

7-23-2012

EFL/ESL (English as a Foreign/Second Language) Students' Perceptions toward the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) Test

Indah Puspawati

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Follow this and additional works at: <http://knowledge.library.iup.edu/etd>

Recommended Citation

Puspawati, Indah, "EFL/ESL (English as a Foreign/Second Language) Students' Perceptions toward the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) Test" (2012). *Theses and Dissertations (All)*. 783.
<http://knowledge.library.iup.edu/etd/783>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by Knowledge Repository @ IUP. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations (All) by an authorized administrator of Knowledge Repository @ IUP. For more information, please contact cclouser@iup.edu, sara.parme@iup.edu.

STUDENT HAS RESTRICTED ACCESS TO FULL TEXT OF THE DISSERTATION.

ONLY COVER PAGES AND ABSTRACT ARE AVAILABLE AT THIS TIME

EFL/ESL (ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN/SECOND LANGUAGE) STUDENTS'
PERCEPTIONS TOWARD THE TOEFL (TEST OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN
LANGUAGE) TEST

A Thesis

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

Indah Puspawati

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

August 2012

© 2012 Indah Puspawati

All Rights Reserved

Indiana University of Pennsylvania
School of Graduate Studies and Research
Department of English

We hereby approve the thesis of

Indah Puspawati

Candidate for the degree of Master of Arts

04/30/2012 _____

Signature on file _____
David I. Hanauer, Ph.D.
Professor of English, Advisor

04/30/2012 _____

Signature on file _____
Sharon Deckert, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of English

04/30/2012 _____

Signature on file _____
Sedef Smith, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of English

ACCEPTED

Signature on file _____

Timothy P. Mack, Ph.D.
Dean
School of Graduate Studies and Research

Title: EFL/ESL (English as a Foreign/Second Language) Students' Perceptions toward the
TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) Test

Author: Indah Puspawati

Thesis Chair: Dr. David I. Hanauer

Thesis Committee Members: Dr. Sharon Deckert,
Dr. Sedef Smith

Since its development in early 1960s, the TOEFL test has gained its popularity as the most widely used English proficiency test. The main purpose of the TOEFL test is claimed to assess the English proficiency of second language speakers of English who intend to study in institutions where English is the language of instruction. While the studies about this test are plentiful, little is known about how the feelings and perceptions of the test takers are in relation to these powerful tests that determine an individual's future. This study investigates the EFL/ESL students' perceptions towards the TOEFL test.

The Data collection method employed in this study was focus group discussion. Thirteen EFL/ESL student teachers in a mid-sized state university in the northeastern United States participated in this study. They were grouped into three focus groups with one group consisting of five participants and two groups consisting of four participants. Each focus group discussion was both audio and video recorded for analysis.

The participants in this study reported to have high anxiety when taking the TOEFL test. Words used by participants to describe their feeling about the test were anxious, stressful, not happy, and nervous. The participants also perceived that the topics covered in the test are not fair for test takers who have different educational, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds, because they are subjects and cultures specifics. The tasks posed in the test were also perceived as unauthentic, mostly due to the time limitations. Thus, the TOEFL test perceived as not being able to measure test takers' language proficiency. Consequently, the

participants agreed that the TOEFL score did not reflect their real English proficiency.

Therefore, the use of the TOEFL score for admission requirements needs to be reconsidered, and the participants agreed that there has been misused of the test scores. This study supports using a more democratic assessment to assess the language proficiency of second language speakers of English.