CHAPTER FIVE

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5.1 PRELIMINARIES

The aim of this study was to show the role of computer technology in enhancing the acquiring of the listening skills in English especially in the Indian context. The statistical analysis of the data obtained from the Pre and Post Test results shows that the use of computer aided instruction facilitates learning and helps to enhance the acquisition of the listening skill. This concluding chapter presents the general discussion of the major contributing factors, the teacher as a catalyst for change and the implications for teaching-learning process i.e. pedagogical implications and suggestions for further research.

5.2 GENERAL DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results derived from the tests administered during the study show that use of computer technology can play an effective role in enhancing the acquiring of the listening skill of English language learners. The researcher would also like to conclude the research by stating the following important aspects observed during the course of this research, which are as follows:

1] Teaching listening is easy with computer assisted technologies as the computer acts as the teacher's aide/assistant and helps the teacher to carry out the listening tasks.

2] Appropriate use of computer technology can enhance the teacher's teaching and make up for any shortcomings as in the case of the
teacher not being able to read fluently in English. Here, then the teacher is a poor model to imitate as the students learn by imitation and when they listen to poor pronunciation they are going to repeat the same. In this scenario which we would easily observe in any school of rural India, the teacher’s shortcoming can be overcome by using the text to speech software. In addition, listening to online stories and conversations strengthens the English language skills of the listeners.

3] The students are more eager to learn, cooperate and are disciplined as they enjoy working with the computer. Computer assisted technologies use animations, sound color and other advanced effects, this captures the students’ attention and motivates them to learn so that the students "want" to learn instead of "have" to learn.

4] The student becomes an independent learner as once s/he is shown how to use the tools of learning s/he can use them on their own later also e.g. listening to online stories- can listen to as many stories as per his/her own convenience.

5] Multiple repetitions of words, sentences, paragraphs are possible as the computer is tireless and can do this mundane task effortlessly. Repeated listening is very important for effective learning but repeating over and over again different words for different students would tax the energies of a human teacher and if seen rationally is quite an impossible task. Thus the computer helps to overcome human limitations and performs tedious tasks effortlessly.

6] Listening resources like OTD are user friendly, quick to access and give instant pronunciation practice. They thus score over conventional dictionaries.
7] The computer is a combination of other A.V. aids like the tape recorder, Television, but it is more advanced with more superior features. Unlike a tape recorder where say, if you have a list of words in hand and the tape recorder plays the words, one has to follow the list with complete attention otherwise there will be confusion if you miss out on a word. But when you use computer assisted listening technologies, like TTS each word is highlighted in color as it is read aloud so there is no cause for confusion. Also as mentioned in the above point, the talking dictionaries give the pronunciation of the word required by clicking on the speech icon which is next to the word.

8] Learning is more effective using computer assisted listening technologies, as the programs combine two or more skills like listening + reading + colorful animations. Thus as more senses are involved in the learning there is better comprehension. E.g. when the students listen to the stories on the British Council site - Learn English for Kids, the story is narrated in clear, good English; the characters speak the dialogues and the animation is colorful and engrossing. All this immediately catches the attention of the children who tend to repeat the dialogues as observed by the researcher. They also want to listen to these stories repeatedly.

9] Use of computer technology can effectively remove the boredom of a normal classroom as has been observed from the responses in the questionnaire. Use of computer technology can add a fresh touch to the teaching and enhance learning.

10] Learners are aware of the use of computer technology, as this is a part of the school curriculum so it is easy to use the different computer
technologies like internet with them. The teacher has to just guide the students and show them which programs to use. Also the generation today, expect and welcome the use of computer technology as is seen from the response given by the students in the questionnaire.

11] Use of computer technology does not diminish the importance of the teacher. On the contrary it increases the appeal of the teacher as the students perceive the teacher to be advanced and in sync with the modern changing world. The researcher observed that there is a better rapport with the students as the use of computer technology acts as a bridge that bridges the digital divide and also as interaction increases between the teacher and the students, there is better communication as the students find that the teacher is more accessible and not remote and distanced as happens in the traditional teaching methods.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

1] TEACHER AS A CATALYST FOR CHANGE

A] Teacher as a mentor: The teacher's role is to provide the right environment for the child and make sure that the child can work for his own development in peace and freedom. The adult should understand that it is the child who has to achieve his goals. The adult cannot do it for him. This important aspect can be covered by teaching the child how to use the different computer technologies to enhance his/her learning.

While technology should not take over the language classroom, it must be embraced in order to allow educators to do those things which they are unable to do themselves or those which will improve what is currently being done in the classroom.
B) Teacher as a link: the teacher has to play the role of a link between the students and the parents. The parents should also be made aware of the use of computer technology for English language skills and other subjects so that at home they can guide their wards as and when required. A child's complete development is the responsibility of all considered. The parents should take an active interest in the child's learning and the teacher can guide the parents towards achieving this goal.

C) Teacher as a student: Teachers must become familiar with using the Internet and its various functions such as e-mail. They must also learn how to use specific search tools in order to access information, search for lesson plans, or material and ideas to supplement their lessons. To avoid facing the same difficulties or problems associated with use of the Internet, teachers can ask students to keep track of problems that arise during use. In essence, language teachers must take the plunge and approach the Internet as a learning experience themselves. While it must be recognized that the Internet cannot replace the language classroom or the interaction between the language teacher and student, it offers a vast amount of information and lends itself to communication possibilities that can greatly enhance the language learning experience. There are a number of sites available as can be seen in the appendix-5 and attached CD. The teacher should have up-to-date information regarding the same and its applicability in the language classroom.

2) If the student is guided properly in the use of computer technology for his school subjects, it would act as a tutor at home and the student would by and by become a completely independent learner.
3] Computers and computer applications are no longer luxury tools only for the elite. In today's fast changing Digital World the computer is as essential an item in the house as is a television or a refrigerator. As seen in Chapter-2 of this work, Government and other agencies are doing their best to make the computers available at low cost to make them affordable for all and as more advancements are taking place the cost of using computers is decreasing.

4] As we have the conventional library in all educational institutions for reading and issuing books to the students likewise we need to adapt to the changing times and have libraries that have a collection of educational CD-ROM, Vcds and DVDs.

5] Computer simulation brings to life difficult, drab or boring concepts and processes and the advanced computer effects can add life to the learning.

5.4 PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Using computer assisted computer technologies provides authentic listening materials. This is particularly important in situations where the student does not get enough exposure to good English listening material. By using the internet resources the student can access a varied variety of accents and listening materials which is constantly upgraded. When you subscribe to sites like The American Storyteller you receive one story every week which has text + listening. Thus the student can listen to new and varied material which is available free of cost as long as one has an internet connection. This would enable the student to procure learning material other than that which is there in the school text books. Thus in this way computer assisted technologies
can play an important pedagogical role and help to enhance the acquisition of English language skills.

5.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study investigated the role of computer technology for enhancing the acquiring of the listening skill of English language learners in the Indian context. The same research can be replicated for accessing the role of computer technology for enhancing the other skills like reading, writing and speaking.

This study has been done on females only likewise, responses of male students towards the use of computer assisted listening technologies can be ascertained through a different study.

This study has been conducted on students who are already studying through English medium; other studies can be conducted taking students studying English in vernacular medium schools