CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

At the beginning of the chapter, the discussion on the basic ideas of the effort of achieving a high score in English proficiency tests starts with how the participants prepared and learnt English to achieve the high score. This chapter explains the theoretical framework. It consists of theories of effort, language testing; English proficiency tests; the definition of TOEFL; and the definition of IELTS; and English learning strategies.

A. Theories of Effort

Three main families of theories target the nature of effort: force-based, resource-based, and mediation theories. This section examines each one, along with their strengths and drawbacks.

1. Force-based Theory

Force-based theories define efforts as exertions of forces against some resistive force in order to reach some goal. Recently, force-based theories have been defended by Kruglanski et al. (2012); de Vignemont and Massin (2015); and Massin (2017). Force-based accounts of effort should not be conflated with so-called peripheralist views about the *feeling* of effort. Force-based theories correspond to the etymology and common dictionary definitions of 'effort' and have several appealing features. First, the idea of a resistance is naturally included in the definition: the effort consists in the force one exerts, and the resistance in the opposite forces

one encounters. Second, force-based theories neatly define an effort's success conditions: an agent's effort succeeds if she attains her goal, non-deviantly, through her force exertion, and fails otherwise. Third, forcebased theories clearly distinguish the intensity of efforts from their success or failure. Bob may exert an intense force on a pumpkin and fail to lift it, or exert a small force on an acorn and succeed in lifting it.

Force-based theories face two main challenges. The first is accounting for the difficulty of efforts. Lifting the same pumpkin is more difficult for a child than for an adult, yet both must exert the same amount of force to succeed. The force-based theorist may initially argue that any physical effort requires a second-order mental effort: lifting the pumpkin requires exerting both a physical force on the pumpkin and a mental force to avoid disengaging from that first-order effort. The second challenge for force-based theories is that of explaining non-physical efforts. In the case of mental efforts such as the example of resisting a temptation no muscular force is exerted. The best move for the force-based theorist would be to provide a formal theory of forces, which is not restricted to physical forces.

2. Resource-based Theory

Resource-based theories define efforts as the use of some limited resource to reach one's goal (Gendolla & Wright, 2009; Szwed et al., 2021; von Kriegstein, 2017; Wright, 2016). While both force-based and resource-based accounts equate efforts with goal-directed actions, on the

force-based account an effort consists in the action of exerting forces (a force being a *vectorial* quantity having both a magnitude and a direction), while on the resource-based account an effort is a transfer, allocation, investment, expenditure of a resource (which is a scalar quantity having a magnitude but lacking direction). A resource-based perspective is naturally suggested by ordinary expressions such as 'investing effort' or 'putting effort into'. Note that such expressions are *synecdochic*: strictly speaking it is not effort that is invested, but some resource, the investment of which constitutes effort.

Resource-based theories offer a promising account of effort's success conditions: an agent's effort succeeds if they non-deviantly attain their goal through their resource investment, it fails otherwise. Resource-based accounts can also clearly distinguish an effort's intensity from its success or failure. Difficulty also constitutes a challenge for at least some resource-based accounts. The same level of resource expenditure may correspond to different difficulty levels across individuals. Likewise, dedicating all of one's attention to a given task may prove easier for some people than for others. Resource-based accounts also face a problem in explaining non-physical efforts: expenditures of mechanical energy are well-understood. One further problem for theories appealing to depletable resources is the role of motivation in effort exertion: studies have found that, even after people have performed depleting actions, the decrease in performance on a second task is smaller if they are given extra incentives;

one would not expect these motivational effects to occur if efforts were mere depletions of a limited resource.

3. Meditation Theory

A recently influential alternative identifies effort with the process that mediates between capacities on the one hand, and performance, on the other (Shenhav et al., 2017). The effort, or the lack thereof, is what explains the difference between an organism's maximum possible task performance (the performance it is capable of at maximum exertion given the task's characteristics) and its actual performance (the level of task performance observed in a given situation). The greater the effort, the closer the actual performance is to the agent's maximal capacity.

The mediation account has recently gained popularity among mental effort theorists (Kool & Botvinick, 2018; Székely & Michael, 2021), perhaps due to some of the following advantages. First, by relativizing an effort's intensity to both the features of the task and the agent's abilities, mediation theories can explain why the same performance can have different levels of difficulty for agents with different characteristics. Second, motivation can be included as one of the variables determining the level of effort agents choose to exert: the higher the motivation, the greater the activity's intensification and the closer actual performance will approximate its maximum level. Third, by not positing a depletable resource, the mediation account provides an alternative to ego depletion-

style views which have been plagued by methodological and replication problems.

However, mediation accounts face challenges. First, they assume that an increase in effort leads to an increase in performance; but this need not be the case (Westbrook & Braver, 2013). In fact, the amount of effort is frequently uncorrelated with the degree of task success: an agent can exert a lot of effort and do just as poorly as another similarly able agent who exerts much less. Thus, mediation accounts seem to lead to the wrong view about the relationship between effort and performance success. Performance success is not determined only by effort intensity; it depends also on skill. Second, the notion of "subjective intensification of activity" stands in need of clarification. To intensify an activity, there must be an activity there to be intensified. But the distinction between the goal-directed activity and its intensification, in several concrete cases, appears to be a distinction without a difference. The effort often begins at the very same time as the activity, suggesting that the effort is not the activity's intensification, but the activity itself.

B. Language Testing

Language testing may be a wide category of testing that surveys angles of a person's capacity to understand or communicate in a specific language. Spaventa (1992) underlined that there are two main types of language testing: testing skills and testing knowledge of content. Skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing as well as sub- skills such as comprehension,

vocabulary, grammar, spelling and punctuation. Taylor and Angelis (2008) specified that different types of tests are there to test students' language knowledge, tests such as non-reference tests, aptitude tests, proficiency tests, achievement tests and diagnostic tests. It is a natural extension of classroom work and provides both teachers and students with useful information that is the basis for improvement.

Reeve and Peerbhoy (2007) stated that an assessment is not a test that has been created by practicing experts over a long period of time. Therefore, students are not yet at the point where they have access to a wealth of resources that will outline every step of every evaluation or give a precise understanding of what evaluation comprises. A test is good when it sets out to achieve approved goals; yet, when it could be considered a pointless movement, it is not.

C. English Proficiency Tests

English proficiency tests are standardized exams that people take to determine their level of fluency in speaking, listening, reading, and writing the English language. These language assessments typically cover a range of language skills, including grammar, speech, comprehension, vocabulary, spelling, and more. Paulina et al (2020) emphasized that the English Proficiency Test (EPT) has been in use for a while and is essential for assessing L2 learners' language proficiency in academic settings. To assess a person's proficiency in using the language for various purposes, English Proficiency Tests or English Language Exams are typically used. These

proficiency tests were developed in order to have an objective and standardized way to fairly judge a person's English skills because language usage is difficult to quantify.

The three main purposes of English language proficiency tests are for immigration, employment, and study. English proficiency test certificates can be used to enroll in universities or colleges abroad. Some universities require their students to take an internationally accepted language proficiency test for this purpose. Another use for the English proficiency test is in the workplace. Most international employers and famous companies use this English proficiency test to assess whether you have the appropriate English language proficiency levels for the job you are applying for. The official website of Educational Testing Service (ETS) in 2013 stated that Agencies and institutions rely on TOEFL scores as well; immigration departments use them to issue residential and work visas, medical and licensing agencies use them for professional certification purposes, individuals use them to measure their progress in learning English (Paulina, 2020).

Many English language proficiency tests are available with different structures, costs, purposes, and passing grades. All of these English language proficiency tests aim to measure one's English language proficiency levels. This research will focus on TOEFL and IELTS.

D. TOEFL

1. What is TOEFL?

TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) is a standardized and globally accepted English language test for non-native speakers of the language. And also, the TOEFL exam assesses the primary English language skills, which include reading, listening, speaking, and writing skills. TOEFL is also a test that organized by American United States institution called ETS (Educational Testing Service). Alderson (2009) defined that The TOEFL test is the world's most widely respected English language assessment and used for admissions purposes in more than 150 countries, including Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

Some purposes of TOEFL test are to apply an education and to get professional profession in other countries. Afri & Harahap (2019) stated that the TOEFL was required for learners in nations whose primary language was not English, but who needed to proceeds their studies in nations whose official language was English. This can be required to guarantee that learners from non-English talking nations are able to go to study in English-speaking nations legitimately.

There are three stages of TOEFL evolution. Carroll (1961) and Lado (1961) explained that the beginning with TOEFL test was created, linguistic theories envisioned language competence as a set of separate components such as language structure, lexicon, and comprehension. The

second stage is a multiple-choice TOEFL test that surveyed reading, listening, and language structure and written expression kept on managed to all candidates. Furthermore, Bachman & Palmer (1996) Canale & Swain (1980) Hymes (1972) implied that language experts continued to elaborate on Carroll's (1961) ideas about integrative language skills, and theories of communicative competence emerged that stressed the fundamentally communicative nature of language use. Chapelle, Grabe, & Berns (1997) described that the last stage of TOEFL would develop of communicative competence that would direct the plan of the unused test was elaborated further as communicative language utilize in scholastic contexts.

The TOEFL test is also divided into four primary English competencies: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. There are contexts for the TOEFL Reading Test section followed by questions connected to the passages. This test section aims to assess your reading comprehension, word recognition, vocabulary, sentence cohesion, and more. The listening section, there are different audio clips about lectures and conversations that are presented. Note that the audio clip is only played once in this section, and question skipping is not allowed. The speaking section is divided into two parts, and the first part is independent speaking, wherein you are to talk about two common topics for a limited time. The second part is an integrated speaking in which there is an audio clip that you need to listen to and then answer the questions that follow orally. The TOEFL

Writing section requires you to write two essays, one integrated essay and one independent essay, for a limited time.

There are two type tests of TOEFL exam. There are the TOEFL Paper-based test (PBT) and Internet-based test (iBT). These TOEFL test types have the same components in test format, duration, and it still measures the primary English language skills. For the TOEFL Paper-based test (PBT), there are three test sections intended to test English language skills: Listening, reading, and writing. The PBT does not test the English speaking skills. However, it is replaced by structure and written expressions test section. The TOEFL Internet-based test (iBT) is the computer-delivered test type of TOEFL exam. And it measures the four English language skills, including listening, writing, speaking, and reading.

The total test time of the TOEFL exam is approximately 3 hours to 4 hours, and a 30-minute preparation time is. The TOEFL PBT listening section lasts about 30 to 40 minutes, and the written expression section lasts for about 25 minutes. As for the TOEFL iBT, the reading section is 60 to 80 minutes long, and the listening test section lasts for about 40 to 60 minutes. The TOEFL iBT speaking test section lasts for up to 17 to 20 minutes, and the writing section lasts approximately an hour. The TOEFL exam uses a centralized scoring network which means that the computer scores the reading and listening test sections. On the other hand, highly-trained professionals score the TOEFL writing and speaking test sections

and automated AI scoring. Each section of the TOEFL iBT exam has a grade from 0 to 30, with all four areas amounting to a perfect score of 120. As for the TOEFL PBT exam overall score ranges from 310 to 667 points. The TOEFL iBT costs USD 185 and while the TOEFL PBT costs around USD 180. Note that the registration for the TOEFL exam also varies from country to country.

2. IELTS

A. What is IELTS?

The IELTS stands for International English Language Testing System. It is a standardized and widely recognized English language proficiency assessment test for non-native English speakers. The IELTS also provides an accurate language proficiency level for an individual's English comprehension. Also, it is especially relevant for people who wish to work or study in English-speaking countries worldwide. This language proficiency exam is considered to provide a structured certification for the English language. The IELTS exam is commonly used for education. As a result, most academic institutions around the world accept the language proficiency certification from the IELTS. The IELTS is also trusted and accepted in over 3,400 institutions in the United States alone. And it is also accepted by thousands of institutions, especially in English-speaking countries over the world.

In addition, several international companies, private, professional institutions, and government organizations prefer the IELTS compared to

other language proficiency exams available in the market. And also, it is one of the requirements for global migration. People usually take this test because it is required to get a working or student visa in English-speaking countries. Moreover, the IELTS is designed to assess the primary English skills, including writing, speaking, listening, and reading. It assesses one's effectiveness in using the English language in different settings or environments. The IELTS can be taken by anyone regardless of age, gender, race, nationality, and such. However, the test is not recommended for those under 16 years old.

The IELTS syllabus is separated into four distinct sections, each measuring a different competency. The four IELTS exam sections are as follows: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Three test sections of the IELTS, including reading, listening, and writing, are all taken on the same test day schedule. And while the IELTS speaking test section is taken on a different day or test schedule.

The IELTS offers two versions of the reading and writing test. Those are the IELTS Academic and the IELTS General Test versions. The IELTS Academic and IELTS General reading test sections use academic topic subjects and are factual, analytical, or opinion-based contexts. And while on the IELTS General reading test section, all the passages presented are shorter and based on the day-to-day situations and working environment. The contexts presented here are all original articles based on newspapers, magazines, and other reading materials. As for the writing

section in the IELTS Academic, it is more inclined in the formal type of writing, and while in the IELTS General writing test, it is an informal type of writing test. However, there are no differences in the speaking and listening sections for the IELTS Academic and IELTS General Test. Both are having the same test formats, duration, and test question types.

Both of these IELTS exam formats measures an individual basic English language skills. The IELTS Academic Test is intended for individuals who want to pursue higher education or those who wish to study in international universities and colleges where the English language is the medium of instruction. In addition, the IELTS Academic is primarily used in an academic setting and for professional registration. The IELTS General Test is ideal for individuals applying to study below a degree level in any international university or college. And also, the IELTS General Test can be taken to assess one's English language proficiency for work-related requirements and other employment training.

The IELTS General Test is also one of the requirements for migration to Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom. This test also features conversational English language skills usage-based in day-to-day situations, social gatherings, and workplace settings. The total test time for the IELTS exam is approximately 2 hours and 45 minutes. And also, there are four sections in this test: Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking. The Reading and Writing section of the IELTS exam each takes 60 minutes, while the Listening section takes 30 minutes.

And for the IELTS speaking test section goes for around 11 to 14 minutes. The IELTS uses a band scoring between 9 and 1, wherein 9 indicate an expert English language user while the 1 below score indicates low ability in using the language. The cost for the IELTS exam depends on where the exam taker is located. Note that the IELTS exam fee differs per location. This is so that the need for foreign currency exchange is eliminated. For example, in the US, the cost of the test is USD 250 on average.

3. **English Learning Strategies**

There are many strategies to teach English, especially TOEFL. TOEFL had three prime skills that can be mastered namely listening comprehensive, grammatical & writing errors and reading comprehensive. Some research had been conducted to get the best strategies in teaching TOEFL for EFL. Hadi, Izzah & Maesari (2021) conducted a research for improving listening for TOEFL through podcast. The data showed that the post-test of TOEFL was improved 36.38 from the pre-test 28.70.

Meanwhile, Guo (2019) also conducted the research improving listening TOEFL by using discourse strategy. Also Juliana (2021) implemented task-based learning approach for improving listening score. The result showed that there was an improving of students' listening skill from the test results of before observation with the highest conversion score of students' Toefl listening is 43. The previous researchers also conducted research about improving reading TOEFL score. First, Ismail & Fata (2021) applied note-taking strategy to improve reading ability in TOEFL reading section. The

result from cycle one showed no increase since the average only incline to 38.58. Then in cycle 2, there was a significant increase reaching 45.11. Second, Syakur, Junining & Sabat (2019) conducted research using E-learning approach to increasing TOEFL score. The TOEFL score in the pre-test, mid-test and post-test experimental class was 344.71, 345.46 and 360.83, while in the control class were 438.27, 452.07 and 450.23. The use of e-learning technology in learning TOEFL has proven to be effective as a learning method for increasing TOEFL scores. Third, Afri & Harahap (2019) implemented mind mapping strategy to increasing TOEFL score. Based on the results of trials with the Mind Mapping method with duration of 3 months there is an increase in the TOEFL score between Pre-Test and Final Test.