

# TOEIC® Newsletter

## 【Special Feature】

Redesigned TOEIC® test to start from the 122nd Secure Program test in May 2006

## The new TOEIC® test

A quarter of a century has passed since the introduction of the TOEIC test (1979) as a means of assessing a wide range of English communication skills. During this period, the kind of English communication proficiency required in real life has been constantly evolving and changing in response to changing needs and requirements. To address this situation, the TOEIC test will be redesigned under the concept of “More Authentic.” The new TOEIC test will be administered for the first time for the 122nd Secure Program (SP) test to be given in May 2006. In this issue, we bring you the full picture of the new TOEIC test, from the details of the redesigning process to a description of the new test and its features.



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The TOEIC® Newsletter is published quarterly by the Institute for International Business Communication (IIBC) in Japanese. It features how the TOEIC® test is used effectively within companies, universities and other institutions. We offer the latest case studies of TOEIC® test usage to our clients, so they can take full advantage of the TOEIC® test within their organization. In this journal, we also introduce a trend of global human resources development and the globalization movement in Japan.

The TOEIC® Newsletter No.92 is translated into English by IIBC for its readers around the world.

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Published by Public Relations Department  
The Institute for International Business Communication (IIBC)  
Sanno Grand Building 2-14-2, Nagata-cho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-0014, Japan  
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Issued April 2006

# TOEIC® test to be redesigned to correspond more authentically to real-world tasks

## What is the TOEIC test?

The TOEIC test is developed and produced by Educational Testing Service (ETS), a non-profit test development organization based in the United States. The test offers accurate assessment of English skills, from the beginner stage to those at advanced levels. Since December 1979, when the first TOEIC Secure Program(SP) test was given in Japan, the number of people who sit for the test has continued to rise, and the TOEIC test is now administered in approximately 60 countries around the world. In 2004, roughly 4.5 million people took the test. In Japan, about 1.43 million people sat for the test in FY2004. In addition to individual test takers, TOEIC has been adopted by roughly 2,500 companies, organizations, and academic institutions. Companies use the test for purposes that include assessing the English skill level of newly hired employees, measuring the success of English training programs, as well as a criterion for staff embarking on overseas business trips and long-term assignments or for advancement and promotion. Universities and junior colleges have found many uses for TOEIC, such as incorporating TOEIC into their accreditation schemes and for evaluating prospective candidates applying for admission based on a recommendation from their high schools (as opposed to candidates who take the institution's entrance exam).

The TOEIC test, which, as outlined above, is widely accepted worldwide as a test for assessing the level of English communication skills, will be administered in its redesigned form starting in May 2006.

## Background of the redesign

Is a given test consistently aligned with the environment and needs of the market in which it is utilized? Is the test functioning in a manner befitting its purpose? Continually verifying these matters in the development and implementation of a test is a

task of great importance to the organization that develops the test. The mission of ETS, which develops and produces the TOEIC test, is to develop tests that match the “abilities being measured,” thereby improving the validity of tests that assist the advancement and learning of English language skills.

The redesigning of the TOEIC test is being undertaken on the basis of this mission of ETS.

Twenty-five years have passed since the TOEIC test was introduced in 1979. During this time, the types of English skills in demand have been undergoing a change along with the dramatic acceleration of globalization spurred on by advancements in information technology. In order to respond to this situation, ETS conducted a Global Survey in 2004 with the cooperation of organizations and corporations in 11 countries around the world (Japan, South Korea, China, Canada, France, Italy, Brazil, India, Mexico, Spain, and Thailand) to determine the kinds of English skills that are currently required in the workplace. The results indicated that changes were in order for the way some of the test problems are presented.

## General outline of the new TOEIC test

The TOEIC test has been redesigned based on the results of a survey on English skills conducted in 11 countries worldwide. Also taken into account were theories on language proficiency and the experience gained from the development of the TOEFL iBT test (Next Generation TOEFL), which was introduced in the United States in September 2005.

“More Authentic” is the concept underlying the formulation of the test questions for the new TOEIC test. This means that, in order to assess the type of English proficiency required in real-life communication, the situations and settings recreated in the test will be more closely aligned to those in real life.

These considerations have led to changes

[Figure] Changes made to the question format

Existing TOEIC			New TOEIC		
Part	Name of each part	Number of questions	Part	Name of each part	Number of questions
Listening Section (45 minutes)			Listening Section (45 minutes)		
	Photographs	20	1	Photographs	10
	Question-Response	30	2	Question-Response	30
	Short Conversations	30	3	Short Conversations	30
	Short Talks	20	4	Short Talks	30
Reading Section (75 minutes)			Reading Section (75 minutes)		
	Incomplete Sentences	40	5	Incomplete Sentences	40
	Error Recognition	20	6	Text Completion (New)	12
	Reading Comprehension	40	7	Reading Comprehension	
				• Single passage	28
				• Double passage (New)	20

### Changes made to the Listening Section

- 1 The number of photo items in Part 1 has been reduced in the new TOEIC test.
- 2 Questions in Part 3 and Part 4 are presented as audio recordings (played on cassette tape, with questions also printed on the test book).
- 3 Three questions for each set of sentences (conversation or talk) in Part 3 and Part 4.
- 4 Adoption of various accents: U.S., British, Canadian, Australian (as well as New Zealand).  
Each accent will be used for one quarter of the test questions in random order.

### Changes made to the Reading Section

- 1 Elimination of Part VI of the existing TOEIC test.
- 2 Part 5 of the new TOEIC test will have short cloze passages where the test taker is required to fill in a word in a blank space.  
Part 6 will have longer cloze passages that require several blank spaces to be filled in with words.
- 3 Double-passage questions have been added to Part 7 of the new TOEIC test. Test takers will be required to read two passages and answer questions about them.

### What remains unchanged?

- 1 The test is made up of a Listening Section (45 minutes; 100 questions) and a Reading Section (75 minutes; 100 questions), for a total of two hours to answer 200 questions. There is no break during the test.
- 2 In the Listening Section, the test taker listens to recorded conversations and narrations played on a cassette player and answers questions regarding them. In the Reading Section, the test taker reads the passages and answers the questions.
- 3 The range of possible scores for the Listening Section and for the Reading Section are each between 5 and 495 points, and the total score is displayed as a number between 10 and 990 in increments of 5 points.
- 4 The test is entirely in English. There are no questions involving English-to-Japanese or Japanese-to-English translation.
- 5 The test is a paper-and-pencil, multiple-choice assessment.

that make the test coincide more closely with actual, real-life communication [see Figure]. For instance, the new TOEIC test features longer reading passages (stimuli) and a more varied mix of accents—U.S., British, Canadian, and Australian (as well as New Zealand). Error recognition items have been eliminated, and longer sentences will be added as incomplete sentences. In addition, the new TOEIC test will allow for more detailed feedback to be given to test takers.

It should be noted that, while the format of problems has been modified, the subject material has not. The situations dealt with in the test are scenarios related to general- or business-based communication. The test problems do not require specialized knowledge of business English, nor do they require the test taker to have knowledge of matters or phenomena that are unique to the history or culture of any given country. Some features of the

new test remain unchanged from the existing TOEIC test, such as the concept of making a direct measurement of passive skills (listening and reading) to obtain an indirect measurement of productive skills (speaking and writing). The duration of the test (2 hours), the number of questions (200 items), and the scoring method of 10 – 990 points also remain the same.

The scoring criteria will also be maintained. A statistical procedure that involves “equating” (i.e., adjusting scores for two or more alternate forms of an assessment so that scores can be used interchangeably) will ensure that the scoring criteria of the existing and new TOEIC tests correspond.

The new TOEIC test will be given for the first time on May 28, 2006, at the 122nd SP test. However, the new test is not scheduled to be administered as a part of the Institutional Program (IP) test until FY2007, at the earliest.

Report Digest version of preview for the press and publishers:

# “Modifications and features of the new TOEIC® test”

Trina Duke, ETS Assessment Specialist

A preview for the press and publishers of the new TOEIC test was provided on July 13 and 14, 2005. Trina Duke, Assessment Specialist at Educational Testing Service (ETS)\*, gave a detailed presentation that chronicled the development of the new test, described the ideas guiding its development, and outlined what sets the new test apart from the existing test. After the presentation, there was a Q&A session with the participants. Here we bring you a summary of Ms. Duke’s presentation.

## Features of the new TOEIC test

It is a great honor for me to be here today to tell you about the new TOEIC test on behalf of Educational Testing Service.

ETS has over 40 years of experience in the field of English language assessment. Our mission is “to help advance quality and equity in education by providing fair and valid assessments, research, and related services. Our products and services measure knowledge and skills, promote learning and educational performance, and support education and professional development for all people worldwide.”

At ETS, a decision was made to review and redesign the TOEIC test on the basis of this mission.

I would like to start by describing the features of the new TOEIC test [see Figure 1].

The new TOEIC test was developed after a close examination of the latest theories relating to language proficiency. The tasks in the assessment were refined to make them more authentic.

[Figure 1] New TOEIC designed for today

- Aligns with current language proficiency theories
- Refines tasks to make them more authentic
- Maintains core quality of the existing test
- Introduces useful proficiency information to help test takers



Trina Duke

Assessment Specialist at Educational Testing Service (ETS). Specializes in English language learning and English proficiency assessment. Engaged in the development of the TOEIC test, TOEIC Bridge, and TOEIC Language Proficiency Interview (LPI). Participated in the new TOEIC test project as a member of the design team.

For example, questions relating to grammar and vocabulary, which are critical for the advancement of English proficiency, are retained in the new TOEIC test. However, the questions in the new test are designed to measure more than the accuracy of the test taker’s knowledge. The new TOEIC test assesses how valid that knowledge is in the real world, that is, it tests for a more authentic processing capability.

Another feature of the new TOEIC test is the introduction of more enhanced feedback to test takers.

At ETS, we applied advanced measurement design methodology for the review of the TOEIC test as well as in the development and design of the new test. These techniques involve gathering

evidence in order to accurately evaluate the language abilities we wish to measure. As it turned out, we were able to again verify the fact that many of the test questions in the existing test had the potential to act as the means of gathering evidence necessary for accurate evaluation. Nevertheless, for the purpose of more functional and effective evidence gathering, we carried out studies from every conceivable angle and judged it would be appropriate to modify some of the question formats. Due to the changes that have been made, we are now able to provide test takers with more detailed information. I would like to discuss this in more detail during the final portion of my presentation.

## Description of the new Listening Section

I would now like to describe the specific changes that were made to the test, and begin by

[Figure 2] Refined test format  
New Listening Section

- Some longer listening stimuli
  - Broader measurement of abilities
- Short conversations as sets
  - More questions per conversation
  - Fewer topics to process
- Reduced number of photo items
  - More testing time for other authentic tasks
- Varied accents
  - U.S., British, Canadian, Australian (as well as New Zealand)
  - Reflects English taught and spoken in the international environment

[Figure 3] Some longer listening stimuli  
Broader measurement of abilities

Existing TOEIC Part	New TOEIC Part 4
<p>Good afternoon. I'm glad you could join me today for a tour of the museum's splendid modern art collection. The tour should last about a half an hour, during which time we will try to focus on some of the museum's best-known pieces. For those of you who enjoy sculpture, I'll be giving another talk at three o'clock in the sculpture garden.</p>	<p>Attention, Trans Air passengers. Due to unusually strong storms, flights from Hong Kong have been delayed. In addition, flights to or through Hong Kong will be unable to take off until the weather system clears.</p> <p>Please accept our apologies for any inconvenience this may cause you. If there is any way we can make your wait more comfortable, please let the gate agent know. In the meantime, we are pleased to offer all passengers a continental breakfast in the waiting area. The food will be available all morning. Please help yourself to coffee or tea, pastries, and fruit. We will announce new flight schedules as they become available. For now, try to relax and be patient. Thank you, and have a good morning.</p>

noting that the new test maintains the core quality of the existing test. The only changes made have been to the format and content of some of the questions.

As outlined in Figure 2, the following four major modifications have been made.

### • Longer listening stimuli

The questions in the Listening Section will contain some passages that are a bit longer than those in the existing test. However, this does not mean all the passages will be longer. We have introduced more variations in the length of passages so that we can take broader measurements of listening abilities.

Please take a look at Figure 3. You can see a sample question taken from the Short Talks section of Part 4. As you can see, the passages in the new test

[Figure 4] Existing TOEIC and New TOEIC comparison

Existing TOEIC	New TOEIC
<u>Listening Comprehension</u> 100 items	<u>Listening Comprehension</u> 100 items
Photographs: 20 questions	Photographs: 10 questions
Question-Response: 30 questions	Question-Response: 30 questions
Short Conversations: 30 questions 30 conversations with 1 question each	Short Conversations: 30 questions 10 conversations with 3 questions each
Short Talks: 20 questions	Short Talks: 30 questions 10 short talks with 3 questions each

are longer than those in the existing test. However, you will also notice that the passages are not exceedingly long.

### •Short Conversations presented as sets

In the Short Conversations section of Part 3, there was one question per conversation in the existing test. In the new TOEIC test, the questions have been increased to three per conversation [see Figure 4]. However, the 30 conversations in the existing test have been cut down to 10 in the new test. In the same way, the number of questions in the Short Talks section has been increased from “two or more” per passage to “three.”

In some respects, fewer topics can lighten the load on the test taker. Also, from the standpoint of what goes on in real life, it is not as if we only hear short conversations all the time. The modifications to the question formats were made for these reasons. We have also adopted longer passages in the Short Conversations section.

Please take a look at the sample questions in Figure 5. In the existing test, the conversations went like this: Speaker A speaks, then Speaker B, then back to Speaker A. However, in the new test, the conversations are a little longer, with some conversations going from Speaker A to B, then to A, then back to B again.

Other changes include those in Part 3 and

[Figure 5] Short Conversations as sets

Existing TOEIC Part	New TOEIC Part 3
<p>A: I didn't expect to see so many people here this early. The show doesn't start for another hour, and half the seats are already full.</p> <p>B: Well, the lead is very popular these days. He's been in a number of successful plays.</p> <p>A: Not only that, but the set design is supposed to be quite unique.</p>	<p>A: Hello. I ordered a computer desk from your catalog at the beginning of the month and I haven't received it yet. Could you look into it for me, please?</p> <p>B: Certainly, sir. Do you have your order number, by any chance?</p> <p>A: Yes, it's 481-6490 [four-eight-one-six-four-nine-zero].</p> <p>B: You're Mr. Donaldson, right? Well, according to my records, it left our warehouse on Monday--that was the fifth of May--so it should be delivered to you tomorrow.</p>
<p>Question (Printed):</p> <p>Where does the conversation probably take place?</p> <p>(Printed)</p> <p>(A) In a lecture hall.</p> <p>(B) At a theater.</p> <p>(C) At a stadium.</p> <p>(D) In a waiting room.</p>	<p>Question 1(Recorded and printed)</p> <p>Why did the man telephone the woman?</p> <p>(Printed)</p> <p>(A) To check on his order</p> <p>(B) To arrange a delivery time</p> <p>(C) To cancel his order</p> <p>(D) To change his order</p>
	<p>Question 2(Recorded and printed)</p> <p>What is the man waiting to receive?</p> <p>(Printed)</p> <p>(A) A computer desk</p> <p>(B) A catalog</p> <p>(C) Some recording equipment</p> <p>(D) Some music</p>
	<p>Question 3(Recorded and printed)</p> <p>What does the woman ask for?</p> <p>(Printed)</p> <p>(A) The man's telephone number</p> <p>(B) The man's name</p> <p>(C) The reference number for the order</p> <p>(D) The date the order was placed</p>

Part 4, where the questions have been printed on the test book and also played on a cassette player. This modification has been made with the aim of improving the fairness of the questions, both for people who are strong readers and those who have strong listening skills.

- Reduced number of photo items

There are 20 questions in the Photographs section in Part I of the existing test. This number will be reduced to 10 in the new test. This allows more time to be allotted to tasks that measure more authentic English skills.

- A greater variety of accents

The English language, as it is actually spoken around the globe, is characterized by many different accents. To better reflect this reality, the new test includes the accents spoken in countries in which English is the official language. The countries chosen are Great Britain, Canada, and Australia (as well as New Zealand) in addition to the United States. The accents used in the test are not particularly strong. The four accents are each used in 25 percent of the questions.

## Description of the new Reading Section

I will now discuss the changes made to the Reading Section [Figure 6].

- Selected longer passages for sentence completion items

The short passages in the sentence completion items in Part V of the existing test will be retained in the same 40-question format in the

[Figure 6] Refined test format  
New Reading Section

- Selected sentence completion items will be passage-based
  - Allows testing context-related skills
- Selected reading sets will use two interrelated passages
  - Requires test taker to connect information from both texts
  - Provides more authentic real-world tasks
- Some reading stimuli will be longer
  - Provides a broad measurement of examinees' abilities
  - More questions per stimulus
- Error recognition items will be eliminated

[Figure 8] Selected sentence completion items will be passage-based

Existing TOEIC  
Part  
He was too .... to lift the heavy package.

Answers (A) surprised (B) far  
(C) strong (D) weak

New TOEIC  
Part 6

Ms. Monica Eisenman  
555 King Street  
Auckland  
New Zealand

Dear Ms. Eisenman:

I am ..... to confirm our offer of part-time employment at Western Enterprises. In your role  
(A) pleased  
(B) pleasing  
(C) pleasant  
(D) pleasure

as research assistant, you will report to Dr. Emma Walton, who will keep you informed of your specific duties and projects. Because you will be working with confidential information, you will be expected to ..... the enclosed employee code-of-ethics agreement.  
(A) follow  
(B) advise  
(C) imagine  
(D) require

As we discussed, you will be paid twice a month ..... the company's normal payroll schedule. As  
(A) accords  
(B) according  
(C) according to  
(D) accordance with

an hourly employee working fewer than twenty hours per week, you will not be ..... to receive  
(A) tolerable  
(B) liberal  
(C) eligible  
(D) expressed

paid holidays, paid time off for illness or vacation, or other employee benefits. Your employment status will be reviewed in six months.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. Otherwise, please sign and return one copy of this letter. You may keep the second copy for your files. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,  
*Christopher Webster*  
Christopher Webster  
Human Resources

Enclosures

[Figure 7] Existing TOEIC and New TOEIC comparison

Existing TOEIC	New TOEIC
Reading Comprehension <u>100 items</u>	Reading Comprehension <u>100 items</u>
Incomplete Sentences: 40 questions	Incomplete Sentences: 40 questions
Error Recognition: 20 questions	Text Completion: 12 questions 3 reading texts with 4 questions each
Reading Comprehension: 40 questions	Reading Comprehension Single Passage: 28 questions 7-10 reading texts with 2-4 questions each Double Passage: 20 questions 4 pairs of reading texts with 5 questions per pair

new test as well [Figure 7]. In addition, there will be sentence completion items in Part 6 with longer passages.

As shown in Figure 8, the new test will have four sentence completion items in one long passage.

When we read sentences in the real world, there are times when we guess at the meaning of a given word from the context or by connecting information from previous or subsequent passages. Using longer passages in the sentence completion tests allows us to measure the ability to pick up on the connection between sentences.

•Selected reading sets will have two interrelated passages

In Reading Comprehension section in Part 7, we have incorporated a new format where the test taker has to read two interrelated passages and answer questions about them.

An example is shown on the right hand side of Figure 9. The document shown at the top is an agenda for a meeting. The document below it is an e-mail sent by one of the participants to another. The test taker is asked to read these two passages and think of the connection between the two when

answering the questions.

In real life, we are required to have the ability to read multiple passages and connect the information from them. Therefore, this test item is authentic. Four of these kinds of Double Passage items are presented in the test, with five questions per item.

•Some reading stimuli will be longer

The addition of the Double Passage items is not the only change that has been made to the Reading Comprehension section. The Single Passage items have also been changed, with some of them being made a little longer than those in the existing test. Longer passages allow us to more accurately measure a broader range of skills.

There will be between seven and ten Single Passage items, with two to four questions per item.

•Error recognition items will be eliminated

Current language acquisition theories do not place much emphasis on making corrections to errors in sentences. We have therefore eliminated error recognition items.

[Figure 9] Selected reading sets will use two interrelated passages

Existing TOEIC Part	New TOEIC Part 7																		
<p><b>Kendar Office Supplies</b> <i>Kemapriatarum Road, Bangkok 10110, Thailand</i></p> <p>Ms. Pranee Udomsak Director Beni &amp; Beni, Inc. 426 Silom Road Bangkok 10110 Thailand</p> <p>Dear Ms. Udomsak:</p> <p>In checking our records, I noticed that you are no longer listed as a current customer of Kendar Office Supplies. When I called and spoke to your office manager, Peri Davis, I was informed that your company is now using one of our competitors for your office needs. Ms. Davis referred me to you as the individual who makes all purchasing decisions at Beni &amp; Beni.</p> <p>Ms. Davis kindly described some of the problems that led you to select another supplier. I'm pleased to tell you that Kendar has made many improvements to its product line and services, and we are certain Beni &amp; Beni will find these attractive. We have introduced a whole new line of office and computer supplies, many of which are not available from any other supplier. In addition, Kendar now has the largest warehouse facility in the region.</p> <p>If you need any additional information please feel free to contact me. We welcome the opportunity to serve your company once again.</p> <p>Sincerely, <i>Manee Chamchoy</i> Manee Chamchoy</p>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td colspan="2">Optimum Software Company meeting with Advantage Power Systems, Inc. November 2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Advantage Power Systems attendees: Katharine Morandi Chom Tai</td> <td>Optimum Software attendees: Ujwal Ahmed Yusra Singh Peter Bodell</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;"><b>AGENDA</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ujwal Ahmed</td> <td>Introductions Review objectives</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Katharine Morandi</td> <td>Advantage Power Systems: project overview and development schedule</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Yusra Singh</td> <td>Optimum product overview • Core software functions • Software platform requirements</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Peter Bodell</td> <td>Optimum training and consulting</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Yusra Singh</td> <td>Technology questions and answers</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ujwal Ahmed</td> <td>Next steps</td> </tr> </table> <p>To: Katharine Morandi From: Ujwal Ahmed, Optimum Software Company Subject: Yesterday's meeting</p> <p>Dear Katharine,</p> <p>Thank you for taking the time to get together with us yesterday. Everyone on our team felt that it was a productive meeting. We have a better understanding of your project's needs now, and we've started looking at ways to adapt our software to meet your requirements.</p> <p>While the basic function of the software is well suited to the project overall, as discussed, we will explore ways to adapt it to the needs of the different departments at Advantage that will be using it. This will incur some additional cost, as we indicated—we'll provide details about that at our next meeting, once our engineers have assessed the changes that will need to be made.</p> <p>I've asked Peter Bodell to prepare a document for you that indicates when the Training and Consulting Department could start providing services to you. He'll send this information to you directly—since you've worked with him in the past, it seems the most efficient way to go.</p> <p>As agreed, let's set up a meeting for the week of November 26 by which time our engineers will be able to outline their approaches to your departmental needs, and we'll have the information we need to put together a contract.</p> <p>In the meantime, please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.</p> <p>Regards, Ujwal</p>	Optimum Software Company meeting with Advantage Power Systems, Inc. November 2		Advantage Power Systems attendees: Katharine Morandi Chom Tai	Optimum Software attendees: Ujwal Ahmed Yusra Singh Peter Bodell	<b>AGENDA</b>		Ujwal Ahmed	Introductions Review objectives	Katharine Morandi	Advantage Power Systems: project overview and development schedule	Yusra Singh	Optimum product overview • Core software functions • Software platform requirements	Peter Bodell	Optimum training and consulting	Yusra Singh	Technology questions and answers	Ujwal Ahmed	Next steps
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## The TOEIC test maintains its high level of reliability

In the new test, no change has been made to the mechanism that ensures the high level of reliability and objectivity of the TOEIC test. Now that I am near the end of my presentation, I would like to talk to you a bit about how that came about.

First of all, there has been no change made to the number of test questions, which remains 100 in each section. Likewise no change has been made to the duration of the test: 45 minutes for the Listening Section and 75 minutes for the Reading Section, for a total of two hours. The test format of multiple-choice questions also remains unchanged, with the same paper-and-pencil administration.

In the design stage of the new TOEIC test, we considered the possibility of reducing the number of questions and making the test shorter in duration. However, as a result of conducting rigorous examinations to verify the effect of such a change, we found that reducing the number of test items would make it difficult to maintain the reliability of the test. Specifically, we found that the reliability coefficient of 0.91 would drop to 0.88 as a result of such changes. A reliability figure of 0.88 is by no means low for a test that provides a comprehensive assessment of the English skills of test takers within a limited time. However, we could not compromise the reliability of the test, even to such a small degree. As a result, it was decided that the number of questions and the duration of the test would remain

unchanged.

The score range, score scale and the range of difficulty will also remain unchanged. The questions in the new test will not be more difficult than those in the existing test.

Also, as I mentioned at the start of my presentation, we have changed the content of our feedback program and will now be able to give more quality feedback to test takers. The score report, in addition to containing the Listening, Reading, and Total scores as in the existing test, will provide more detailed and specific information. By enhancing the score report, we will help test takers to more effectively advance their English studies.

The new TOEIC test will be introduced starting from the SP test in Japan and South Korea to be administered in May 2006. At ETS, we are also working in cooperation with the Institute for International Business Communication (IIBC) to develop a speaking and a writing test for TOEIC test takers. Please visit IIBC's official website (<http://www.toEIC.or.jp>) for the latest news on TOEIC.

Thank you very much.

\* ETS: With a combined in-house and off-site staff of approximately 2,800 people, ETS is the world's largest organization in the field of educational research. Its employees include experts in the fields of education, linguistics, statistics and psychology. In addition to the TOEIC test, the organization is engaged in the development, production, and administration of TOEFL, SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test), GRE (Graduate Management Admission Test), and most of the other public examinations given in the U.S., including certification and competency tests, state examinations, and aptitude tests.

## Q&A on the new TOEIC® test

Here we bring you the answers to some of the most frequently asked questions concerning the new TOEIC test. The FAQs on the new TOEIC test can also be accessed on our official website (\*Available only in Japanese).

Q1

**Why has the test format of two hours, 200 questions remained unchanged after the test was redesigned?**

ETS conducted a variety of studies regarding the duration of the test and the number of questions. As a result, it was determined that the conventional format of two hours and 200 questions was necessary for the accurate assessment of English communication skills. In order to maintain a high level of reliability, the duration of the test and the number of questions will remain unchanged in the new TOEIC test (see page 9).

Q2

**Specifically, what is different about the new TOEIC test?**

The content and question format of the test more accurately reflect authentic communication situations (see pp. 2-3).

In addition, the new TOEIC test is based on current theories of linguistic proficiency. By identifying, at the question formulation stage, which areas of English proficiency are being tested by a given test question, we can obtain more detailed and specific information on each of the areas. This in turn will allow us to give new types of feedback, such as subscores for some areas, in addition to the existing feedback of scores for listening, reading, and the total. The specific details of feedback are presently under review. These details will appear on our official website and in other forms as soon as they are finalized.

Q3

**Why did you choose to use the four types of accents? Now that there are more accents, will there be a need to make specific types of preparation for the test?**

To better reflect the fact that there is variety

in the English used in the world, the new TOEIC test has adopted the accents used in four geographical regions, the United States, Great Britain, Canada, and Australia (as well as New Zealand). These regions were chosen because their accents are some of the most generally used and taught accents in the international environment. In the test, each of the four accents is used for one quarter of the questions. It should be noted that the pronunciation and accents are not strong. None of the items require the test taker to have mastered any specific variation of English in order to discern what is being said. The intent behind the increased variety of accents is not to determine whether test takers can tell the accents apart. Rather, the purpose is to make the test more closely resemble real-world situations.

Q4

**Is the new TOEIC test also limited to listening and reading?**

There is a high correlation between speaking and listening skills, and between writing and reading skills. The TOEIC test was developed to apply these relationships, taking direct measurements of listening and reading skills to make an indirect assessment of speaking and writing skills. This has not changed: the new TOEIC test has also been developed to make a comprehensive assessment of English communication proficiency through the testing of listening and reading skills.

At ETS, we are also carrying out ongoing studies regarding those tests that specialize in speaking and writing skills and which aim for a more detailed measurement of abilities in these areas.

Q5

**Can the scores from the new TOEIC test be used in the same way as before?**

The scoring criteria for the new TOEIC test will remain the same as those for the existing

TOEIC test. You will therefore be able to use both test scores in the same manner.

For the TOEIC test, we use a method called “equating” to maintain the consistency of the scoring criteria. This technique of adjusting the level of difficulty between different tests will be used for the new and existing tests. Therefore, a score of 600 on the new TOEIC test will indicate the same level of proficiency as a score of 600 on the existing test.

**Equating:** A technique for maintaining the same scale value regardless of which test form is taken, as long as the abilities of the test taker have not changed.

Generally speaking, there are several techniques that can be used to equate the results (scores) from different test forms. One is to incorporate shared “anchor” questions that are the same across different questions. A second technique is to administer a series of different tests for the same test taker (or group of test takers). There are still other techniques, including the application of the item response theory.

For the TOEIC test, the scores are equated primarily on the basis of the first technique outlined above. A variety of verification processes are incorporated in the course of implementing this technique, such as performing item analysis on each of test question (verification of whether the intent of each test question has been achieved). This series of processes are collectively referred to as “equating.”

As a result of equating, the final assessment is not reported as raw scores on the TOEIC test, but rather as raw scores converted into scale scores.

## **Q6** Does the new TOEIC test place less emphasis on grammar?

At ETS, there is a set of guidelines regarding the extent to which grammar and vocabulary questions need to be incorporated in order to verify a specific level of English proficiency. These guidelines are observed in the new TOEIC test as well. Through all of its sections, the TOEIC test aims to comprehensively measure the ability to communicate in English, including grammar and vocabulary. It is not true that the new TOEIC test places less emphasis on grammar.

The types of abilities measured are not limited to any test section; rather, the test as a whole is designed to measure the test taker’s skills in a multifaceted way.

## **Q7** Will the new TOEIC test have a strong business slant?

The concept of covering a broad range, from

daily life to business, will remain unchanged compared to the existing test. The TOEIC test presents materials that deal with events that occur in an international environment. Therefore, a variety of scenarios are presented, ranging from those related to everyday life to those related to the workplace. For instance, Part 6 presents questions about letters, e-mails, and news articles. Some of this subject matter is business-related, while some is of a personal nature. However, none of the questions require any specialized business knowledge, nor do they involve extremely private matters, such as mail exchanged between family members.

## **Q8**

### Will longer passages make the test more difficult? Will the test require higher problem-solving speed?

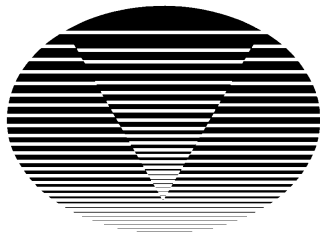
Short passages are not necessarily easier, and long passages are not necessarily more difficult. Longer passages do not necessarily mean a more difficult test. Longer passages mean there is more information on hand for answering questions. Also, longer passages mean fewer topics. In some cases, it may be easier to answer questions relating to one subject compared to having to process many topics. The length and difficulty of the passages, and the content of the questions, have been designed with the overall balance in mind. Our pilot study has also verified that there is no major difference in difficulty between the new and existing tests.

Additionally, the results of our “Speededness Study,” which examined the appropriateness of the volume of information and the processing speed, also demonstrated that there is no difference between the existing and new tests.

## **Q9**

### Will there be variations in the spelling as well?

The words in the written questions will appear in the form of their most common U.S. spelling. However, questions that require knowledge of uniquely American cultural backgrounds or phrases have been eliminated. The TOEIC test is designed to make a fair and comprehensive assessment of communication skills in English as a common world language, without regard to particular country or region.



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Printed in Japan