The comparison of passive voices between TOEIC and TOEFL tests [*]

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Abstract

Passive voice can indicate difficulty and formality in sentence. Especially in the TOEIC and TOEFL tests, which are widely accepted in world class. The main purpose of this research article is indicate the different of passive voice between TOEIC and TOEFL. The major instruments of this research artical is Coh-metrix. Coh-metrix is a tool for analyzing the text, by analyzing it to an average frequency.Using 15 set of examination in reading part of TOEIC and TOEFL as data. The research found that TOEFL had average of passive voice more than TOEIC, most of passive voice are found in the formal sentences and complicated sentences more than ordinary sentences. Scores of TOEIC and TOEFL are able to apply for work or apply for study at a foreign universities. However, this research article will be useful in the decision-making for the TOEIC or TOEFL test.

Keywords : TOEIC and TOEFL, Passive voice, Test

บทคัดย่อ

กรรมวาจกนั้นสามารถบ่งบอกถึงความยากง่ายหรือความเป็นทางการในประโยคนั้นๆได้ โดยเฉพาะใน ข้อสอบ TOEIC และ TOEFL ซึ่งเป็นแบบทดสอบที่มีการยอมรับและแพร่หลายในระดับโลก ดังนั้น วัตถุประสงค์หลักของงานวิจัยชิ้นนี้คือ เปรียบเทียบความแตกต่างของกรรมวาจกและการใช้กรรมวาจกใน TOEIC และ TOEFL เพื่อทดสอบว่าในข้อสอบใดมีกรรมวาจกมากกว่ากัน โดยใช้ Coh-metrix ซึ่งเป็น โปรแกรมวิเคราะห์ภาษา ซึ่งวิเคราะห์ออกมาเป็นค่าเฉลี่ย โดยใช้ข้อสอบ TOEIC และ TOEFL ในส่วนของการ อ่าน ชนิดละ 15 ชุด โดยหาค่าเฉลี่ยความถี่ของกรรมวาจกเพื่อนำมาเปรียบเทียบและสรุป ผลการวิจัยพบว่าใน ของข้อสอบ TOEFL นั้นมีกรรมวาจกมากกว่าข้อสอบ TOEIC พอสมควรซึ่งกรรมวาจกนั้นส่วนมากจะพบใน ประโยคที่เป็นทางการและประโยคที่เป็นทางการจะซับซ้อนกว่าประโยคแบบทั่วไป ซึ่งคะแนนของ TOEIC และ TOEFL นั้นสามารถนำไปยื่นเพื่อนสมัครทำงานหรือเรียนต่อในมหาลัยต่างประเทศได้ อย่างไรก็ตาม งานวิจัยนี้จะเป็น
ประโยชน์ในด้านการตัดสินใจในการเลือกสอบ TOEIC หรือ TOEFL

คำสำคัญ : โทอิคและโทเฟล, กรรมวาจก, ข้อสอบ

Introduction

Nowadays English is now a global lingua franca. Most of population in our world, even non-native use English as a tool for communication and exchange of ideas. The vital role of English are in education, job application and business. Graduates that recently graduated need to achieve impressive scores of certain standardized tests, TOEIC is very significant in attaining employment and TOEFL is a key for education opportunities.

TOEIC or Test of English for International Communication developed by Educational Testing Service (ETS) a private non-profit organization, is a multiple-choice, norm-referenced test designed to measure the English-language listening comprehension (LC), and reading (R) skills of individuals for whom English is a second language (ESL). The maximum score of TOEIC is 990. TOEIC is a well-accepted test type widely used in Asia and Europe in recruiting employees. Some business services, such as hotel and tourism, require candidates to obtain high scores in a standardized language test. Example cabin crew, pilot require TOEIC score around 650 – 750 and travel agency, customer service require 550 – 650.

TOEFL or 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 United State of America's universities. The test is accepted by many English-speaking academic and professional institutions. TOEFL is a trademark of the Educational Testing Service (ETS), which designs and administers the tests. ETS issues official score reports, sent independently to institutions, for two years following the test. TOEFL maximum score is 120. Most of universities in USA require TOEFL score over 79.

TOEIC and TOEFL are totally different TOEIC focuses on business English. It is generally thought of as a work-related English proficiency exam. However, a surprising number of USA universities and degree programs will accept the TOEIC as an alternative to the TOEFL. There are four types of TOEIC tests: reading & listening, writing, speaking. TOEFL have four types of tests like TOEIC. However, TOEFL focuses on how English is used in an academic setting, which is why schools and universities use TOEFL scores for admissions purposes. The reading passages in the TOEFL use formal, academic language and high-level vocabulary rather than casual or conversational English. Both TOEIC and TOEFL scores, once taken, will be valid for 2 years because upon that, the ability of test takers will probably have changed. After this period, test takers have to retake tests for application and else. In TOEIC and TOEFL, examinee would have faced many of grammar. Therefore, TOEIC and TOEFL are have different difficulty levels, especially active voice and passive voice.

Active voice and Passive voice are is a grammatical voice common in many of the world's languages. Many languages have both an active and a passive voice, this allows for greater flexibility in sentence construction, as either the semantic agent or patient may take

the syntactic role of subject. When using active voice, the subject performs the action noted by the main verb. Active voice always used in conversation. On the other hand, when using the passive voice, the subject is acted upon by another agent or an unknown something. Example Active: Brutus stabbed Caesar. Passive: Caesar was stabbed by Brutus. The passive voice is often used in formal texts for instance TOEIC and TOEFL tests. In the same time, the active voice is clearer and easier to read. The passive voice always avoids the first person; something is in first person ("I" or "we") it's also in the active voice. Passive voice is considered to be one of the difficult Grammar. Many people are easy to confuse with passive voice. Since it involves a couple of combinations to work out prior to the actual construction, knowledge of other two areas are similarly important to be mastered beforehand (verb to be + verb + participle). This puts the people in difficulty as it requires higher order skills such as synthesis.

Therefore, this paper aims to compare the average frequency of passive voice between TOEIC and TOEFL. There are 15 set of TOEIC tests and 15 set of TOEFL tests, the research uses a website tool (www.tool.cohmetrix.com) for finding the average frequency of passive voice between TOEIC and TOEFL. The research evaluates statistics in frequency.

This research focused on average frequency of passive voice between TOEIC and TOEFL. The findings of this research are expected to provide information and be helpful for the TOEIC or TOEFL teacher, specifically who need score of TOEIC and TOEFL in job or education's requirement.

Purpose of the study

Main purposes of this research article is to study the differences average frequency of passive voice between TOEIC and TOEFL and how passive voice work in TOEIC and TOEFL.

Research Methodology

1. Data Collection

The data used in this study were collected from online websites that provide TOEIC and TOEFL test and all of test used in teaching class with published within 2010 - 2015. There are two type of data, TOEIC in reading part and TOEFL in reading part that provide data.

1.1 English proficiency test (TOEIC)

TOEIC consist of 15 set of reading part, this test was administered to provide data (average frequency of passive voice). TOEIC Test collection was download from online website that provide TOEIC and TOEFL test.

1.2 English proficiency test (TOEFL)

TOEFL consist of 15 set of reading part for provide data to find average frequency of passive voice by Coh-Metrix. TOEFL Test collection was download from online website that provide TOEIC and TOEFL test.

2. Instruments

The data used in this research were obtained by only one instruments Coh-Metrix. Coh-Metrix is a computational tool that produces indices of the indices of the linguistic and discourse representations of a text. Developed by Arthur C. Graesser and Danielle McNamara, Coh-Metrix calculates the coherence of texts on many different measures. Coh-Metrix can be used in many different ways to investigate the cohesion of the explicit text and the coherence of the mental representation of the text. "Our definition of cohesion consists of characteristics of the explicit text that play some role in helping the reader mentally connect ideas in the text" (Graesser, McNamara, & Louwerse,2003). The definition of coherence is the subject of much debate. Theoretically, the coherence of a text is defined by the interaction between linguistic representations and knowledge representations. While coherence can be defined as characteristics of the text (i.e., aspects of cohesion) that are likely to contribute to the coherence of the mental representation, Coh-Metrix measurements provide indices of these cohesion characteristics.

3. Data Analysis

To find passive voice in TOEIC and TOEFL with the Coh-Metrix tools online is the easiest part of the process. Coh-Metrix websites are setup to be quick and user friendly for students, teachers, and researchers. Frequency of passive voice was used to show how formal of sentences.

To use Coh-Metrix, Figure 1 show the main page user will find when user visit Coh-Metrix-3.0 (http://cohmetrix.com) then it will take you to the new command. Choose "Coh-Metrix Web Tool".
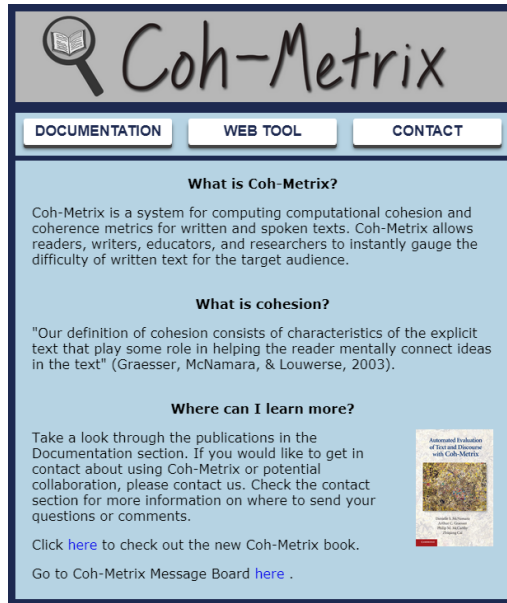
Figure 1 simply click on the "WEB TOOL"

Figure 2 click "Coh-Metrix Web Tool".

Figure 3 show the main operation of Coh-Metrix 3.0 to find the result fill in the data in the text with TOEIC of TOEFL examination, the limit text to a maximum of 15,000 character. Fill code in a small blank bar. And press "Submit" and Coh-Metrix will analyze texts.
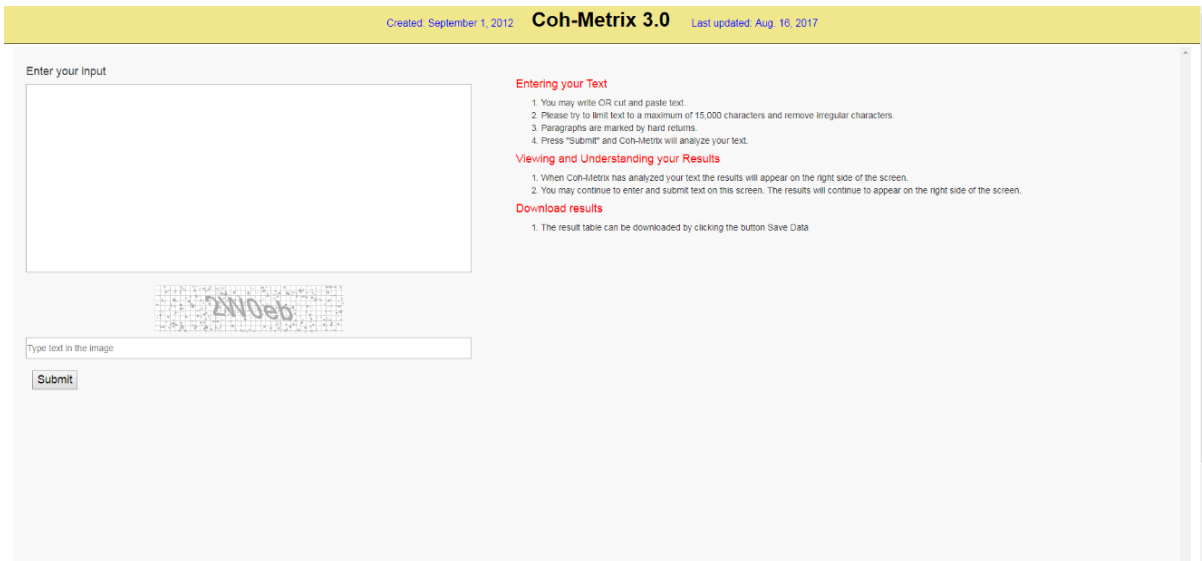
Figure 3 Fill in data and click "Submit"

When TOEIC and TOEFL text has analyzed by Coh-Metrix. The results will appear on the right side of the screen. Focused on column of passive voice density which is a data that processed as an average frequency and uses for finding result. Repeat all process until finished all 30 sets of test.
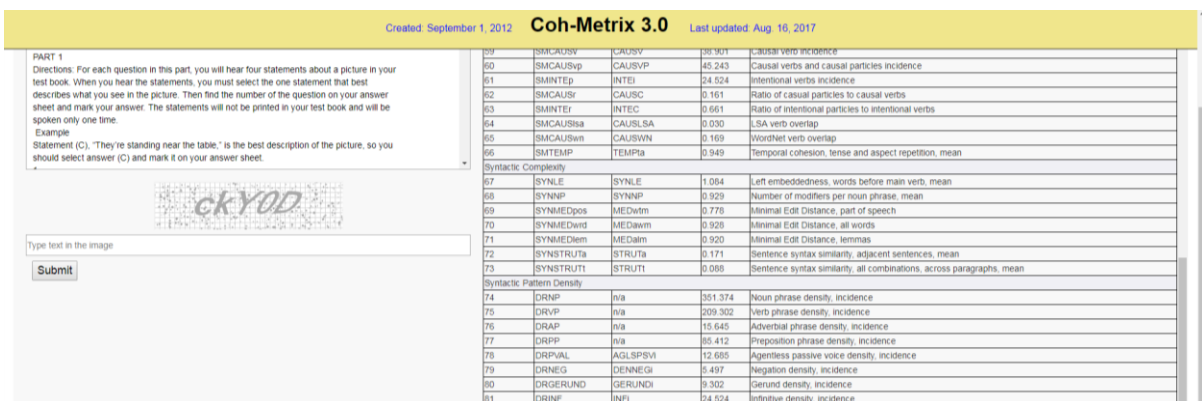

Figure 3 viewing result.

Result

The average frequency of passive voice used in the TOEIC and TOEFL

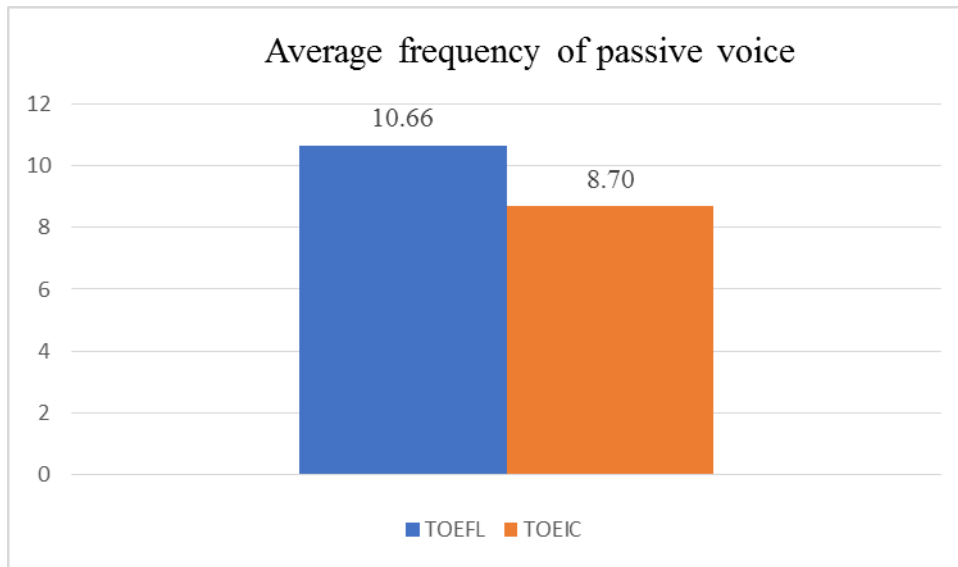| Set	TOEIC	TOEFL
1	18.74	15.15
2	14.54	13.81
3	12.46	12.37
4	12.33	12.37
5	11.94	12.24
6	11.05	11.20
7	8.05	10.53
8	7.98	10.28
9	7.75	10.20
10	5.84	9.89
11	5.63	9.86
12	4.79	8.99
13	4.41	8.96
14	3.30	8.60
15	1.72	5.43

In this table show that passive voice was found in every test which can noticed from average frequency of passive voice, and almost of TOEFL test have more average frequency than TOEIC, although the first set of TOEIC have higher average frequency of passive voice than all of TOEFL test. Whereas the rest of average frequency is still lower than TOEFL test except second set of TOEIC that almost equal to first set of TOEFL. That mean some TOEIC test almost have average frequency equal TOEFL test.

Comparing average frequency of passive voice of all examination between TOEIC and TOEFL

This figure show that TOEFL had average frequency of passive voice more than TOEIC almost clearly. That means that TOEFL is more formal than TOEIC and there is more passive voice than TOEIC as well, although in previous table show that TOEIC have a high score in the first set of test and some set of TOEIC.

Example of Passive voice that found in all test

Tenses	TOEIC	TOEFL
1. Present Simple	The flight is canceled.	The shafts are replaced by female figures.
2. Present Continuous	-	The exact cause of such a glacier surge is being studied.
3. Present Perfect	-	-
4. Present Perfect Continuous	-	-
5. Past Simple	The agreement was signed last month.	The Rocky Mountains were explored by fur traders during the early 1800.
6. Past Continuous	-	In less than a year, basketball was being played in both the United States and Canada.
7. Past Perfect	-	Carved wooden blocks had been introduced by A.D. 750.

8. Past Perfect Continuous	-	-
9. Future Simple	The result will be announced next week.	-
10. Future Continuous	-	-
11. Future Perfect	-	Exploration of the Solar System is continuing, and at the present rate of progress all the planets will have been contacted within the near 50 years.
12. Future Perfect Continuous	-	-

This is a sample of passive voice that found in TOEIC and TOEFL test and classified by Tenses. This table shows that the example of TOEIC was found only simple sentences and all sentences implicate to travel, business and meeting, at the same time TOEFL was found half of tenses in examinee. That mean TOEFL is more complex than TOEIC because only simple tenses are found in TOEIC and TOEFL is more various in tenses. In present simple sentences, TOEIC and TOEFL sentences are sample sentence, whereas TOEFL sentence explain that what was replaced the shafts.

Discussion and Conclusion

Based on the average frequency of passive voice in TOEIC and TOEFL, the TOEFL score is higher. The TOEFL test is more formal than TOEIC, which corresponds to that in the data analysis. Therefore, choosing to take TOEIC for study in USA universities is an easier option than TOEFL. However, surprising number of universities will accept the TOEIC as an alternative to the TOEFL (see eg. The GlobalExam Blog). In the meantime, TOEFL is more accepted in the USA universities. There are both advantages and disadvantages to used TOEIC score, choose wisely. However whether it is a TOEIC or TOEFL test, examinee should prepare and need to mastery passive voice because passive voice is difficult. If familiar with passive voice it will make TOEIC and TOEFL much easier.

In conclusion, this research has shown that TOEFL have more passive voice and more formal than TOEIC. This is because study abroad should be able to communicate, as opposed to the TOEIC that focuses on the business language. TOEIC is focuses on communication and language used in an academic, higher-education environment. For this

reason, it made TOEFL more difficult and more complex than the TOEIC. Although some of TOEIC examinations have average passive voice more than TOEFL examination whereas when comparison with the average totals of TOEIC and TOEFL examinations, TOEFL scores are significantly higher than TOEIC.

Acknowledgement

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