

上海市业余外语广播讲座

# A New Radio Course for TOEFL-type Tests

Listening  
Comprehension

华东师范大学出版社

冯慧妍 杨永蓉 编

## 新编 英语出国考试 广播教程

· 听力理解分册 ·

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## 前 言

《新编英语出国考试广播教程》(A New Radio Course for TOEFL-type Tests) 系上海市业余外语广播英语课教材, 是编者受上海人民广播电台的委托, 为了帮助广大学员提高对托福型测试的应试能力而编写的。

本教程全套分编为三册。本书听力理解分册(Listening Comprehension)为其第一册, 其余两册分别为: 结构及书面表达; 词汇、阅读理解及写作。

本教程由华东师范大学外语系冯慧妍副教授和复旦大学外文系杨永荃教授编写。上海外国语学院英语系教师杨 薇为本教程提供了部分素材。

编 者

1990 年 1 月

## Preface

With the opening-up of our country, more and more Chinese students and scholars wish to pursue further studies abroad. This gives rise to the need for them to pass various English tests such as the TOEFL, GRE, Michigan Test and other EPT tests. A New Radio Course for TOEFL-type Tests is specially designed to help Chinese learners of English to cope with such tests through intensive basic training.

Since language is an integral whole, much attention is paid in study to its three component parts, namely, phonetics, grammar and vocabulary. Accordingly, the New Radio Course is prepared with a view to help learners improve their listening, reading and writing abilities.

The New Radio Course consists of three separate sections: Section 1 Listening Comprehension, Section 2 Structure & Written Expression, and Section 3 Vocabulary & Reading Comprehension, plus a part on Test of Written English (TWE).

A New Radio Course for TOEFL-type Tests takes the TOEFL for its blue-print, since it is the most often used examination in the admissions process of foreign students to colleges and universities in North America. TOEFL, an acronym for "Test of English as a Foreign Language", is written and administered by Educational Testing Service (ETS) of Princeton, New Jersey, U.S.A. to test the learners' ability to use the English language.

The purpose of the TOEFL test is to furnish valid test scores which establish a norm in the English proficiency of non-native speakers. The majority of admissions committees of colleges and universities in the United States require foreign applicants to submit TOEFL-type test scores along with transcripts and recommendations in order to be considered for admission. Some colleges and universities in Canada and other English-speaking countries also require these scores for admissions purposes. Many universities use them to fulfill the foreign language requirement for doctoral candidates whose first language is not English. Therefore, it is helpful for the learners to know more about the nature of the TOEFL tests.

The TOEFL is designed to test five language skills, namely, Listening Comprehension, English Structure, Vocabulary, Reading Comprehension, and Writing Ability. These skills are tested in three sections which coincide with those used in this Course. They are:

Section I Listening Comprehension

Section II Structure and Written Expression

Section III Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary.

There are 150 questions in all, 50 for Section I, 40 for Section II, and 60 for Section III. The test should be done within 120 minutes; 40 minutes for Section I, 25 minutes for Section II and 45 minutes for Section III.

At the request of many colleges and universities requiring TOEFL scores, the TOEFL program has begun offering a written test (TWE) to examinees in PRC since the 1986-1987 testing year. Therefore, examinees who take the TOEFL test in China will be required to write a short essay. However, the writing test score will not affect the

total TOEFL score. It provides an opportunity for the examinee to demonstrate his / her ideas on paper, to support those ideas with examples or evidence, and to compose in standard written English. It will help colleges and universities evaluate the level of the examinee's writing proficiency. Out of the four TOEFL tests administered each year in China, only two, the October and the May tests, require TWE.

There are no passing or failing scores on the TOEFL, each individual institution usually sets its own standards. Generally speaking, a total score of 600 is considered excellent while any score below 400 is regarded as poor,

## How to Prepare for TOEFL-type Tests

Since TOEFL-type tests are a requisite for international students planning to enter most universities in North America or other English-speaking countries on either the graduate or undergraduate level, it pays to make good preparations for the tests. But how to go about it? Here are some tactics that are helpful.

### 1) Keeping the TOEFL-type Tests in Perspective

Aware of the importance of the TOEFL-type tests to their academic future abroad, some students become obsessed with studying only such tests. These students may become blind to the importance of following a well-rounded program of English study. Avoid becoming one of these students by keeping the following suggestions in mind:

- (1) You need to remember that a program of TOEFL-type test preparation can never take the place of an integrated program of study in a reputed institute or school. Do not fall into the trap of thinking that **only** study materials and books labeled TOEFL will help you prepare for the test. All good language books can help you.
- (2) You need to think about how other aspects of your English study relate to your preparation for a TOEFL-type test. If you are a student in a language program, you should consider how your course in grammar, reading, writing, and listening relate to the TOEFL-type test you are going to take.

- (3) You need to remember that being a fluent speaker of English does not necessarily mean that you will get a good score for a TOEFL-type test. Some students who have excellent conversational English are surprised and angry when they receive low scores in a test. On the other hand, students with a fair knowledge of grammar and vocabulary may also find themselves incapable of coping with the listening comprehension exercises in the test. Therefore, to achieve good results in the TOEFL-type test, you need to develop an all-round ability in reading, writing, listening and speaking.
- (4) You need to remember that people who write well in English make the best scores on the TOEFL-type test. It is difficult for some students to accept the fact that the TOEFL-type test **does** test writing ability—especially in the Structure and Written Expression Section. If you cannot write good compositions in English, you will probably not get a good score for the test. *Learn to write well while training your ear.*

## 2) Planning Your Program

- (1) You need to spread your study over as many weeks as possible. It is not a good idea to do a lot of studying in a short amount of time.
- (2) You need to study each day, on a regular basis. One hour of study on each of six days is more beneficial than six hours of study on one day.
- (3) You need to use all the materials for **each section** of this book. Avoid the temptation to omit some or all of the exercises and to focus on the practice tests. The practice tests help you only



if you do all the exercises that precede them, even if you think that the exercises are too easy or too difficult. If they are really easy for you, you will be able to do them quickly. If they are really difficult, you will need to do them carefully, study your errors and try to avoid making similar ones in the future.

### 3) Do You Know When You Know ?

It is very important for you to have a clear understanding of yourself and how you are answering the questions. If you are a good language student, then you are probably very good at guessing intelligently about the meaning of written and spoken language. But do you know when you are guessing and when you are sure of an answer ? Try this process on a practice test to find out whether you know when you know and when you are guessing.

- (1) As you answer the questions on the practice test, put a small check (✓) beside those answers about which you are 100% certain you are correct
- (2) When you compare your answers with the correct answers, calculate what percentage of your "100% certain" answers were actually correct.
- (3) Are you usually correct when you are "100% certain" that your answers are correct ?
- (4) You may want to repeat this process on several exercises and practice tests.

### 4) Tricky Questions

Some of the questions on the test are definitely tricky. The

test writers are very clever about making all the wrong answers appear right in some way. Some students fall for the tricks while others do not. You need to know how often the test is tricking you into choosing the wrong answer. Try this process

- (1) Put two answers in the blank beside each question. Think about each question carefully, then write your first answer followed by your second answer.
- (2) Always put your two answers in the same order: first answer first, and second answer second.
- (3) Compare your two answers with the correct answers. Count how many of your first answers were correct. Count how many of your second answers were correct. Compare these two numbers.
- (4) Consider these questions: Which were better — your first answers or your second answers? Why? Were the questions able to trick you into choosing some wrong answers? How should you answer on a real TOEFL-type test?

## 5) Posture and Performance

- (1) When you practice and when you take a real TOEFL, sit up straight, lean forward slightly, and keep both feet on the floor. Never lean back in the chair.
- (2) Sit in a straight chair at a table or desk when you practice. Do not lie on the floor or the bed, or lean back in a comfortable chair when you practice. A position which is too comfortable will not help you learn: when you sit in a studious position, you can concentrate better.
- (3) Use both hands when you practice. Use your pencil hand

to answer the questions. Use your other hand to mark your place on the questions.

- (4) Keep your eyes on the questions and answer sheet. Don't look around the room or at other people if you are working with a group. The key to answering the question is always on the page.

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## Introduction

The Listening Comprehension Section measures your ability to understand spoken English such as might be heard in a classroom or other public places in North America. The English is delivered at normal conversational speed by speakers who have clear North American pronunciation. The vocabulary and grammatical patterns are typical of those used by an educated speaker in a relaxed situation.

The Listening Comprehension Section is the first section of the TOEFL. There are fifty listening items organized into three groups, Parts A, B, and C, each having separate directions. It takes approximately forty minutes to complete all the items.

In all three parts, each item and question is spoken only once. The test, however, is preceded by a very complete introduction, which includes sample items from each part. It is important to pay close attention to this introduction, even if you are familiar with the format of the test. Careful listening will help you determine if your seating is satisfactory for comfortable listening. In addition, it will enable you to get accustomed to the voices of the speakers and the volume of the recording.

**Part A: Similar Sentences** There are twenty items in the first part. For each item, you hear one sentence. You have about 13 seconds to read four sentences in the test booklet and choose the written sentence that is similar in meaning to the spoken sentence. The



many sight-sound confusions contained in the answers make these items difficult.

**Part B: Short Conversations** The second part consists of fifteen short conversations between two speakers, usually a man and a woman. After each conversation, a third speaker asks one question about the conversation. Many different types of questions are asked, but most require you to draw conclusions from the information in the conversation. You have about 13 seconds to read four phrases or sentences and choose the one that answers the spoken question.

**Part C: Longer Conversations and Mini-Talks** This part consists of fifteen questions based on three or four selections. During the thirteen-second pause after each question, you must read four phrases or sentences and mark the answer. The longer conversations often take place in an academic setting such as a university library or classroom, but they may also concern some other topic. The mini-talks, like the longer conversations, usually last less than two minutes. They are informative talks or classroom lectures of a non-technical nature. Previous knowledge of the topics is not required in order to answer the questions. Notetaking during the talks is neither necessary nor permitted.

In the following pages, the three parts of the Listening Comprehension Section are approached through different objectives covering specific problem areas. If you study these objectives systematically, you should develop an effective strategy for dealing with the Listening Comprehension questions in the actual TOEFL-type tests.

In Part A, Similar Sentences, you hear one sentence. You