

Analysis of TOEIC Scores

(Comparing Intensive Course with Regular Course)

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- I. Introduction
- II. Data Analysis of TOEIC Scores at FLI from 2010 to 2012
- III. Differences among Students at FLI Based on Two Teaching Approaches
- IV. Conclusion

I . Introduction

With the onset of what has been called the Globalization period, life has become more difficult and the population of the Republic of Korean has decreased.. Currently, the birth rate in Korea is now 1.2 per family. The result is that the market in Korea is in the process of shrinking, and even leading to businesses trying to cooperate and merge with each other. Due to this situation, it is getting harder and harder for graduating seniors at colleges and universities to find jobs. In order to solve these problems, two solutions are being considered. One is accept immigrants in order to maintain or increase the population and market size of Korea. The other is for Korean businesses to sell more products in other countries' markets. Although "Globalization" has been discussed for more than 20 years, it is

really only now that Koreans need to be able to communicate with people in other countries, increasing the need for more competent English education. Therefore, "Activity in English" for third graders at elementary schools has started somewhat "drastically," but Korean companies won't be able to wait until they grow up. The businesses in Korea badly want to hire people who can communicate in English. It is very common for the personnel departments or sections in Korean companies to ask job-seekers about their scores on the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC). Therefore, the TOEIC is not only a kind of English proficiency test, but has also been a key to economic success and upward mobility in Korean society.

Naturally, intensive EFL courses have just been spreading lately and has been developed for general need of English proficiency. It has been obvious that groups studying English by intensive EFL courses scored better on the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC). Data on the TOEIC scores are introduced and analyzed in this paper. And, TOEIC scores of the intensive courses with those of the non-intensive regular courses will be compared, and a case will be presented about the intensive EFL courses at FLI (Foreign Language Institute of NSU).

II. Data Analysis of TOEIC scores at FLI from 2010 to 2012

The locus of this research was the intensive TOEIC classes opened in FLI of NSU. Analyzing the average score differences of the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) among the intensive class students of FLI of NSU, it becomes obvious that the TOEIC average

scores of these intensive TOEIC class students are higher than those of the other regular TOEIC class students. The average scores these intensive class students took are at least over 472 points.¹⁾

TOEIC has been utilized as a standardized test for the senior students to pass before graduation at NSU since 2004. The following data shows TOEIC score transition of both the intensive class students and the regular class students opened in FLI of NSU from 2010 to 2012. The following data included their scores.

Table 1. Average TOEIC scores of the Intensive class students of FLI from 2010 to 2012

	TOEIC Scores	The 1stTest	The 2ndTest	Average
2012	Average (n=136)	339	416	377.5 (+77)
	Highest	750	820	785
	Lowest	90	90	90
2011	Average (n=142)	380	502	441 (+122)
	Highest	615	785	700
	Lowest	120	255	187.5
2010	Average (n=107)	284	576	430 (+292)
	Highest	550	830	690
	Lowest	75	195	135

1) Concerning the participation rate in class activities between two class types, the intensive classes showed a 2 percent absence rate and the regular classes, a 17.5 percent absence rate.

Table 2. Average TOEIC scores of the Regular class students of FLI from 2010 to 2012

	TOEIC Scores	The 1stTest	The 2ndTest	Average
2012	Average (n=136)	326	342	334 (+16)
	Highest	625	615	620
	Lowest	70	140	105
2011	Average (n=142)	357	307	332 (-50)
	Highest	680	705	692.5
	Lowest	125	75	100
2010	Average (n=107)	272	267	269.5 (-5)
	Highest	485	560	522.5
	Lowest	80	80	80

Comparing these data for the three years (presented in Table 1 and Table 2 from 2010 through 2012), the average score range of the intensive class students is between 90 and 785 points, and that of the regular class students is between 105 and 620 points. The average differences between the lowest and the highest are 695 points and 515 points, respectively. In 2012, the average score of the regular class students is between 70 and 625 and its average score is 43.5 points lower than that of the intensive class students. In 2011 and 2010, also, it is 109 and 160.5 points lower than that of the intensive class students. When the students start their own classes whether it is a regular class or an

intensive class, their TOEIC scores are very similar. We can see the scores 339 (2012), 380 (2011) and 284 (2010) in the intensive class, but the regular class shows the scores of 326 (2012), 357 (2011), and 272 (2010). Thus, there are not so big differences in the English proficiency among the students at the beginning of their classes whether they are in the intensive classes or in the regular classes. However, there is some difference in the level of achievement at the end of their course work. Noticeably, the intensive class students show a much higher level of achievement than the regular class students.

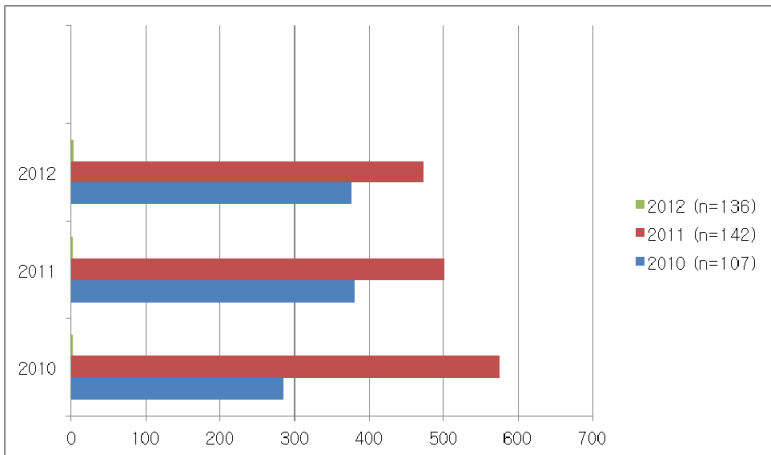


Figure 1. Distribution of the Intensive TOEIC class students' scores in 2010, 2011 and 2012.

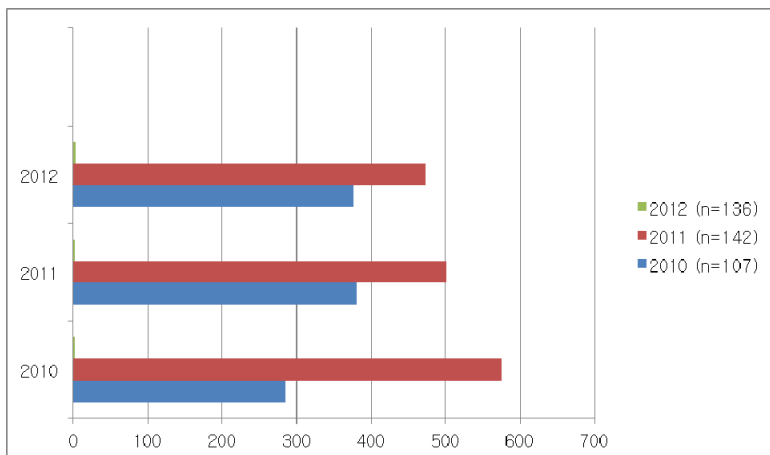


Figure 2. Distribution of the Regular TOEIC class students' in 2010, 2011 and 2012.

Table 1 and Table 2 are shown as in Figure 1 and Figure 2, respectively. The blue parts of the data represent the first test and the red parts, the second test. The average difference between blue bars and red bars in Figure 1 is higher than that in Figure 2.

III. Differences among students at FLI based on two teaching approaches

The students whose scores are on "Table 1" chose both non-native and native speakers as instructors. Whereas, the students whose scores on "Table 2" all had native English speaking instructors from at least the Listening sections. The instructors used in the Sisa Program for the TOEIC preparation class used extensive reading materials. In case of the regular classes, students attend just a one-hour class every day from

Monday to Friday. They are taught reading skills three times a week and listening skills twice a week. Not only do they not have any textbooks arranged in advance but they are also divided into two levels. This two-level system might have a potential drawback in that it is generally recommended and more efficient to divide into more levels than this if possible. This means that some students who are more proficient work in the same class with others who are less proficient. It takes a semester (16 weeks) to complete this regular course. After completing this course, most students did not improve and even receive lower scores in 2010 and 2011.

On the other hand, let us here examine the intensive classes which were much more systematic. The instructors of the intensive classes, native speakers, were the same as those of the regular classes. They taught listening parts. Some Korean teachers also taught English grammar parts and reading parts. They used an e-Learning software to build students' vocabularies (up to 6,000 out of 12,000 words). Of the classes scheduled from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., students had two hours of grammar classes, two hours of listening classes, and two hours of reading classes. The instructor used a TOEIC Preparation workbook and explained the correct answers. After taking the TOEIC pretest as a placement test before this program, students were divided on the basis of three-level system. Every class has had 15 persons. The evaluation scale assigned 40% to the e-Learning, 20% to the final tests, 20% to the handouts, and 20% to the class participation.

The participants who took part in the regular TOEIC course of Foreign Language Institute in 2010 showed the following grades. They took tests twice before and after the course. We have made a correlation analysis in order to figure out the difference between the result of pretest and that of post-test.²⁾

Table 3. The result of Correlation Analysis of TOEIC Grades of Regular Course in 2010

Type of Test	Pretest	Posttest
Pretest	1	.604***
Posttest	.604	1

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 3 shows that correlation between the pretest and the post-test is significant ($r = .604$, $p < .001$). This correlation can be represented as the following Figure 3:

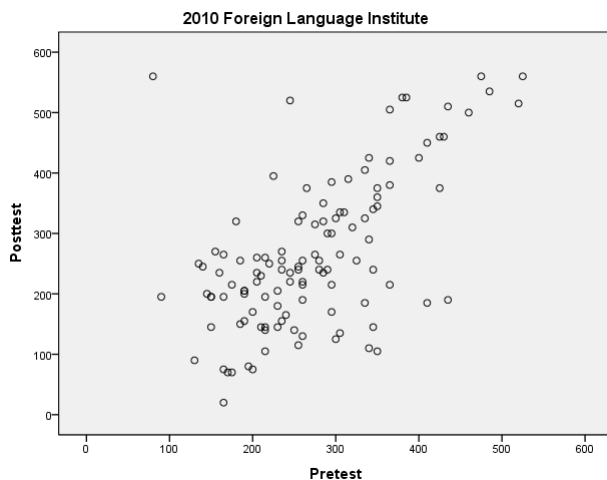


Figure 3. Distribution of Regular Course Scores of the pretest in 2010 (horizontally) and the post-test in 2010 (vertically)

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- 2) For the analyses that intensive courses specially designed suit motivated students much more than regular courses, refer to Cross (1992), Ping & Zhihong (2012), Norton & Toohy (2011), Simpson (2008), Rivers & Temperley (1978), etc.

As illustrated in Figure 3, the group of students in the upper levels appears to show a high correlation; whereas, the group of students in the low levels shows a low correlation. In the following, Table 4/ Figure 4 for regular course in 2011, Table 5/ Figure 5 for regular course in 2012 show the similar results to Table 3/ Figure 3 for regular course in 2010. Thus, though Table 4 and Table 5 show the significant difference between the pretests and the post-tests, Figure 4 and Figure 5 show a low correlation on the whole.

Table 4. The result of Correlation Analysis of TOEIC Grades of Regular Course in 2011

Type of Test	Pretest	Posttest
Pretest	1	.677***
Posttest	.677	1

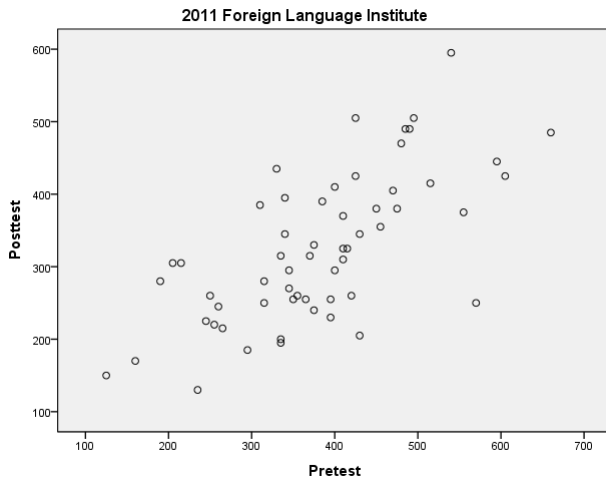


Figure 4. Distribution of Regular Course Scores of the pretest in 2011 (horizontally) and the post-test in 2011 (vertically)

Table 5. The result of Correlation Analysis of TOEIC Grades of Regular Course in 2012

Type of Test	Pretest	Posttest
Pretest	1	.638***
Posttest	.638	1

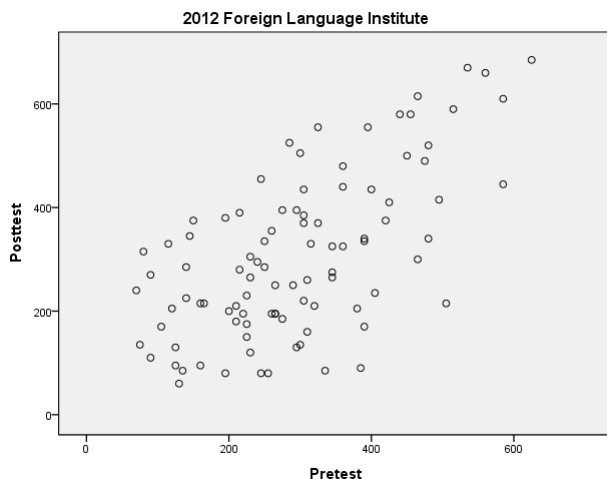


Figure 5. Distribution of Regular Course Scores of the pretest in 2012 (horizontally) and the post-test in 2012 (vertically)

The participants who took part in the intensive TOEIC course of Foreign Language Institute in 2010 showed the following grades. They took tests twice before and after the course. We have made a correlation analysis in order to figure out the difference between the result of pretest and that of post-test..

Table 6. The result of Correlation Analysis of TOEIC Grades of Intensive Course in 2010

Type of Test	Pretest	Posttest
Pretest	1	.642***
Posttest	.642	1

Table 6 shows that correlation between the pretest and the post-test is significantly different ($r=.642$, $p<.001$). This correlation can be represented as the following Figure 6:

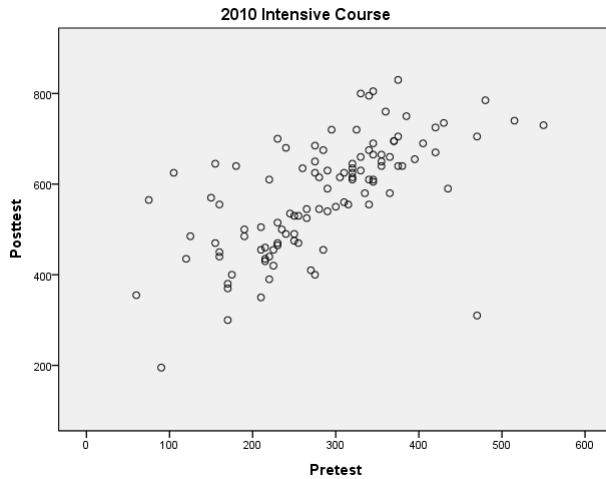


Figure 6. Distribution of Intensive Course Scores of the pretest in 2010 (horizontally) and the post-test in 2012 (vertically)

As illustrated in Figure 6, the groups of the students in the upper levels and in the mid-levels show a high correlation, which is distinguished from the low correlation in the low levels. In the following, Table 7/ Figure 7 for intensive course in 2011 and Table 8/ Figure 8 for intensive course in

2012 show similar results to Table 6/ Figure 6 for intensive course in 2010. Thus, through Table 7 and Table 8, we can find a significantly different correlation between the pretests and the post-tests. Figure 7 and Figure 8 show a high correlation on the whole.

Table 7. The result of Correlation Analysis of TOEIC Grades of Intensive Course in 2011

Type of Test	Pretest	Posttest
Pretest	1	.706***
Posttest	.706	1

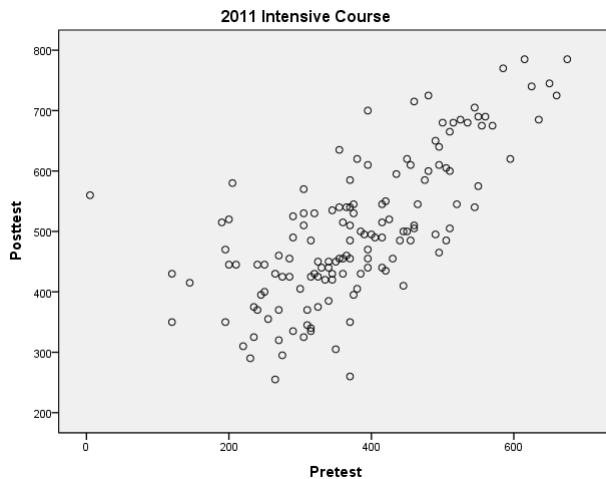


Figure 7. Distribution of Intensive Course Scores of the pretest in 2011 (horizontally) and the posttest in 2012 (vertically)

Table 8. The result of Correlation Analysis of TOEIC Grades of Intensive Course in 2012

Type of Test	Pretest	Posttest
Pretest	1	.710***
Posttest	.710	1

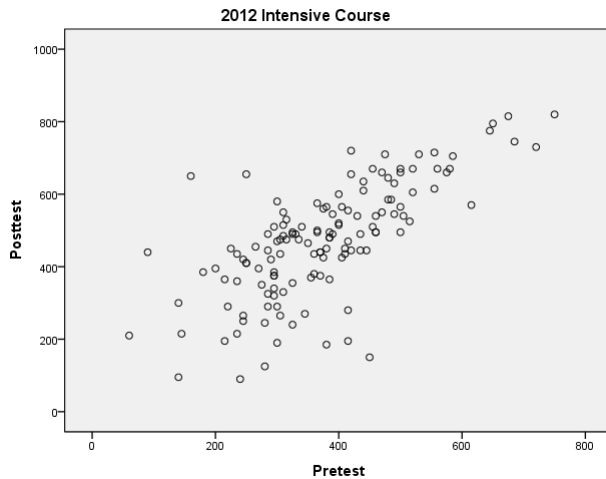


Figure 8. Distribution of Intensive Course Scores of the pretest in 2012 (horizontally) and the post-test in 2012 (vertically)

In all the Figures, each bubble shows a point where the grade of the TOEIC pretest (horizontally) and that of th TOEIC post-test (vertically) meets.

In Figure 3, Figure 4 and Figure 5, which were received from the regular course students in 2010, 2011, and 2012. all bubbles are scattered around. This points out that there are somehow some limitations in regular courses. whether they are on students, instructors or any other thing such as teaching methods and materials.

Figure 6, Figure 7, and Figure 8 are the outs, obtained from the

TOEIC pretests (horizontally) and the post-tests (vertically) of intensive course students in 2010, 2011, and 2012. The bubbles are floated around the mid-percentages as well as the high percentages in general.

IV. Conclusion

The above data prove that the TOEIC scores of the intensive course students and the regular course students were almost the same over the years respectively, when the students took the pretest before each course started. However, it is clear that the better results among the intensive course students were not coincident. The differences between the intensive courses and the regular courses depend on how intensively the instructors manage their classes, using some more appropriate materials and applying a multi-level system which distributes the students to a tailored class.

We believe in the benefits of intensive English programs. Indeed, the intensive programs are a good alternative for students who want to improve their English skills, especially in Korea where students are not provided with many opportunities to practice target foreign languages. However, many intensive English programs outside of NSU do not include all the skills (reading, listening, speaking, and writing) in their syllabus. Still, we should consider intensive English programs as a great alternative for students to improve their English skills because they get more classes of English per cycle and because students are more motivated to use only English in these classes.

Intensive English programs should be more promoted since there is a need for improving student's level of English. When students participate in intensive programs to improve their English, they receive authentic and

constant input. As a consequence, they absorb the new material since they have to frequently reinvest and reuse it. Moreover, the possibility to improve their skills increases considering the fact that students are constantly working and manipulating the language. They also can have a positive experience from the intensive program because of the fact that they are becoming more comfortable with the language and that they are more aware of their progress in English.

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Abstract

Analysis of TOEIC Scores (Comparing Intensive Course with Regular Course)

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The purpose of this paper is to compare and analyze TOEIC scores of two kinds of courses opened at a university and the distribution of TOEIC scores of two groups. In addition, this paper will examine the ability of participants and the used instructional materials and equipment. The university has two kinds of TOEIC courses; one is a four-week intensive course opened in summer and winter vacations, where students participate in the classes from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The other is a regular TOEIC course, offering one-hour class every day from Monday to Friday during the university semester (15 weeks). This paper points out how important, the EFL/ESL teacher education, teaching materials, teaching methods and e-learning in operating more effective classes. The intensive TOEIC course and the regular TOEIC course include 120 hours and 75 hours a semester, respectively. Unfortunately, both courses have such a limited amount of time that students cannot achieve their fluent and perfect command of English. For Korean student to master English in a limited amount of both time and resources, the development of effective and qualitative EFL/ESL Intensive courses is essential.

Key Words: Intensive courses, Regular courses, e-learning, EFL/ESL, TOEIC

집중코스, 상시코스, e-학습, 배치고사, 평가고사

논문접수일: 2014.06.02

심사완료일: 2014.06.16

게재확정일: 2014.06.21

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