

# Listening Section of the Simulated Toefl Test: Semantic and Pragmatic Context Analysis

Mustafa Hasan Ahtif<sup>1</sup>, Nilotpala Gandhi

<sup>1</sup>PhD. Research Scholar, School of Languages, Gujarat University, Ahmedabad, India

<sup>2</sup>School of Languages, Gujarat University, Ahmedabad, India

**Abstract.** *Language users are impacted by sociolinguistic factors like semantics and pragmatics in every circumstance. Even in a proficiency test, those two contexts are present because they serve as the test's framework. In order to identify the semantic and pragmatic settings in the TOEFL test simulation for the Listening component, research was done. In this study, the researcher used a qualitative descriptive strategy, using document analysis as the instrument. The study's focus was the FORUM TENTOR INDONESIA publication TOP NO. 1 TOEFL SIMULATION. The outcome demonstrates that different kinds of semantic and pragmatic context were present in the test simulation. In 8 of the 30 questions that were analyzed, there were semantic contexts. Semantic contexts of three different types—meaning, semantic feature, and semantic roles—were discovered. Semantic Roles (4 Questions), Semantic Feature (2 Questions), and Meaning are the other predominant semantic types (2 Questions). The Pragmatic context quantities, however, are more prevalent than the Semantic context. Because one test item can contain multiple types of pragmatic language, 40 questions from the 30 studied items were found to have pragmatic contexts. Additionally, the majority of the pragmatic inquiries were of the Reference type since the narrator of the listening section used referring to formulate the question. Context, Politeness, Reference, and Speech Act are the different types of pragmatic context that can be encountered. Reference-type pragmatic contexts are the most common (25 questions).*

**Keywords:** *Semantic, Pragmatic, Sociolinguistic, Listening*

Received: September 18, 2022

Revised: October, 12 2022

Accepted: November 22, 2022

## INTRODUCTION

In every situation, sociolinguistic factors have an impact on language users. When we meet someone, as social creatures, we often communicate with them. This could be as basic as asking them how their day was or as simple as saying hello (Trudgil, 2000). Since language serves as a "bridge" to connect people, Trudgil (2000) noted that language and society cannot be separated. Semantic and pragmatic settings are just two examples of the various sociolinguistics-related communication acts we engage in on a daily basis. In his book "The Study of Language," Yule (2010) defines semantics and pragmatics. Unlike semantic recognition, which is the perception of words' meaning, pragmatic recognition is the recognition of words' meaning or speaker meaning in their speech, making it an important consideration in the research of hidden meaning context. Pragmatics, according to Leech (1983), is "the study of meaning in the context that arises with systematic pattern and rule to expose particular languages' preference in situational meaning." Leech argues that pragmatic theories were also justified before to Yule's notion.

Meanwhile, according to Yule (2010), semantics is "the study of word, phrase, and sentence meaning." Semantic analysis always makes an effort to focus on what the words ordinarily imply rather than what a speaker might prefer the words to mean in a certain context.

According to the justification, it was established that when learning a language or using it, we should also take semantic and pragmatic considerations into account. In order to properly master advanced language use, language users must be able to comprehend those two concepts. Without this understanding, the language will not be communicative. The ability to do speech acts, convey and construe non-literal meaning, and bring discourse and politeness function for knowledge connected to cultural element are all requirements for language learners to fully attain pragmatic competence, according to Jong (2002). Since pragmatic reasoning is more easily understood than semantic reasoning, its application will be the same as semantic reasoning. When a person has already accomplished the necessary elements and their language skills are combined, we can evaluate how wonderful they are using a language test. As long as the goal is achieved and the right tests are chosen, the language test is recognized as a valid certification of language proficiency (McNamara, 2010). One of the widely used language proficiency tests, the TOEFL, has seen a surge in popularity as the number of L2 English learners has increased.

This exam is a standard measure of English proficiency and has become a prerequisite for a variety of job and academic opportunities. The researcher will talk about the study of semantic and pragmatic information included in the question as a means of adding authenticity to the test. As a result, the test-taker should be listening to native speakers speak in those two circumstances in real life, and the test maker therefore seriously examined the authenticity of the response (McNamara, 2010). (McNamara, 2010). In contrast to "Pragmatic comprehension of High and Low-Level Language Learners" and "An inquiry into Pragmatic Knowledge in Reading Section of TOLIMO, TOEFL, and IELTS Examinations," this study takes a different approach. The important similarity is that they omit mentioning the fundamental method for determining whether a test item is regarded to be a semantic or pragmatic test.

They concentrated solely on evaluating semantic and pragmatic skills in proficiency tests using the student's score as the only variable. It is a fascinating idea, and the primary researcher is interested in conducting research from this semantic and pragmatic sociolinguistics perspective. Especially if the examinee is not well-versed in semantics and pragmatics, the use of such language in this context is likely to confuse and frustrate them, making it difficult for them to demonstrate competence. Thus, the researcher seeks to create novel understanding to provide their perplexing problem-solving; this investigation may help test-takers gain perspective in advance of the test. This study also excludes Proficiency Tests like the International English Language Testing System (TOEIC) and the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) because the researcher can only concentrate on one such test. Including sociolinguistic variables in a single research will make it too complex to describe every Proficiency exam. Additionally, the results of those examinations' final tests, the TOEFL and IELTS, are frequently required. There are currently over 2.2 million IELTS test takers worldwide. These two examinations are the most frequently accepted tests in many nations, according to estimates made in tandem with TOEFL test takers.

## **Semantic**

Yule (2010) outlines semantic meaning, or the recognition of words' meanings, in his book *The Study of Language*. Semantics, in its broadest sense, refers to the study of words, phrases, and sentences. According to Katz (1972: 1), semantics is the study of meaning; it is not concerned with the organization of the syntactic components or the sound of sentences or other linguistic objects. The study of semantics is extensive. The semantic phrase is thought to have been first used at the turn of the 20th century. The word semantics derives from the Greek word *semanticist*, which means "important"; *sema* in means "to exhibit, denote," or "shown by sign," and *sign* is derived from *seam*. There are various types of semantic content mentioned in Yule's (2010) book *Study of Language*; he classified them into the term meaning, semantic features, semantic roles, lexical link, and collocation based on the context. Conceptual meaning and associative meaning are the two semantic categories that make up meaning. Conceptual meaning is the meaning a term has when it is used in its most basic, literal sense to describe or explain something. Consider the English term "needle," which conjures up images of "slim, pointy, steel objects." The word

"needle," however, may be interpreted differently by association meaning, such as "pain," "disease," "blood," "drugs," "thread," "knitting," or "hard to discover" (idiom for finding needle in the haystack). These connections can vary from person to person.

The peculiarity of semantic is typically explained by semantic traits. For instance, "The boy was eaten by the hamburger." Those phrases are correct syntactically yet have strange semantics. Although both the boy and the hamburger are nouns, we can see that the problem is that the hamburger cannot 'consume' property like the boy can. By attempting to determine the characteristic that every noun is supposed to have in order to be used with the verb, we may apply this. You might call that characteristic a "animate being." In this illustration, the youngster represents the animate being and the hamburger is the inanimate being. Meaningful roles in a sentence, semantic roles describe the agent, theme, instrument, and experience. The expression "they boy kick the ball" demonstrates it.

The youngster acting as the agent in this situation is the ball, which serves as the topic and is impacted by the act. The noun phrases in the sentence define the functions of the individuals and objects engaged in the action. It is not necessarily required for the agent to be a living entity; for instance, a leaf being thrown by the wind qualifies as an inanimate object acting as an agent. On the other hand, the meaning of an instrument and experience is different. The agent's use of an instrument is indicative of the latter's role in the execution of the action. For instance, the kid cut the paper with the knife and drew on it with a crayon. Until then, the noun form of "experience" might be applied to a subject to designate that being as the one having the felt sensation or witnessed event in question. Lexical relationships such as synonymy, antonymy, and hyponymy are all explained in this material. Two or more words that are nearly interchangeable in meaning are said to be synonyms.

Terms like "almost," "near," "large," "giant," "broad," "wide," "buy," and "buying" are just a few examples. Dead and alive, big and small, fast and slow, etc., are all antonyms. A homonym occurs when the meaning of one form is combined with that of another. Animal and dog, poodle and dog, vegetable and carrot, flower and rose are all pairs of words that can be used interchangeably. A prototype can be described using language like "different instance." While all birds have a common ancestor with penguins, the similarities between pigeons and doves, in terms of "form," feathers, and the ability to fly, are more striking than those between penguins and doves. Words that share the same pronunciation but have distinct spellings include meat/meet, flour/flower, pail/pale, and many others. On the other hand, homographs are words that seem alike yet have two or more distinct meanings. The bank (as in riverbank) and bank (as in financial institution) are two such pairs, as are bat (as in flying creature) and bat (used in sports). Polysemy is one approach to convey many meanings that are related through elaboration. The word "head" can mean any number of things, including the top of your body, the top of a beer glass, or the leader of an organization or a division. Examples of metonymy include "king" for "crown" and "president" for "White House".

### **Collocation**

A collocation occurs when two words appear to have happened simultaneously. The hammer will use the example of being coupled with the nail. Bread is produced by a table, a chair, and butter; thread is produced by a needle; and salt is produced by pepper.

### **Pragmatic**

Studying a language's "not visible" meaning is known as pragmatics (Yule, 2010). According to Leech (1983), pragmatic analysis is the investigation of meaning in the context of a scenario that follows a historical pattern and rule in order to identify a particular linguistic preference for situational meaning. Van Dijk (1977) suggested that pragmatic understanding differs from other language comprehension in that it requires contextual knowledge, interlocutor role play statues, the physical environment of the dialogue, and many contexts that are likely to include the communicative act. In many aspects, pragmatic researches "hidden" meaning, or how

we may determine what something means even when it is not said or written. Similar to how semantics is discussed in Yule's book *Study of Language* (2010), pragmatics is also covered there. Yule divided the pragmatics material into four categories: context, reference, speech act, and politeness.

**Context** There are various types of context; linguistic context is the collection of additional words used in the same phrase or sentence, and physical context helps us understand how to interpret words like "head," which has a different meaning in the two sentences he was ahead of me in academically and I need to go to the head office. If we see the term "Restaurant" in a building, for instance, it is evident that we may infer where it is located. Deixis is another term used in context. Deixis refers to language-based pointing. Persondeixis is used to point objects and persons, whereas spatialdeixis and temporaldeixis are used to point at certain times. Reference is the act of using words to help the listener recognize something. Inference is the essential step in naming anything that is connected to other things to refer to individuals. As an illustration, we may use the name Jennifer to refer to a friend of mine, but the connection is too far, so we can infer that Jennifer is merely the name of one of our friends worldwide. Anaphora and assumption are present in this.

Anaphora uses the example of a feral kitten running into my kitchen to explain the "referring back" The kitten became a cat but did not turn into another type of thing. Presumption therefore refers to what the speaker assumes the audience knows to be true. I want to make clear that assumption looks like this: "Ben, how are your kids doing?" The sentence makes two assumptions: first, that Ben is a father and has a family, and second, that Ben has more than one kid. Of course, the question did not say anything, but given the little information, we make the best assumptions we can. Act of speech acts like "requesting," "commending," "questioning," and "informing" are used to characterize actions. When an interrogative structure is employed with the intent to ask a question, as in "Can you close the door?", this is referred to as a direct speaking act. When we use a syntactic structure that is typically associated with the function of a question but lacks the function of a request, for example, when someone enters the room and leaves the door open and you say, "You forgot to shut the door," we are using an indirect speech act.

In this case, you are indirectly ordering the person to close the door. Being polite may be summed up as being aware of and thoughtful of another person's "face. In contrast, anytime you say anything that decreases the potential harm to another's face, it is referred to as a face-saving act (could you give me that book?). If you say something that represents a threat to another person's self-image, it is referred to as a face-threatening act. Positive faces the urge to be linked, whereas negative faces the need to be autonomous and free from constraints. "So, a face-saving gesture that accentuates a person's negative face will convey worry about imposition (I'm sorry to trouble you...; I realize you're busy, but...)," Yule (2010) writes. The face-saving action will demonstrate unity and call attention to a shared objective (Let's accomplish this together; you and I have the same problem, therefore).

### **TOEFL proficiency test**

According to McNamara, testing permeates every facet of human interaction (2010). The test's name, whether it be a drug test, DNA test, paternity test, or lie detector test, will reflect its intended use and general format. For instance, the DNA analysis seeks to reveal the DNA structure and pattern. A language exam is one that is designed to assess a test taker's command of the language being tested. The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) has been widely recognized as an accurate evaluation of language skills since its debut in 1964. Previously, the TOEFL exam was known as the Paper-Based Test (Paper Based Test). The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) was originally a paper-and-pencil exam, but over the years it has evolved into computer-based and, most recently, internet-based forms (Internet Based Test). The website for the Test of English as a Foreign Language states that it is used to measure the verbal, aural, and reading comprehension skills of non-native English speakers. The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) is recognized as the gold standard for English proficiency testing by

over 10,000 schools and agencies in over 130 countries, including the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia

## METHODS

The study's author made an effort to evaluate the TOEFL listening section's items' semantic and pragmatic content. This article will explain each thing in detail so that you may tell whether or not it is a semantic or pragmatic inquiry. Because of the constraints placed on this study, the researcher opted for a qualitative methodology. To this claim, Ary et al. add support (2010) The goal of qualitative researchers is to gain a deeper understanding of a phenomenon by looking at the whole rather than its parts. The goal of qualitative research is not statistical examination of data but rather a more in-depth picture and comprehension of the topic at hand. In 2015, FORUM TENTOR INDONESIA published TOP NO 1 TOEFL SIMULATION, a research-analyzed TOEFL simulation book, because the real TOEF exam cannot be acquired without help from the authorized authority. The book comes with a CD for the TOEFL's Audio Listening section, in addition to several lessons, tips, instructions, and activities. This book provides a collection of test items from the PBT/IBT/CBT++Accept in the Try Out Exercise, which is divided into three parts: listening, structure and written expression, and reading. The researcher, however, will focus solely on the audio recording.

## Procedure

Since no one in authority had access to the actual TOEFL exam, the researcher, having already amassed the best TOEFL simulation book on the market, decided to use the Try Out TOEFL book instead. This book is suitable since it has an audio test that is relevant to the research. The study's Listening phase is comprised of several questions selected at random by the researcher. This book is divided into two parts, each of which serves as a "Try It Out," and has one "Listening" section. In addition, there are a total of 30 questions to evaluate, since they are accumulated from across all of the Try-Out phases. The data is going to be analyzed when it's been gathered. The study was broken up into three distinct phases by the researcher:

A. making a table the researcher compiles the results into a table and matches the test items to the Pragmatic and Semantic theory concepts from Yule's (2010) Study of Language book. This is how the table looks:

Table 1. Analysis of Semantic and Pragmatic context

No	Question	Type of Pragmatic Context	Type of Semantic Context	Note
1	Example question from section A	Pragmatic type ...		The narrator uses politeness in the conversation
2	Example question from section B		Semantic type...	The question is referring the job from speaker A

Reducing and coding There are also two other methods of data analysis: coding and reduction. The researcher has some steps in the coding and reduction process, The researcher first deconstructs the data to determine whether a query is pragmatic, semantic, or neither. The researcher then determined which test question had an answer that matched the goal of the study.

The researcher represented and interpreted the categorical data in this stage by providing a narrative description and interpretation. The results will also be modified by the researcher to suit the needs of the expert.



## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Listening Section Contextuality on the TOEFL Practice Test. Among the 30 questions evaluated, the researcher found a wide range of semantic contexts in the Listening component of the Try out TOEFL simulation. Those conditions have to do with meaning, semantic characteristics, and semantic roles. As an added bonus, the semantic type instances in Listening are described below:

Table 2. Types of Semantic Context found on Listening Section.

Types of Semantic Context	Appendix I (Try Out 1)	Appendix II (Try Out 2)	Total
Meaning	Found in question number 4 and 5	-	2
Semantic Feature	Found in question number 1	Found in question number 2	2
Semantic Roles	Found in question number 13	Found in question number 1, 2, 9	4

According to the data in the table above, out of a total of 30 test items analyzed in Appendices I and II, Semantic Context uncovered a total of 8 things. Appendix I (Test 1) has four items that have been determined to be semantically related. Meaning (in questions 4 and 5 of Appendix 1), semantic traits (in questions 1 and 2 of Appendices I and II), and semantic roles (in questions 3 and 4 of Appendices II) were all noted (in questions 13 and 1, 2, and 9 of Appendix I and II, respectively). Without specifically stating it, the man's reaction to the idea that the polar bear's thick fur is due to its environment in a cold climate conveys the general idea that animals in cold regions have fur to keep warm. Such a question will encourage the receiver to read the entire text. The answer choice for question 12 provides more context for the paragraph under consideration. Subtly yet effectively, the man's rebuttal to the idea that the polar bear's thick fur is the result of their habitat in a chilly climate conveys to broad beliefs that some animals in frigid regions have fur to keep them warm. This type of question will encourage the listener to read the entire text.

The answer option for question 12 provides more context for the passage that is the focus of the question. Option A is the correct one since it will keep you warm (See Appendix I,, which ties to notions that the whole narration is talking about the fur on polar bear as page 2). Toefl Listening Exercise: Modeling the Semantic Features Appendix I question 3 and Appendix II question 8 both contained the term "semantic feature." The items on the test fall under the category of Semantic Features due to the foreign language used in them. Could I count on you for a helping hand? The sentence in bold in the text (see Appendix I, first page) is grammatically correct, yet its meaning is "weird" or semantically (meaning) peculiar. Semantic oddities are typically explained by the sort of semantic trait. So, we can't just jump into interpreting the bolded part of the phrase. When spoken directly, the phrase "gives me a hand" has a different meaning; it is not a plea for help in the sense that one could extend a limb. Semantic Feature describes cases like this, when it is necessary to look at the larger context before a word or sentence may be understood on its own.

Test out your listening comprehension with the TOEFL virtual exam and its Semantic Roles feature. Semantic Roles are the last type of semantic context that can be found in the Try Out. This type of semantic context was found in Questions 13, 4, and 36 of Appendices I and II (see Table 4.1, "Semantic Context Discovered in the Listening Section"). The phrase structure of the test items provides support for the semantic roles assigned to them. Semantic functions are a part of the definitions of Agent and Theme. An "agent" is any subject or thing that influences a noun. Example question 4 in Appendix II demonstrates sentence form with a subject, verb, and noun (bolded). The semantic roles background, however, sheds light on the arrangement by revealing whether the word in question serves as an agent or a theme in the sentence. The most of the time, he is the driver of a vehicle. The passage's main attention is on a remark in the chapter

(Appendix II, Page 1) in which the agent is identified as the "He" who pushed the "Car." Researcher found different types of pragmatic context on the TOEFL listening section simulation from the 30 questions analyzed in the Appendices, Try Out 1, and Try Out 2. They are the four roles of politeness, context, reference, and speech acts. Here is how we classify pragmatic occurrences in the listening section:

Table 3. Types of Pragmatic Context found on Listening Section

Types of Pragmatic Context	Appendix I / Try Out 1	Appendix II / Try Out 2	Total
Context	6 and 10	3, 6, 7, 10, 14	7
Politeness	2, 7, 9	4	4
Reference	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15	1, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15.	25
Speech Act	3 and 15	9 and 10	4

According to the chart above, 40 pragmatic contexts were discovered among the 30 test items on the TOEFL Try Out's Listening component. Because one question might have multiple pragmatic types, there are significantly more pragmatic contexts than there are in the examined test. The different types of pragmatics that were identified include Context (found in questions 6 and 10 in Appendix I and questions 3, 6, 7, 10, 14 in Appendix II), Politeness (found in questions 2, 7, 9 in Appendix I and question 4 in Appendix II), Reference (found in questions 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15 in Appendix I and in questions 1, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 in Appendix II), and Speech Act (found in question number 3 and 15 in Appendix I and question number 9 and 10 in Appendix II). Reference (25 questions) and Context (7 questions) are the two types of pragmatic context that are most frequently encountered, with Speech Act (7 questions) and Politeness coming in third and fourth, respectively (7 questions). Context on the TOEFL Try Out Simulation's Listening Section The context type is a pragmatic context that may be found in the TOEFL Try Out's Listening portion. The kind was identified in Appendix I questions 6 and 10, as well as questions 3, 6, 7, and 14 in Appendix II.

The context is enrolled with the word's use; therefore certain words will be used more than once to create meaning. In question number 7 in Appendix II (see Appendix II, page 3) on the first narration of the "It sounds good," the woman responded. Garlic with snails. The expression "snails and garlic" in that passage does not refer to a typical thing because a snail is an animal, and garlic is a vegetable, but if we look at the place settings, it refers to a meal that is provided in a restaurant. Additionally, by expressing the narrator's favorite cuisine in the subsequent remark, the section aids the listener in comprehending the passage's major theme. In the TOEFL Try Out Simulation, Politeness Was Found on the Listening Section Politeness is mentioned in Appendix I questions 2, 7, and 9 as well as in Appendix II question 4. Due to the repetition of modest and courteous speech, those test items can be characterized as being polite. When the woman was saying "Ohh," it was indicated in the bolded language of question number 4 on Appendix II. I don't think so," she said (see Appendix II, page 2), disputing the man's claim, but the audio recording gives the impression that she was speaking in a low, quiet tone. Another instance of courtesy may be seen in answer to question number 7 on Appendix I, where the guy stated, "I don't think so," in response to the woman's point.

Like capturing the sun's energy, there are simply three simple actions. (See page 3 of Appendix I.) The manner the man was speaking on the audio recording was likewise quite real, and he refuted the incorrect point the woman had made in the prior chapter. Documentation from the Listening Test of the TOEFL Practice Exam When it comes to the Try Out, the most helpful context can be found in the reference type. This explains the "referring back" question style that is common in listening sections. The story serves as the primary source material for Questions 2, 3, and 4 on Appendix I (see Appendix I, page 1). After that, the narrator will likely ask what the conversation's or passage's central point is. A man said, "Welcome, is there anything I can do for you?" in the third passage. When asked by the man what she wanted to buy, she said, "Some

history books." With the sentence in hand, the narrator then asked, "What does presumably the man do?" These inquiries are designed to bring listeners back to the passage and refresh their recollection of it. Only by focusing on the paragraph will the audience be able to find the solution, but they will also need to listen to the complete passage's narration in order to understand its relevance. Because of the women's narration, it's clear that the guy works at this place and would help the lady publish her book. Performer's Dialogue for the TOEFL Practice Exam's Listening Section Table 4.2, "Types of Pragmatic Context on Listening Section," indicates that speech acts took place in Questions 3 and 15 of Appendix I, and in Questions 9 and 10 of Appendix II. Every question on Try Out is phrased as a question, thus the speech act guides you through when to use "requesting," "commending," "questioning," or "informing." The study's speech acts and narrator questions were all selected at random from the conversational excerpt. Was last night's film any good? Is Question No. 9 Listed on Appendix II? (see Appendix II, page 3). This comment was made by the male narrator as a rhetorical act, as he was "questioning" the other party.

The discussion provides more background on the research subject ("What are the semantic context found in the listening component of the TOEFL Try Out simulation?") and connects the findings to established theories, as well as "What are the pragmatic context identified in the TOEFL Try Out simulated hearing section?" In this case, the researcher split the listening process in half to zero in on the semantic and practical background. The studies found that the competence test has both semantic and pragmatic components. Trudgil (2000) claims that sociolinguistics has an impact on how language is used in every scenario. When taking a language competency exam like the TOEFL, for example, you may be given a passage with a familiar narrative. That's because real-world testing serves as the basis for any credible examination (McNamara, 2010). The purpose of the test is to determine how proficient an individual is in the use of the English language.

Everyday dialogues from many cultures are included to gauge their potential to understand an English-speaking setting. Karbalei and Rahmanzade (2015) and Garacia (2004) conducted research on the semantic and pragmatic components, which argues for their inclusion in the competency examination. The researcher used Yule's "Study of Language" (2010) as a reference to determine if a given sentence was Semantic or Pragmatic. Yule's (2010) terminology is borrowed by Karbalei & Rahmanzade (2015) and Garacia (2004). The researcher looked at the transcript of the Listening Try Out and compared it to Yule's (2010) Semantic and Pragmatic classification to evaluate the test item. Findings showed that the Semantic and Pragmatic components of the Try Out on Both Listening section each had their own unique number. Pragmatics outnumber semantics by a large margin. This occurred because almost all of the test items were of the Pragmatic context type, where references are commonplace. As a feature of Reference, the question narrator "points back" to the paragraph in which the questions raise doubts about the text's central meaning or purpose.

However, the semantic context of the table was always made clear by the first or second question. The emphasis on semantic meaning means that initial questions usually revolve around a single word or a few sentences where the semantic was present. The pragmatic is there in almost every question and in most extended exchanges. Several questions on the TOEFL ask about topics that are covered within a single conversation that is about halfway through the test. Pragmatic language is heavily utilized in order to generate an inquiry that asks what the paragraph discusses. Again, references are quite clear. Try Out is already challenging enough without having to contend with Semantic and Pragmatic obstacles as well. Some words have complicated meanings that call for more than a cursory understanding (i.e. the used of Idiom or Figurative Meaning in the passage). According to Jong (2002), one needs a solid grasp of the characters in question to completely grasp either pragmatics or semantics. The lack of genuine "data" also undermines the reliability of this study. Instead of using real people as subjects, this study relied on documents for its information. No one involved in the creation of the item is taking part in the testing of it. If we want to learn more about whether a problem is pragmatic or semantic, we need to ask the people who will be affected by it. Contextual information,



interlocutor role play statues, the real physical location of the dialogue, and many other types of context that probably have the occurrence of the communication act are required for understanding a pragmatic meaning, as stated by Van Dijk (1977). Because of this, it seems as though many people with whom we interact have difficulty responding pragmatically, leading us to suspect, speculate, and assume the worst. In this case, the researcher may have made a pragmatic or even semantic error if his or her interpretation of the test maker's intent differs from the test maker's intended meaning. However, the study's validity might be defended on the grounds that the Try Out's multiple-choice questions allow for a precise elaboration of semantic and pragmatic notions. It helps the researcher make identifications by observing the correlation between the narration passage and the correct answer.

## CONCLUSIONS

The TOEFL Listening Test provides the test taker with an opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of the language's Semantic Context. Only eight of the thirty questions used for evaluation took semantic context into account. In terms of semantic context, we distinguish between Meaning, Semantic Features, and Semantic Roles. The three most common kinds of semantic context are Semantic Roles (4 Questions), Semantic Features (2 Questions), and Meaning (2 Questions). As a counterpoint, the Pragmatic context is far more common than the Semantic one. Forty of the thirty topics under consideration have pragmatic contexts since each given topic may be used in multiple ways. Items in the Listening Test will feature a variety of pragmatic contexts, including those related to Context, Politeness, Reference, and Speech Act. The two most common categories of pragmatic context are reference (25 questions) and context (7 questions), with speech act (7 questions) and politeness (4 questions) following (7 questions).

## REFERENCES

- Allami, H. (2014). *Pragmatic Knowledge Assessment in Listening Sections of IELTS Tests*. Iran: Yazd University
- Ary, D. Jacobs, L. C., Sorensen, C., & Razavieh, A. (2010). *Introduction to Research in Education Eighth Edition*. Belmont: Wadsworth
- Creswell J. W. (2012) *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research fourth edition*. Boston: Pearson.
- Examinations. Tehran: Farhangian University
- Fraenkel, Jack. R., and Norman E. Wallen. 2012. *How to Design and Evaluate Research in Education 8th Edition*. Boston: McGraw-Hill Higher Education.
- Garcia, P. (2004). *Pragmatic Comprehension of High and Low Level Language Learners*. Arizona: Northern Arizona University
- Jianda, L. (2006). *Assessing EFL learners' interlanguage pragmatic knowledge: Implications for testers and teachers*. China: Guangdong University of Foreign Studies
- Jung, Y.J. (2002). *Issues in Acquisitional Pragmatics*. New York: Columbia University
- Karbalaei, A. & Rahmanzade, M. K. (2015). *An Investigation into Pragmatic Knowledge in the Reading Section of TOLIMO, TOEFL, and IELTS*.
- Kasper, G., & Schmidt, R.G. (2008). *Developmental Issues in Interlanguage Pragmatics*.
- Katz, J. J & Fodor, J. A. (1963). *The Structure of a Semantic Theory*, Vol. 39, No. 2. (Apr. - Jun., 1963), pp. 170-210. Massachusetts: Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- Katz, J. J. (1972). *Semantic theory (Studies in language)*. USA: Harper & Row
- Latief, M. A. (2016) *Research Methods on Language Learning an Introduction*. Malang: Universitas Negeri Malang (UM Press)

- Leech, G. N. (1983). *The principles of pragmatics*. New York: Longman. McNamara, T. (2000) *Language Testing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Sheppard, B. (2013). *Teaching and Researching Listening (2<sup>nd</sup>ed.)*. USA: University of Oregon
- Soler, E. A. & Martínez-Flor, A. (2008). *Investigating Pragmatics in Foreign Language Learning, Teaching and Testing*. UK: Cromwell Press Ltd
- Tan, P. (1994). *Key concepts in ELT*. *ELT Journal*, 48(1), 100
- TOEFL test taker demography and Types of TOEFL test. (2017). Retrieved from <https://www.ets.org/toefl>
- Trudgill, P. (2000). *Sociolinguistics: An introduction to language and society fourth edition*. London: Penguin.
- Van Dijk, T. (1977). *Text and Context*. London: Longman
- Vitásková, K. & Šebková, L. (2017). *The Variable Professional Perception in Assessment of Pragmatic Language Level in Autism Spectrum Disorders and Related Developmental Difficulties*. Czech Republic: Palacký University in Olomouc
- Yule, G. (2010). *The study of language 4<sup>th</sup> edition*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press