

Computer-based TU-GET Score Comparison between TOEFL iBT and IELTS

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The computer-based Thammasat University General English Test (TU-GET CBT) is a four-skill English proficiency test. The test battery of the TU-GET CBT consists of four parts: listening, reading, speaking, and writing. All of the test items in the TU-GET CBT listening and reading sections are based on the multiple-choice format with four options. The TU-GET CBT speaking section consists of two tasks- a narrative speech and an opinion speech. The TU-GET CBT writing section consists of one essay writing task. Each part has a maximum score of 30 points, making a total of 120 points.

TU-GET CBT test scores have been widely accepted in Thailand as evidence of test-takers' proficiency in English for both academic and occupational purposes. Recently the Language Institute of Thammasat University conducted score comparison research between the TU-GET CBT, TOEFL iBT, and IELTS tests. The objective of this project is two-fold: First, the TOEFL iBT and IELTS are internationally recognized university admission tests, and linking TU-GET CBT scores to these two well-known tests can facilitate test users' decision-making process on university admissions; second, the score comparison research can establish empirical relationships between the scores on the TU-GET CBT and the two tests, serving as evidence for the predictive validity of the TU-GET CBT.

Two groups of undergraduate students at Thammasat University participated in this empirical study in the academic year 2016. The first group comprised of 209 Thammasat University undergraduate students who took the TU-GET CBT test and the official TOEFL iBT Complete Practice Test (TPO), which simulates the real TOEFL iBT test (ETS, 2016). The second group comprised of 58 Thammasat University undergraduate students who took the TU-GET CBT and the IELTS tests. Table 1 below shows descriptive statistics of these three tests including sample sizes, mean scores, and standard deviations, score ranges.

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Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of the Sample.

Test	N	Mean	SD	Range
Group 1				
TU-GET CBT Total	209	41.53	20.11	9-98
TPO Total	209	36.83	21.82	4-110
Group 2				
TU-GET CBT Total	58	68.5	16.35	37-109
IELTS Total	58	6.69	.85	5.0-8.5

A correlation coefficient indicates how strong the relationship is between the total scores test takers obtained from the TU-GET CBT and TPO tests and from the TU-GET CBT and IELTS tests. The values can range from -1 to +1, where +1 shows the strongest positive correlation, while -1 shows the strongest negative correlation. The correlation of test takers' total test scores from the TU-GET CBT test and the TPO test is .800. The correlation of test takers' total test scores from the TU-GET CBT test and the IELTS test is .778.

The equipercentile linking method was used to find the correspondence between the TU-GET CBT, TOEFL iBT, and IELTS total scores. This selected method has been used extensively in a wide range of settings such as the linking of the SAT with the ACT and the linking of the TOEFL iBT test with the IELTS test (ETS, 2010). The equipercentile linking method allows us to link the scale scores from the test of our interest (i.e. TU-GET CBT) to other tests (i.e. TPO and IELTS) through percentile ranks.

Table 2 below displays the score comparison results for the total scores on the TU-GET CBT test and the TPO test. In all cases, the TU-GET CBT score intervals and their corresponding TPO intervals would pass similar percentages of test takers.

Table 2. TU-GET CBT and TOEFL iBT Total Score Comparisons.

TU-GET CBT Score (0-120)	TOEFL iBT Score (0-120)
0-10	0-4
11-20	5-13
21-30	14-25
31-40	26-34
41-50	35-47
51-60	48-58
61-70	59-71
71-80	72-75
81-90	76-82
91-97	83-94
98-120	95-120

Note. The TOEFL iBT scores were obtained from the ETS's official scored TOEFL iBT Complete Practice Test (TPO).

Table 3 below presents the comparison results for the total scores on the TU-GET CBT test and the IELTS test. As TU-GET total score has a much larger score scale (0-120) than IELTS (1-9), the TU-GET CBT score range corresponding to an IELTS score tends to be broad. For example, TU-GET CBT scores of 64-73 would correspond to an IELTS score of 6.5; TU-GET CBT scores of 74-86 would correspond to an IELTS score of 7.0. In all cases, the TU-GET CBT score intervals and their corresponding IELTS scores would pass similar percentages of test takers.

Table 3. TU-GET CBT and IELTS Total Score Comparisons.

TU-GET CBT Score (0-120)	IELTS Band (0-9)
0-36	0-4.5
37-48	5.0
49-57	5.5
58-63	6.0
64-73	6.5
74-86	7.0
87-94	7.5
95-102	8.0
103-120	8.5-9.0

References

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