CHAPTER – 5

CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of the study was to investigate the effect of the mixed method of imparting listening. To state otherwise, the pedagogies framed on the Krashen’s Theory of Affective filter is juxtaposed with bottom up skill task items which focus on the engineering college students deficient in second language listening. This is pursued to explore the status of the issues mentioned subsequently.

1. Would there be a significant difference in the pre-test and post-test scores, suggesting the intervention program benefitted the students?

2. Would such method benefit students in improving Intensive, Selective Responsive and Extensive listening?

3. Would there be a significant difference in the pre-test and post-test results of the experimental and control groups, suggesting that the improvement is due to the intervention program and not solely to natural maturation?

4. Would such method gain positive attitudes of the learners, suggesting that they have more willingness to attend classes when being taught through the mixed method?
5. What kind of listening activities were the learners interested in the mixed method of imparting listening?

   In order to answer the questions, the experimental group and the control group comprising low level listeners from the engineering college affiliated to Anna University, Chennai were taken for the study. The sample size was 110, with 55 students in the experiment group and 55 students in the control group.

   The pretest was administered to the Experimental and the Control groups at the beginning of the study. After the pretest, the experimental group received six week training in the mixed method of imparting listening which was framed on the Krashen’s Theory of Affective Filter. In this six week period the control group continued their regular listening classes without affective filter activities. At the end of the six weeks period, post test was administered to both the groups. The pre test was administered to find the entry level of the students and to divide the students according to their rank into two groups, i.e. the experimental group and the control group. The post test was administered to examine the improvement the students have made at the end of the six weeks.

   As the first step the tests were scored. Secondly, the raw score from the tests and the data from the questionnaires were obtained and tabulated in the Microsoft Excel sheet for analyzing it. Descriptive statistics and paired samples t test were conducted to find the difference between the pre test and post test scores across the experimental and control groups in order to answer the research questions. In this chapter, the research findings are discussed in detail referring to the relevant literature. Besides, the pedagogical implications, limitation of the study and suggestions for further research are also presented.
5.2 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The findings and discussions relating to the results of the study are presented in accordance with the research questions.

5.2.1 Pre tests and post tests

The results of the study point out that, the experimental group improved their listening skill significantly at the end of six weeks’ through the mixed method of imparting listening (pre test: $\bar{x} = 13.52$, post test: $\bar{x} = 20.49$, development: 6.96, p<.05). This increase may be attributed to the mixed method of imparting listening which is made of the Theory of the Affective Filter and the training items of the bottom up skills. As suggested by the literature (Morley, 1972; Postovsky, 1975) bottom up skills are most important in listening comprehension.

This result is in line with the literature on listening comprehension (Brown & Hilferty, 1986; Rixon, 1986; Morley, 1991 and Nunan and Miller, 1995) and proved that training in bottom up skills enhances listening. In other words students are exposed merely to tape recordings in the classes which do not lead to gain listening comprehension skill. Therefore greater success in listening comprehension can be achieved by providing greater varieties of activities with target skill task items.
boredom and increase interest in the class. Therefore, the results of the present study were consistent with the literature. This shows participants’ interest in the class which is important in the development of listening comprehension. In the mixed method of listening class students were exposed to varieties of activities that attracted them. While, the experimental group demonstrated statistically significant results, it is advisable to interpret the results of the control group which also demonstrated a significant difference.

Also there was a significant development in intensive listening, selective listening, responsive listening, and extensive listening skills. The difference in selective listening (2.96) and intensive listening (2.55) are higher when compared to responsive listening (0.49) and extensive listening (0.76). This is in line with the study of Koichi (2002) that though training is imparted in bottom up listening, top down listening ability is also important for listening. This result may suggest that as a second step in designing the module the researcher can include task items that concentrate on top down skills.

According to the results, the control group has also proved a significant difference at the end of six weeks period of regular listening classes (pre test: \( \bar{x} = 13.65 \), post test: \( \bar{x} = 16.38 \), development: 2.73, \( p < .05 \)). Though informants in this group did not receive any particular training other than the regular listening class with the task items of bottom up skills, they have showed development. The fact that the control group showed development may be due to attending listening class with the specific target skill task item i.e. bottom up skill, and of natural maturation in the regular listening class.

As conferred before, at the end of the six week period both the experimental group and the control group showed a significant development. When compared with the development of both the groups, the development in the
experimental group (6.96) was found to be higher than the control group (2.73). And the difference was also found to be statistically significant.

This finding is parallel to the literature on imparting listening which suggests that the mixed method of imparting listening is more effective in developing the listening skill than solely depending on the traditional way of teaching listening (Morley, 1991; Nunan & Miller, 1995; Rixon, 1986).

5.2.2 Questionnaire

The attitude questionnaire also revealed that the students have more attitudes towards the mixed method of listening class when compared to the regular listening class. And the coefficient correlation between the attitude and listening test is highly correlative. This result again proves the study of Crookes and Schmidt (1991) that varying the activities, tasks and the materials in the class would decrease boredom and increase interest in the class. Also the post test score result and the attitude score reflect the suggestion of Taylor (1981), that listening material for the instruction should offer the learners lots of target language to listen to in a digestible, palatable, yet challenging form.

5.2.3 Activity rating

Finally, the result of the rating scale for the activities in the mixed method of teaching showed top rating to the activities with Video-advertisement (4.03) and the second top rate was given to video-movie trailer (3.96) activities. And the third top rate was given to song supported with video (3.92). However, through multiple regression analysis it was found that the movie trailer activity gained more attention of the students. So it may be said that the movie trailer was selected as the best activity by the informants.

These results are parallel to the study Ramirez and Alonso (2007) that digital stories have effects on understanding the spoken English and it is in line
with the study (Kellerman, 1992; Kiany & Jalali, 2006). This result also reflects Progosh (1996) investigation that students’ reactions to two video listening quiz that presented two people discussing their likes and dislikes of a popular film and found that nearly 92% of the students preferred video quizzes over audio only.

In the light of the findings of the study it can be concluded that this study substantiates the previous literature on listening and affective filter activities. In order to enhance the listening skills of low level listeners it is essential for teachers to teach listening by diagnosing the practical problems faced by the students and adapting strategies like using the Affective Filter activities additionally by utilizing technologies and an authentic input. Integrating varieties of input with visual support and games to filter the affective factors encouraged the students to enhance the listening skill. Driving out students fear and inhibition in the second language listening class is appreciated. This study draws closer to prove this suggestion by revealing that though traditional ways of imparting listening (merely playing audio and testing listening) with bottom up task items aid the development in listening skill, the mixed method of imparting listening helped more comparatively.

5.3 PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

According to the findings of the study, both the experimental group and the control group significantly developed their listening skill at the end of the six week training. However, the development of the experimental group was significantly higher than the development of the control group. The fact that the statistically significant performance of the control group may be attributed to the effectiveness of the target skill task item and solely on the maturity of the regular listening classes they received throughout the six- week period. On the other hand, the significant development of the experimental group can be credited to the mixed method of imparting listening throughout six weeks.
In the light of the findings, the foremost implication of the study relates to the approach in language teaching. The mixed method of imparting listening can be accommodated in classes giving more attention to filter the affective factors. Also, the suggested approach in teaching listening, such as listening for top down activities can be followed to help students be successful in practicing this skill.

Teachers in language classes may neglect teaching listening and neglect to address the affective factors or they do not feel it as important to be considered in a listening class. However, this study has indicated that filtering affective factors plays an important role in teaching English, particularly in developing the listening skill. Therefore another implication of the study may relate to teacher training programme. Potential language teachers may be trained in the current approaches regarding listening and to use affective filter activities inside the classroom.

To conclude, the findings of the present study can draw the attention of the academicians, the curriculum designers, material developers, teachers to shape curricula, create syllabi, develop materials and to conduct classes accordingly.

5.4 LIMITATIONS

The limitations of the present study are presented one after the other. First, the study had been conducted for only a limited time of six weeks. Though development has been observed in the experimental and the control group, a six week period is not enough for a language skill to develop, particularly for listening, which is one of the most difficult skills.

Secondly, the study was conducted only to low level second language listeners. So it is not possible to generalize the module to all levels of learners. This study diagnosed the problems from the low level learners and proposed a
module to close the gap. So this exact module cannot be utilized for other learners.

Finally, the study module was designed only for developing the bottom up skills in listening and it has not concentrated on the top down skills. Moreover, the task items are designed in order to enhance the bottom up skills and not the other.

5.5 FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

As conferred in the limitations of the study, a six-week period is not enough for a language skill to develop. Therefore, for future research studies, the period of training can be extended.

In addition, the present study was conducted only for the low level second language listeners in the engineering college. The study can further be extended with high level achievers as participants and enhance their skill of listening. Moreover, the study can be further directed using other group of samples studying in medical colleges, arts and science colleges etc. Similarly the sample size can also be expanded. There were only 55 participants in the present study for the experimental group, and in order to generalize the findings a large sample size can be assigned.

This research study investigated the bottom up skills and it can be extended for the top down skills like listening for understanding, listening for gist, listening for information, etc. with the theory of the Affective Filter.

The present study has only one experimental group and one control group to test the mixed method of teaching bottom up skills. It can be researched further with a research design of two experimental groups, one for the bottom up skill and the other for the top down skill and a control group, to see which one of the skills gets aid from the mixed method of imparting listening more. In a
similar vein, this research design can be compared with other methods of teaching listening.

5.6 CONCLUSION

The present study unveiled that the mixed method of imparting listening is helpful in developing the listening skill of tertiary level ESL students in engineering college. However, both groups have made progress in their listening skills at the end of the research period; the experimental group’s development is statistically much higher than that of the control group which indicates the aforesaid finding: the effect of the mixed method of imparting listening skills.

The findings are in accordance with the literature which highlights the relationship between the affective factors and learning a second language. Although the relationship of learning a second language with the affective filter was proposed by several scholars (e.g., Scovel, 1978; Oxford, 1999, and Brown 2000), the research studies (Narayanan et al 2008 and Boyle, 1984) focused on motivation, attitude and anxiety in listening skill in general.

There was also a study (Yen, 1988) which examined the linguistic problems in the listening of Taiwanese students but the present study is unique in the way it was designed to find the practical problems of the low level learners and to find the effectiveness of the mixed method of imparting listening to create new strategy in teaching listening.
Although there were limitations to the study, this research might provide a new pedagogy in English language teaching. The neglect of addressing the need of the listeners and the pursuit of ways to develop listening skill are well known in this field of teaching listening. Therefore the present study may call the attention of the language teachers and task designers and it can also assist language learners to overcome the problems they face regarding this particular skill while learning the target skill.