within a sentence. Answers must be recorded on a designated answer sheet provided at the test center (Manhattan Review, 2024).

Each question in this section presents four possible answer choices, but only one is correct. The "structure" questions involve incomplete sentences, and test-takers must determine the correct addition from the given options. While some incorrect choices may closely resemble the correct one in meaning, only one answer fits grammatically and contextually. On the other hand, "written expression" questions feature sentences with four underlined elements, and test-takers must identify the one that requires modification. Recognizing errors such as subject-verb disagreement, incorrect pronoun usage, or improper noun forms is essential for answering these questions accurately (Manhattan Review, 2024).

Designed for students preparing for university admission, this section covers various academic fields, including arts and sciences. However, no specialized knowledge of these subjects is required. Unlike the listening comprehension section in the Paper-Based Test (PBT), which includes conversational language, the Structure and Written Expression section is entirely formal (Manhattan Review, 2024).

C. Reading Comprehension Section

The Reading Comprehension section is the third part of the TOEFL PBT exam. This section consists of 50 multiple-choice questions, and test-takers have 55 minutes to complete it. The reading comprehension section includes 5 to 6 passages, with each passage containing between 6 and 12 questions. These questions assess a test-taker's ability to understand both explicit and implied information, as well as the meanings of specific words or phrases. The passages cover a range of topics, from academic subjects to general interest themes, but all necessary information is provided within the text, meaning no prior subject-specific knowledge is required. The length of each passage varies from 200 to 450 words, with an average passage containing 25 to 35 lines of text (Manhattan Review, 2024).

Questions in this section follow two main formats: some focus on the content of the passage, while others test the meanings of particular words or phrases based on their context. The wording of the questions is typically straightforward, often appearing in formats such as "The passage primarily discusses . . ." or "The word X is closest in meaning to . . .". In some cases, test-takers may also need to identify where specific information is located by selecting the correct line number from the passage. Each reading comprehension question provides four answer choices, but only one of them is correct (Manhattan Review, 2024).

1.4 Definition of Anxiety

Anxiety can be understood in several ways. One definition describes it as a tendency or emotional state that arises when individuals are under pressure or feeling fearful. It is also considered a universal emotion that can occur in any context or stage of life. Koseler (cited in Duraseh et al., 2021) characterizes anxiety as a distressing psychological condition resulting from internal conflicts within a person. Additionally, Wen (as cited in

Lili, 2015) defines anxiety as an intense and prolonged negative emotional state triggered by vague or threatening external stimuli, often accompanied by unpleasant emotions such as anticipation, irritation, and fear.

In practical situations, Muliawati et al. (2020) illustrate how experiencing stress and anxiety before an exam is a common phenomenon. It typically manifests as excessive nervousness, which then leads to negative thoughts, such as concerns about failing the test or being unable to answer all the questions. These persistent negative thoughts can have harmful effects on test-takers, influencing both their behavior and mindset during the exam.

Carlson and Buskist (as cited in Mandela, 2021) describe anxiety as a sensation of worry or impending doom, often accompanied by physical symptoms like an increased heart rate, sweaty palms, and a tense stomach. Furthermore, anxiety is recognized as a psychological factor that significantly hinders the learning process. It is closely associated with feelings of discomfort, frustration, self-doubt, apprehension, and tension (Fang, cited in Prastiyowati, 2019). Hidayati (cited in Sunarti et al., 2019) adds that anxiety stems from various causes, including exams, health concerns, social relationships, career uncertainties, global affairs, and environmental conditions.

Another perspective on anxiety views it as a psychological pressure combined with fear in stressful scenarios, spanning multiple life domains. Koseler defines it as an ongoing psychological distress emerging from personal inner struggles. Similarly, Carlson and Buskist emphasize the physiological symptoms linked to anxiety, such as an accelerated heartbeat and physical discomfort. Anxiety also interferes with learning by fostering negative emotions like frustration and uncertainty. Köseler (cited in Karakus, 2019) explains that anxiety is a pervasive feeling that can surface in any situation.

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Meanwhile, Budak (cited in Karakus, 2019) interprets anxiety as a reaction stemming from subconscious influences responding to unidentified stressors.

Psychologically, anxiety is often considered a personality trait that impacts learning abilities, particularly in language acquisition. Research suggests that debilitative anxiety negatively affects language learning (MacIntyre & Gardner, cited in Atasheneh, 2012). Alzamil (cited in Hilipito, 2024) highlights that anxiety can lead to abrupt mood changes, causing a calm and composed individual to become uneasy or fearful. It can also make a person who once felt secure start experiencing doubt and insecurity or shift their emotional state from happiness to sadness.

In the context of listening comprehension, Vogely (cited in Golchi, 2012) investigated the sources of listening anxiety among students learning Spanish at an American university. According to the students' self-reports, half of their concerns stemmed from aspects of the auditory input, such as speech characteristics, difficulty level, lack of clarity, absence of visual cues, and insufficient repetition. Listening anxiety is a term that describes the challenges students face in fully understanding spoken material. When experiencing this form of anxiety, learners may react unexpectedly to listening tasks, including struggling to hear or complete an audio exercise.

Tahsildar and Yusoff (cited in Adnan et al., 2019) define listening anxiety as a psychological reaction influenced by emotions, beliefs, and behaviors during listening tasks. Similarly, Wheels (cited in Adnan et al., 2019) describes it as the fear of misinterpreting, processing information inadequately, or failing to psychologically adjust to the conveyed message. These emotional and cognitive factors can instill fear in students, making listening tasks more difficult. Krashen (cited in Kilic, 2013) introduced the idea that listening anxiety can function as an affective filter, making comprehension

more challenging. As comprehension difficulty increases, anxiety intensifies, creating a cycle that must be disrupted to ensure effective listening skills.

1.5 Type of Anxiety

Experts have categorized anxiety into various types. According to Thomas, as cited in Mandela (2022), anxiety can be classified into two main types: state anxiety and trait anxiety.

a. State anxiety is a temporary emotional response triggered by a perceived threat. Thomas defines it as a form of anxiety that arises in specific situations and has a clear cause. This type of anxiety is short-lived and only occurs when an individual encounters a particular event or condition.

b. Trait anxiety, on the other hand, is a long-term tendency to experience anxiety, even in situations that are not inherently threatening. Individuals with this type of anxiety frequently experience excessive worry and perceive threats in various circumstances. Marwan elaborates that trait anxiety is an intrinsic part of a person's personality and persists as an enduring condition. It influences an individual's responses to different situations, making them prone to worry regardless of the circumstances they face.

c. Specific-situation anxiety arises in response to particular events or circumstances, such as public speaking, exams, or classroom activities. This form of anxiety is situational and is considered a subcategory of trait anxiety, as it manifests in specific contexts. An example of this type is language anxiety, which occurs when individuals feel anxious about using a foreign language.

Scovel, as cited in Adalta (2022), classifies anxiety based on its effects, distinguishing between debilitative and facilitative anxiety:

1. Debilitative anxiety is an overwhelming form of anxiety that negatively impacts an individual's performance. Excessive levels of this anxiety can hinder a student's ability to function, particularly during academic activities such as exams. A high

degree of debilitative anxiety can lead to mental blocks, making it difficult for students to recall information or engage in conversations effectively. This type of anxiety is often associated with a lack of knowledge and motivation, both intrinsic and extrinsic. Managing debilitative anxiety is typically more challenging than handling facilitative anxiety.

Characteristics of debilitative anxiety include:

    a. Physical symptoms: Sweating, trembling, a rapid heartbeat, and nausea before or during stressful tasks like exams.

    b. Cognitive symptoms: Difficulty focusing, excessive worry about potential mistakes, and memory lapses that hinder problem-solving.

    c. Behavioral symptoms: Avoidance of tasks, procrastination, and a tendency to give up due to fear of failure.

    d. Emotional symptoms: Feelings of panic, extreme fear, or hopelessness regarding one's abilities and outcomes.

2. Facilitative anxiety, in contrast, can be beneficial as it encourages individuals to confront challenges. This type of anxiety serves as a motivating force, helping students stay focused and approach tasks with a sense of urgency and determination. Facilitative anxiety plays a crucial role in guiding emotions toward productive behaviors.

Some positive effects of facilitative anxiety include:

    a. Enhanced alertness, allowing students to be more attentive and responsive.

    b. Increased motivation, which drives individuals to complete tasks and tackle challenges.

    c. Improved concentration, enabling students to focus on details and remain engaged.

    d. Goal-oriented behavior, where individuals set and strive toward clear objectives.

e. Positive stress (eustress), where anxiety is manageable and serves as an energizing force.

f. Productive nervousness, leading to better preparation and time management.

g. Increased effort and perseverance, encouraging students to study harder and push past obstacles.

Similarly, Spielberger, as cited in Adalta (2022), differentiates anxiety into two types based on its nature: state anxiety and trait anxiety.

1. State anxiety is a temporary condition that fluctuates depending on situational factors. Anxiety levels rise when individuals perceive a situation as threatening and decrease when the perceived threat subsides. The way an individual perceives danger is shaped by their personality and past experiences.

Common signs of state anxiety include:

a. Physical indicators: Elevated heart rate, sweating, trembling, and shortness of breath when facing stressors.

b. Behavioral indicators: Restlessness, avoidance of anxiety-inducing situations, and difficulties in decision-making or concentration.

c. Emotional indicators: Sudden feelings of nervousness, fear, or panic that vary depending on the situation.

2. Trait anxiety, also known as congenital anxiety, is a stable and persistent tendency to experience anxiety. It is an inherent part of an individual's personality and affects their perception of anxiety-inducing situations. People with trait anxiety consistently worry, even in non-threatening conditions.

Key characteristics of trait anxiety include:

a. Physical signs: Chronic tension, fatigue, and persistent muscle tightness, regardless of stress levels.

b. Behavioral signs: A habitual tendency to overthink, expect negative outcomes, and struggle to relax even in safe environments.

c. Emotional signs: A pervasive sense of apprehension, fear, or unease that remains constant, irrespective of circumstances.

1.6 Previous Studies

There are several previous studies that the researcher takes to support this research. They are as follows.

No	Researchers	Title	Results
1	Adalta, (2022)	Students' Attitude and Anxiety on Listening Class (A Descriptive Quantitative Study of Second Semester English Education Students' of UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu).	The category of positive attitude received an average score of 3.61, translating to 72.27%, and was classified under the predicate "Positive." Meanwhile, for the category of negative attitudes, the average score was 3.48, with a percentage of 69.67%, also earning the predicate "Positive." Regarding the overall results, 62% of the students, totaling 29 individuals, fell under the "relaxed" category. Additionally, 13 students, making up 28% of the group, were classified as "very relaxed." Lastly, 5 students, or 11%, were categorized at a

No	Author	Title	Findings
			moderate level with the predicate "Medium Anxiety."
2	Agustiana, (2018).	Listening anxiety among Indonesian EFL students	The data indicates that students generally have a favorable outlook on learning to comprehend spoken English, with an average score of 3.56. However, their anxiety levels when engaging in listening activities are notably high, as reflected by a score of 3.52. Despite this, students demonstrate a strong commitment to enhancing their listening skills, achieving a score of 3.74.
3	Prastiyowati (2019)	Anxiety on Students' Listening Comprehension in University Students in Malang	Students often experience anxiety due to their background knowledge. They may worry about missing key ideas, feel nervous if they don't understand every word, or become anxious when encountering unfamiliar words and topics. Additionally, they might struggle with guessing missing information, which further

				increases their anxiety.
			19	Apart from background knowledge, certain listener-related characteristics also contribute to their anxiety during listening tasks. Low confidence, difficulty maintaining concentration, fast-paced speech, and confusion when processing important details are some of the key factors that impact their performance. These challenges make the listening process more stressful for students. Moreover, several factors have been identified as causes of students' listening anxiety. These factors can be grouped into four main categories: teachers, students, listening materials and processes, and other external influences. The role of teachers includes their characteristics and teaching conditions, while student-related factors pertain to their individual performance during listening

			activities.
4	Sarair et al. (2022)	Anxiety Over TOEFL Listening Comprehension Among Eight-Semester Students	Many students feel nervous before attempting the listening comprehension section of the TOEFL exam. Their anxiety often stems from struggling to catch every word spoken by native speakers, whose pronunciation may differ from what they are accustomed to. Another source of their nervousness is the difficulty in connecting unfamiliar topics or terms to what they already know. When they fail to make these connections, confusion increases, making it even harder to understand the listening material.
5	Kimura (2016)	Foreign Language Listening Anxiety: A Self-Presentational View	Research findings indicate that second language listening anxiety is a complex construct consisting of two interrelated yet distinct components: Self-Focused Apprehension and Task-Focused Apprehension.

			Self-Focused Apprehension pertains to the fear of being socially evaluated, while Task-Focused Apprehension involves concerns about successfully processing auditory information. Moreover, both aspects of listening anxiety are influenced by an individual's level of social anxiety.
6	Li (2022)	Examining foreign language listening anxiety and its correlates: A meta-analysis	A moderate negative correlation was observed between listening performance and listening strategy, while a small negative correlation was found between the two. Additionally, two correlates with low evidence were identified. Motivation showed a small negative correlation, whereas reading anxiety demonstrated a moderate-to-large positive correlation, indicating a stronger association. Furthermore, learners' age and their foreign language performance played a significant role as

			moderating factors in these relationships.
7	Limandra (2013)	Students' Anxiety Towards Toefl Test : The Caused Factors And The Effects	Students exhibited various symptoms of test anxiety, including nervousness, digestive issues, and rapid heartbeat, among others. These symptoms arose due to a combination of internal and external factors. Despite experiencing anxiety, the students were positively influenced by it. Their test-related stress ultimately encouraged them to strive for better performance on the TOEFL exam.
8	Dueraseh et al. (2021)	Analyzing Foreign Language Listening Anxiety And Online English Proficiency Test Of Undergraduate Students	The study found that foreign language listening anxiety and English proficiency test scores had only a weak correlation, ranking fourth in terms of their relationship. Anxiety mainly stemmed from encountering unfamiliar words they struggled to pronounce while listening. When such moments occurred, students

			often experienced panic and stress, which negatively impacted their comprehension. Several factors contributed to undergraduate students' anxiety during listening proficiency tests. The primary causes included feelings of panic and worry, which frequently escalated into stress and heightened nervousness while taking the test.

The present study distinguishes itself by focusing on TOEFL listening comprehension, whereas previous research, such as that conducted by Sarair et al. (2022) and Limandra (2013), primarily examines listening anxiety in the context of the TOEFL exam. These studies emphasize the heightened stress students experience due to factors like unfamiliar native accents and the pressure of time constraints. In contrast, Agustiana (2018) and Prastiyowati (2019) investigate listening anxiety in broader EFL learning environments, where students encounter stress during everyday classroom listening activities rather than exam-specific scenarios.

A key difference also emerges in how researchers approach students' attitudes toward listening. While Adalta (2022) and Agustiana (2018) highlight that students generally have a positive outlook on learning to listen in English, despite their struggles with anxiety, they also emphasize the efforts students make to enhance their listening abilities. This perspective

contrasts with studies that primarily focus on the negative effects of anxiety without acknowledging students' resilience and proactive learning strategies.

When examining the root causes of anxiety, Kimura (2016) takes a distinct approach by linking listening anxiety to social anxiety and self-presentation concerns. Unlike Prastiyowati (2019) and Sarair et al. (2022), which emphasize external factors such as teacher influence, the complexity of listening materials, and comprehension difficulties, Kimura shifts the focus to internal psychological elements, including self-esteem and social apprehension. This provides a deeper understanding of how personal insecurities contribute to listening anxiety.

Another notable distinction arises from Li (2022), whose meta-analysis offers precise statistical correlations between listening anxiety, motivation, and reading anxiety. In contrast to studies like Adalta (2022) and Agustiana (2018), which primarily categorize attitudes and levels of anxiety through qualitative or descriptive methods, Li adopts a quantitative approach, providing numerical insights into the relationships among these factors.

Furthermore, Limandra (2013) expands the discussion by addressing the physical symptoms of anxiety, such as digestive issues and an increased heart rate, which are directly linked to the stress of taking the TOEFL exam. This health-related perspective differentiates the study from others that predominantly focus on cognitive and emotional aspects of anxiety. Meanwhile, Dueraseh et al. (2021) brings a contemporary angle by investigating listening anxiety in the context of online English proficiency tests. By exploring the unique challenges posed by remote learning and testing environments, this study sheds light on an area that remains relatively unexplored in prior research.