THE EFFECTS OF VIDEOS ON ADULT ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE
STUDENT LISTENING COMPREHENSION

by

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A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
(Language Education)

We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

December, 1999

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Date Dec. 10 '99
ABSTRACT

This two-part study employed an experimental design and interviews to examine the effects of videos on adult English as a Second Language (ESL) student listening comprehension. The purpose of the first part of the study was to compare the effects of video in two pre-listening activity conditions on beginner and upper-beginner adult ESL listening comprehension. The participants were 49 Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) students enrolled in two beginner and two upper-beginner ESL classes. The beginner classes were randomly assigned either to the audio only (AO) condition or the audio with written script (AW) condition. The upper-beginner classes were similarly assigned to the two conditions, the AO condition or the AW condition. In the AO condition, the students listened to a tape recording of four pre-listening questions prior to viewing the video. In the AW condition, the students listened to the same tape recording and, in addition, were shown the same questions that were printed on large sheets of paper and held up at the front of the class by the teacher. The same pre-test was administered to all four classes. Twelve exercises including pre-listening questions, videos, and comprehension questions were completed. The beginner classes viewed videos from Learning English in the Community LINC 2 (Cameron et al., 1995), and the upper-beginner classes viewed videos from Learning English in the Community LINC 3 (Cameron et al., 1995). The same post-test was administered to all four classes. Results indicated that the written script in the AW condition significantly improved the listening comprehension ability of beginner and upper-beginner adult ESL students.

The second part of the study was aimed at gaining insights into the pre-listening questions, the videos, and their value on teaching listening comprehension. All of the
students were individually interviewed. Overall the students were positive about the showing of videos as aids for enhancing listening comprehension, the content of the videos, as well as the questions. Some of the students, however, found some of the instruments difficult to understand. They found that the vocabulary was unfamiliar or the speed of delivery was too fast. This lack of comprehension may have affected the results of Part One of the study.
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all of those people who assisted me in the completion of this thesis. Thank you, Dr. Gloria Tang for all of your help, Dr. Margaret Early for your encouragement, Dr. Bernard Mohan for your support, and Dr. Maria Trache for your advice.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank Loree Phillet for the final editing.

A special thanks all of my students who willingly participated in this research project.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to my family, friends, and colleagues who gave me advice and words of encouragement when I most needed them.
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Listening comprehension can be defined as “the ability to understand the spoken language of native speakers” (Mendelsohn, 1994, p. 19). Its importance in second language (L2) teaching theory and pedagogy has changed dramatically over the last 60 years. L2 listening comprehension has moved from near zero status to a position of significance (Danaher, 1996; Mendelsohn, 1994; Morley, 1990).

In the 1940s, 1950s, and early 1960s, attention to L2 listening comprehension was limited to sound recognition and prosodic patterning (Morley, 1990). “Neither the predominant British model of situational language teaching nor the predominant American model of audiolingual instruction took particular note of listening beyond its role in the imitation of patterns and dialogues” (Morley, 1990, p. 319).

During the middle and late 1960s, Newmark and Diller (1964), Rivers (1966), and Belasco (cited in Pimsleur & Quinn, 1971) proposed that listening comprehension may be the key fundamental skill to L2 acquisition. This focus on listening led to the development of comprehension approaches to L2 teaching and learning. The primary assumption underlying these approaches is “that large amounts of listening practice before speaking or reading may prepare the learner to acquire a second language with a greater efficiency than if he or she were taught all the skills simultaneously” (Danaher, 1996, p. 42). Asher’s (1969, 1977) Total Physical Response and Terrell’s (1977, 1982)
Natural Approach are examples of comprehension approaches to L2 teaching and learning that were practiced in the late 1960s, through the 1970s, and into the 1980s.

The significance of L2 listening comprehension continued to grow through the 1980s. Krashen (1982) stressed the importance of ‘comprehensible input.’ Other researchers have studied and are continuing to study listening and interactions, meaning negotiation, intake, learner strategies and information processing. Brown, Chaudron, Faerch and Kasper, Gass and Varonis, Long, O’Malley et al., Pica and Doughty, Rubin, Swain are among the researchers examining these topics (Morley, 1990).

The emphasis on listening comprehension in the 1970s and 1980s resulted in the development of specialized listening instructional materials. There was a sudden proliferation of listening comprehension methodology texts and textbooks with corresponding cassette tapes. In general, these materials were similar to L2 reading comprehension exercises. The exercises involved listening to a text and responding to questions. The teaching and learning of listening comprehension throughout that time period could be described as the administering and taking of a series of tests (Chambers, 1996; Morley, 1990).

In the 1990s, researchers are continuing to study the many factors that are believed to affect L2 listening comprehension (Baltova, 1994; Berne, 1998; Brown, 1994; Chambers, 1996; Danaher, 1996; Herron, 1994; Herron et. al, 1998; Ito, 1996; Mendelsohn, 1994; Rubin, 1994; Swaffar & Vlatten, 1997; Vandergrift, 1997). Instructional materials are continuing to be developed. Videos and compact discs are increasing in popularity. Most importantly, however, there is a trend away from listening as testing towards listening as a learning experience (Chambers, 1996; Mendelsohn,
The emphasis is currently on teaching listening comprehension skills. Listening activities are “preceded by pre-listening activities to put the listening in context, to access pupils’ knowledge of the language and knowledge of the topic and to arouse certain expectations” (Chambers, 1996, p. 25). Students are given a ‘while-listening activity’ which focuses their attention. “Tasks focusing on greater detail may accompany second and third playings of the text” (Cambers, 1996, p. 25).

Listening comprehension in second language teaching theory and pedagogy has moved to a position of prominence (Baltova, 1994; Berne, 1998; Brown, 1994; Douglas, 1989; Feyten, 1991; Mendelsohn, 1994; Morley, 1990; Rubin, 1994; Vandergrift, 1996, 1997). Researchers and teachers today “agree that oral comprehension skills are a crucial component of the ability to communicate successfully and appropriately in a target language” (Baltova, 1994, p. 507).

L2 listening comprehension is, however, still a young field. Much work is needed to understand the characteristics of oral comprehension and its role in language learning (Rubin, 1994).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Second language (SL) researchers and teachers are not alone in recognizing the importance of oral comprehension skills. Students, too, acknowledge the value of listening comprehension. I have been an English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher for over five years. I have encountered ESL students from a variety of countries. Typically my students are adult immigrants and refugees of diverse backgrounds. Their gender, age, nationality, first language, religion, level of education, and amount of formal training
in English vary. To all of them, however, listening comprehension is a serious concern. They express an ability to understand spoken English in the classroom, but an inability to understand spoken English outside of the classroom and they want to understand English in the ‘real world.’ I am thus faced with the problem of selecting and designing appropriate instructional materials and classroom techniques for teaching listening comprehension.

I have easy access to ESL listening comprehension methodology texts as well as numerous ESL listening comprehension exercises and activities with accompanying written texts, cassette tapes, and videos. In the institution where I teach, I am provided with instructional materials. My job is to choose the method for presenting these materials. The problem I face, however, as a listening comprehension teacher is that there is limited empirical research validating teaching methodologies in the field. There is little qualitative and even less of quantitative research available to support the lessons that I plan for my classes. Hence the need for this research.

This research project has been motivated by needs of my students. As mentioned, they express a need to comprehend English outside of their English classes. My goal, as an ESL teacher and a researcher, is to discover classroom tasks that enhance the listening comprehension skills of my students. To discover such tasks, I chose to conduct a two-part study.

A number of researchers, among them Allan (1984), Kellerman (1990), Reffler-Engel (1980), Riely (1979), and Willis (1983) assert that, with few exceptions, communication involves a combination of auditory and visual processing (Baltova, 1994). “With the interplay of audio and visual modalities that video provides” (Garza,
1990, p. 292), it is logical that they be used in L2 classes. Additionally, a number of empirical studies have been conducted on teaching listening comprehension with and without videos. Based on their research, Baltova (1994), Herron et al. (1995), Rubin (1990), Secules et al. (1992), and Tyson (1990) support the utilization of appropriate videos in teaching L2 listening comprehension.

In addition to the research that validates the use of videos in enhancing listening comprehension, there is a body of research that explores the effectiveness of various pre-listening activities to videos. Herbert (1991) found that allowing ESL college students in Quebec to read the transcripts of the videos prior to viewing them enhanced their listening comprehension. Herron (1994) and Herron et al. (1995, 1998) conducted a number of studies with college beginning-level French students at Emory University. Her 1994 study showed that having the teacher read aloud sentences outlining the video prior to viewing enhanced students' listening comprehension. She also found in 1995 that showing pictures and reading sentences aloud was more effective at enhancing listening comprehension than simply reading the sentences aloud. Finally, she concluded in 1998 that there was no difference between the listening comprehension levels of students who were exposed to statements and those exposed to questions with options for answers as pre-listening activities. Work in the area of L2 pre-listening activities as introductions to videos is limited.

To fill this gap in research in the effect of video on the listening comprehension of adult ESL learners, I conducted a two-part study. In Part One, I examined the effects of audio only and audio with written script pre-viewing questions as introductions to videos on beginner and upper-beginner adult ESL learners’ listening comprehension. In
Part Two, I investigated the perceptions and attitudes of the learners and teacher on the materials and methodology used in Part One of the study.

The ESL learners that participated in this research project were immigrants and refugees studying English through the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program. Their skill levels were tested by registered assessment centers and they were assigned to specific levels. The individual students selected the educational institution where they wished to study.

The study was conducted at a college in Burnaby, British Columbia. For the purpose of this study the college will be called Western College. Forty-nine students in four intact classes participated in the study. The intact classes participating in this research project were randomly selected.

Prior to the start of the study, the students completed a questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to acquire background information on each subject. It requested the following: name, date of birth, gender, country of origin, length of time in Canada, L1, additional languages, educational background, length of time studying English in Canada/abroad, and work experience.

Part One of the study was conducted during the students’ regular listening class time in the listening laboratory. It was quantitative in its approach. A pre-test post-test control group design was used to determine the effectiveness of audio only and audio with written script pre-viewing questions to videos on adult ESL listening comprehension. The effectiveness of the two types of pre-viewing questions was tested at both the beginner and the upper-beginner levels.
Part One of the study began with the administration of a pre-test. All of the students wrote the same pre-test. Then, over an eight-week period, the students completed a series of 12 exercises. Each exercise included a pre-listening activity, a two to six-minute video, and a set of comprehension questions appropriate for the level of the students. The pre-listening activities included a series of questions. One beginner class and one upper-beginner class received the audio only version of the questions. The other beginner and upper-beginner classes received the audio with the written script version of the same questions. At the end of the eight-week period, a post-test was administered to all the students. The pre-tests and post-tests consisted of the listening component of the Comprehensive English Language Test (CELT) Forms A and B (1986) respectively. The videos were selected from Communicating in English LINC 2 (Cameron et al., 1995) and Communicating in English LINC 3 (Cameron et al., 1995). The exercises included pre-viewing questions and comprehension questions that were based on these videos. The results were analyzed to determine the effectiveness of the two presentations of pre-viewing activities at each level of proficiency.

Part Two had a qualitative perspective. All of the students were individually interviewed. The interviews were semi-structured. The students were asked what they liked and did not like about the presentation of the videos and about the videos themselves. The interviews were held during the students regular class time. The interviews were audio taped and transcribed for analysis.
1. 2 Significance of the Study

This study explores classroom tasks for enhancing listening comprehension among adult ESL learners in an English speaking environment. It is significant because, to the best of my knowledge, there is no other research on L2 listening comprehension in this situation and such research would be valuable in guiding teaching and learning. The Canadian government spent approximately $101,800,000 on the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program in 1998-1999. They plan on spending the approximately the same amount per year for the next two years (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 1998). The demand for efficient and effective ESL instruction in Canada includes more than just the LINC program. As English continues to grow as an international language, the number of international students studying in Canada also continues to grow. This situation is not limited to Canada. Demand for ESL instruction in other English speaking nations around the world is on the rise as well. It is my hope that the study will reveal information that can guide ESL teachers, curriculum developers, and researchers in general in enhancing the listening comprehension of L2 learners.

1. 3 Background of the Study

Listening comprehension and its development in adult ESL learners are the central focus of my study. To situate the project, I will discuss the researcher, describe the educational institution, the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program, English as a Second Language (ESL) course, and define the students.
1. 3. 1 The Researcher

I have been involved with adult ESL listening comprehension for more than six years. I began as an assistant in the ESL listening laboratory. My position has evolved and I am currently responsible for planning, implementing, and evaluating the listening comprehension component of the ESL course. As a result of my responsibilities I am frequently exploring techniques that will enhance my students' listening comprehension.

1. 3. 2 The Educational Institution

I work at Western College, an educational institution that is accredited by the Private Post Secondary Commission of British Columbia (PPSEC). It has been in operation since 1974. It consists of three campuses. They are located in Burnaby, Vancouver, and Surrey, British Columbia. Western College offers a number of full and part-time courses and programs. They include English as a Second Language LINC Program, English as a Second Language Visa Students' Program, Teaching English as a Foreign Language, Desktop Publishing/Graphic Design, Early Childhood Care and Education, Community Support Worker, Medical Office Assistant, Computerized Office Training, Hotel Front Office Management, Tourism, Instructor's Certificate, Automotive Mechanics Pre-apprenticeship, Career Planning, and Job Search.

1. 3. 3 The Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) Program

Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) is a federal government funded program which provides language training aimed at enabling immigrants and refugees to function in their new communities.
When newcomers arrive in Canada, they have their English or French language skills tested at registered assessment centers. Based on the assessment, a language level is assigned. Each language level has a specific length of instruction. Lower-beginner students receive 800 hours, beginner students receive 600 hours, and upper-beginner students receive 300 hours. The students then choose full or part-time studies at a participating educational institution.

1. 3. 4 The English as a Second Language LINC Course

The full time ESL LINC course at Western College is from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon on Friday. The program is divided into specific subjects: listening, grammar, reading, writing, Canadian culture, and conversation. Listening is taught by one teacher; grammar, reading, and writing are taught by another teacher; and Canadian culture and conversation are taught by yet another teacher. The listening classes are 90 minutes long and are scheduled twice a week in the mornings with at least one day between them. Grammar, reading, and writing are also taught in the mornings. Canadian culture and conversation are taught in the afternoons.

The ESL course is offered at the Burnaby campus. This campus is located about 20 minutes from downtown Vancouver by public transit. There are nine classes of 15 students in the program. Five classes are full time day classes, one lower-beginner, two beginner, and two upper-beginner. Four are part-time evening classes, one lower-beginner, two beginner, and one upper-beginner. One coordinator and six full time and four part-time teachers make up the staff of the ESL LINC Department.
1. 3. 5 The Students

The students participating in the LINC program are diverse. Western College has had male and female students from ages 19 to 70. They have been from Africa, Asia, Europe, North, Central, and South America. The level of their education ranges from grade 1 to having a Ph.D. The students are literate in at least one language. The amount of formal English training they have received varies considerably. Some students have studied English in non-English speaking countries while others have been in immersion situations. Their work and life experiences are as different as their appearances.

The students that participated in the pilot for this research project were from both day and night school classes. The students that participated in the study were restricted to full time day classes. The distribution of students that participated in this study was not based on a deliberate selection of specific characteristics. The students were males and females, from 20 to 52 years old. They had lived in Canada between 2 and 73 months. Their countries of origin included: China, Hong Kong, Hungary, India, Iran, Iraq, Korea, Poland, Romania, Russia, Somalia, Taiwan, Ukraine, Vietnam, and the former Yugoslavia. They were fluent/literate in at least one language. They had formally studied English from 0 to 6,720 hours. These English classes occurred in their native country, in another country, or in Canada prior to the start of this research project. Their level of education varied from Grade 8 to seven years of University. Their jobs included such things as homemaking, working in a factory, cooking, engineering, and teaching at a university.
Although diverse, the students typically had two things in common. First, they were motivated to learn the language so that they could function in their communities. Second, they told me they had difficulty understanding spoken English, in particular, outside the classroom.

1. 4 Research Questions

The study was composed of two parts. The purpose of Part One of the study was to investigate the effectiveness of audio only and audio with written script pre-listening questions as introductions to videos on beginner and upper-beginner adult ESL learners' listening comprehension. More specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:
1. Which type of pre-listening activity, audio only or audio with written script, is more effective in improving listening comprehension in beginner adult ESL learners?
2. Which type of pre-listening activity, audio only or audio with written script, is more effective in improving listening comprehension in upper-beginner adult ESL learners?

The purpose of Part Two was to explore the perceptions and attitudes of the learners and the teacher on the methodology and materials used in Part One of the study.

1. 5 Definition of Terms

Before proceeding to the description of the study, I will provide a definition of terms. English as a Second Language (ESL), in this study, refers to learning English as a second or additional language when it is not one's mother tongue. First Language (L1) is “a native language which an individual acquires as a mother tongue” (Hiroshi, 1993,
Second Language (L2) is “a language which an individual learns as a second or foreign language other than his/her native tongue” (Hiroshi, 1992, p. 7).

Listening comprehension is defined as “an active and conscious process in which the listener constructs meaning by using cues from contextual information and from existing knowledge” (O’Malley et al., 1989; cited in Mendelsohn, 1994, p. 19). For the purpose of this study, it is the ability to answer comprehension questions after viewing a video.

Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) is a federal government program that provides “immigrants with basic communications skills that are essential for any individual to function in our society. Training options will be matched to individual needs and will help participants achieve a first level of language competency. Training will normally be offered during an immigrant’s first year in Canada and will place greater emphasis on introducing newcomers to shared Canadian values, rights, and responsibilities” (Employment and Immigration Canada, 1991, p. 3).

A Pre-listening Activity is one that puts the listening in context. It is intended “to access pupils’ knowledge of the language and knowledge of the topic and arouse certain expectations” (Chambers, 1999, p. 25). The pre-listening activities in this study consisted of sets of questions that were aimed at focusing the attention of the viewer to specific information in the videos. In the audio only pre-viewing questions treatment, the questions were presented in an aural form. The students listened to a cassette tape recording of the questions. In the audio with written script pre-viewing questions treatment, the questions were presented in an aural and visual form. The students listened to a cassette tape recording of the questions while they read the same questions that were
written. The questions were written on two- by three-feet papers and held up at the front of the class for the duration of the tape recording.

1. 6 Summary

Chapter 1 has provided a statement of the problem, the background of the study, the research questions and a definition of terms. Chapter 2 will provide a review of the research that is pertinent to this study. Chapter 3 will describe the methodology used in this research project. Chapter 4 will describe the findings and observations of the project. The last chapter, Chapter 5, will provide a summary and a discussion of this research project. Additionally it will provide suggestions for teaching ESL listening comprehension and further research.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RESEARCH

This chapter reviews literature relevant to the constructs of this study, i.e., the use of videos and pre-viewing questions as introductions to those videos in the development of listening comprehension in ESL learners. It describes the theoretical assumptions of listening comprehension and research in L2 listening comprehension.

2.1 Theoretical Assumptions of Listening Comprehension

“Listening is used more than any other language skill in our daily lives” (Morley, 1990, p. 32). In fact, of the total time spent communicating, listening takes up 40-50%; speaking, 25-30%; reading, 11-16%; and writing, 9-11% (Feyten, 1991; Mendelsohn, 1994; Morley, 1990).

L2 listening comprehension is a very complex skill (Berne, 1998). It is an active process (Berne, 1998; Rubin, 1994). “The listener must participate fully in selecting the stimuli to which s/he will attend and in assigning meaning to those stimuli” (Coakley and Wolvin, 1986; Richards, 1983; Rost, 1990; Wolvin and Coakley, 1985; cited in Berne, 1998, p. 170). Listening is “important because listeners often have no control over what is ‘coming at’ them, particularly in one-way communication situations” (Mendelsohn, 1994, p. 9).

Researchers and language teachers have attempted to analyze the process of listening comprehension. An example follows. In the following description, except for
the first and the last, the operations occur simultaneously or in extremely rapid succession (microseconds). From the reception of sound waves through the human ear, the hearer:
(a) processes "raw speech" and holds an "image" of it in short-term memory;
(b) determines the type of speech event that is being processed;
(c) infers the objectives of the speaker through consideration of the type of speech event, the context, and content;
(d) recalls background information relevant to the particular context and subject matter;
(e) assigns a literal meaning to the utterance;
(f) assigns an intended meaning to the utterance;
(g) determines whether information should be retained in short-term or long-term memory; and
(h) deletes the form in which the message was originally received.

These operations occur before the hearer initiates the process of developing a response (adapted from Clark & Clark, 1977; Richards, 1983; cited in Brown, 1994).

Stage D, in the above process, 'recalls background information relevant to the particular context and subject matter' is of particular interest to this study. It suggests, and research has confirmed, that some previous knowledge of the subject can influence the process of listening (Chiang & Dunkel, 1992; Long, 1990; cited in Rubin, 1994; Schmidt-Reinhart, 1994). Drawing on this knowledge, as pre-listening activities do, has been found to be effective in enhancing listening comprehension in language learners (Hebert, 1991; Herron 1994; Herron et al. 1995, 1998).
2. 2 Research in L2 Listening Comprehension

In this section, research in pre-listening activities and videos in L2 listening comprehension will be examined.

2. 2. 1 Pre-listening Activities

Ausubel, one of the principal representatives of cognitive learning theory in the 1960s, contended that “learning occurs in the human organism through the meaningful process of relating new items to already existing concepts” (Hiroshi, 1993, p. 15).

“Rarely if ever do we listen to something without some idea of what we are going to hear: only, perhaps, when we turn on the radio or television at random, or enter a room where a conversation is already in progress. Usually we have some preconceived idea of the content, formality level and so on of the discourse we are about to hear” (Ur, 1984, p. 3). It is logical, therefore, for teachers to provide some introduction to the material being presented.

Hebert (1991), Herron (1994), and Herron et al. (1995, 1998) have conducted research on the use of pre-listening activities. All of their work involves pre-listening activities for videos in L2 classrooms. Hebert (1991) conducted a study with 52 intermediate learners of ESL attending a college in a rural area of the province of Quebec. The French speaking students had little exposure to English other than listening to American, British, and Canadian popular music. The students were assigned to one of two groups. In one group, the students read the transcript and viewed the video. In the second group, the students only viewed the video. At the beginning of the study, all of the students wrote a pre-test. Over an eleven-week period, the students viewed videos and
wrote comprehension quizzes. Following the final video quiz, all of the students wrote a posttest. Hebert found that the group that read the transcript and viewed the video did significantly better in their listening comprehension than the group that simply viewed the video over the same period of time.

Herron (1994) and Herron et al. (1995, 1998) conducted a series of experiments with different pre-listening activity conditions to introduce videos to beginning-level French students at Emory University. Her 1994 study included 38 students in two sections of a semester-long French course. She used a counterbalancing of treatments across the two groups. Each week for ten weeks she showed the ten-minute videos to both of the sections. She alternated the pre-viewing activity between the sections. The pre-viewing activity included having the teacher read aloud “six sentences written in French on the board that outlined, in chronological order, major scenes from the new video lesson” (Herron, 1994, p. 192). Following the viewing, each student wrote a listening comprehension test given in English. The results favored the pre-viewing activity with video condition “t (37) = 2.20, p < .05” (1994, p. 194).

In 1995 Herron et al. had 39 students in two sections participate in their study. This time, they varied the pre-viewing activity slightly and added two additional videos. In both conditions, the teacher read aloud six sentences that outlined the scenes from the video. In one condition, however, the teacher also showed pictures that were related but not a translation of the sentences. The pictures were cut from magazines. Again, following each video the students answered comprehension questions. Herron et al. found that the students’ comprehension and retention of information benefited significantly more when the six sentences were accompanied with pictures.
In 1998 Herron et al. had 67 students in five sections participate in their study. In two of the sections the teacher read aloud six sentences about the video. In two other sections the teacher changed the sentences to questions and read them aloud. She also read three possible answers for each question. The final section was a control and had no pre-listening activity. In this experiment there were ten videos. Again, following each of the videos, there were comprehension questions. They found that there was no significant difference in the listening comprehension between the section that had sentences read and questions read. There was, however, a significant difference between these two sections and the group that had no pre-listening activity. The sections with the pre-listening activities scored significantly higher on their tests than did the control group.

These researchers concur that having some pre-listening activity is more beneficial than no pre-listening activity in enhancing L2 listening comprehension. However, research needs to be done to determine which pre-listening activities are most valuable for adult ESL student in English speaking environments.

2.2.2 Videotapes

"The use of video allow the replication in the classroom nearly any real-life listening situation imaginable" (Hiroshi, 1993, p.46). Recent research supports the use of videotapes in teaching and learning L2 listening comprehension under certain conditions. Among the researchers who have investigated the impact of video are Tyson (1990), Rubin (1990), Baltova (1994), and Secules et al (1994).

Tyson (1990) examines the effect of video on the listening comprehension of intermediate college and university ESL students. A total of 62 students from four
educational institutions were selected for the study. The majority of the students’ first language (L1) was Japanese. The students were assigned to either the audio or the video treatment group. The audio group listened to a 15-minute audio taped segment of a televised science program twice. The video group viewed and listened to the same 15-minute videotaped segment of the televised science program twice. At the end of the programs, the students were asked to write down as many ideas as they could about in the program. The students wrote the ideas in their first language. There was a significant difference favoring the video group. The study “supports the use of video as an effective medium for enhancing the listening comprehension of intermediate ESL students” (Tyson, 1990, p. 91).

Rubin (1990) conducted a study of 394 students studying Spanish in American high schools. For a portion of her study, she divided the students into five groups. Four of the groups were exposed to 120 minutes of video, in class, over six weeks. The fifth group was not exposed to any videos in class. Rubin found that the listening comprehension of high-beginning Spanish high school students “who watched dramas on video improved significantly over students who received no video support for their listening training” (Rubin, 1994, p. 204). Her results were based on pre- and post-comprehension tests taken at the beginning and at the end of the six weeks.

In a study of 52 first and second year students studying French at Emory University, Secules et al. (1992) also found that using videos enhanced L2 listening comprehension. Two classes studied French using a direct method for one term while two classes studied French using a video series for the same length of time. Based on a
listening comprehension test written in English, the classes using the video series scored higher than did the classes not using the video series.

The impact of video on L2 listening comprehension skills was also explored by Baltova (1994). Her study included 53 grade 8 students studying intermediate level core French at a school in a small city in Southern Ontario. The students were randomly assigned to one of four conditions. They watched and listened, watched only, listened only, or had no exposure to the video. At the end of the 15-minute video, all of the students wrote the same English multiple choice comprehension text. The results of the students who had no exposure to the video were used to identify questions that had answers that were easy to infer. Interestingly, the students that watched and listened performed very similarly to those students who watched only. These results were almost twice as high as students who listened only. Baltova concluded that “visual cues were informative and enhance comprehension in general, but did not necessarily stimulate the understanding of text proper” (1994, p. 508).

Baltova (1994) subsequently completed a second study in the same school. Again the subjects were grade 8 core French students. A total of 43 students in two classes were randomly assigned to one of two conditions. In the first condition, the students watched and listened to the video. In the second condition, the students listened to the video. The video was the same 15-minute video. The comprehension test was revised. The results of the study showed no significant difference between the two groups. In both experiments, Baltova claimed that text difficulty influenced the outcomes.

“Herron et al. (1995) reported that for first-year University French students listening comprehension improved more after one year’s exposure to a video-based
curriculum than after the same length of exposure to a text and audio-based curriculum" (Rubin, 1994, p. 205).

Although there is support of the use of video in teaching L2 listening comprehension, in general, to the best of my knowledge, there is no research supporting its use in ESL listening comprehension in immersion situations.

2. 3 Summary

In this chapter, I reviewed research relevant to teaching listening comprehension to adult ESL learners. Among the topics were theoretical assumptions of listening and research in L2 listening comprehension. In the following chapter, Chapter 3, I will describe the methodology used in this research project. I will state the hypotheses and provide details on the research site, the subjects, the instruments, procedures, scoring, and analysis.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This study was a two-part investigation on the effects of pre-viewing questions as introductions to videos and the videos themselves on beginner and upper-beginner adult ESL student listening comprehension. Part One was quantitative in its approach. It began with a questionnaire that requested the subjects to provide their name, date of birth, gender, country of origin, length of time in Canada, L1, additional languages, educational background, length of time studying English in Canada/abroad, and work experience. The students then participated in a pre-test post-test control design experiment that investigated the effectiveness of audio only (AO) and audio with written script (AW) pre-viewing questions as introductions to videos on adult ESL students. In a pre-test post-test control group design, “subjects are randomly assigned to a control group or an experimental group and receive a pre-test. . . . After they receive their respective treatments, subjects receive the post-test” (Shavelson, 1981, p. 33). This design was selected because it was decided that it would cause least disruption to the classes.

In Part Two, the qualitative portion of the study, the students were individually interviewed. The interviews were intended to discover students’ perceptions of and attitudes to the methodology and materials used in Part One of the study. The interviews were tape recorded and transcribed. Additionally, the teacher recorded her own observations.
The methodology of Parts One and Two will be described in detail in this chapter. The hypotheses, research site, subjects, instruments, procedures, and analysis will be discussed.

3. 1 Hypotheses

Altogether eight hypotheses were proposed for testing in this research project:

1. The beginner audio only (AO) and the beginner audio with written script (AW) groups will show no significant differences in same pre-test.

2. The beginner AO group will show significant gain in the post-test over the pre-test.

3. The beginner AW group will show significant gain in the post-test over the pre-test.

4. The beginner AW group will show a significantly larger gain than the beginner AO group in the same post-test.

5. The upper-beginner AO and upper-beginner AW groups will show no significant differences in the same pre-test.

6. The upper-beginner AO group will show significant gain in the post-test over the pre-test.

7. The upper-beginner AW group will show significant gain in the post-test over the pre-test.

8. The upper-beginner AW group will show a significantly larger gain than the upper-beginner AO group in the same post-test.
3.2 Research Site

This research project was conducted at Western College. Western College is a private college with three campuses located in the lower mainland of British Columbia. The study took place at its Burnaby campus. The Burnaby campus has 15 classrooms. During the day, six of these are used for the ESL LINC program. One of the six classrooms is a language laboratory. Along with the usual classroom furniture, it contains cassette recorders, books with corresponding cassette tapes, a television, and a VCR. Part One of the research project, the questionnaire and the experiment, were conducted in the language laboratory. The majority of Part Two was conducted in an office near the language laboratory. Of the 34 interviews, 32 were conducted in person in this office. The remaining two interviews were conducted over the telephone. This was agreed upon because neither student was in school the week that the interviews were being conducted.

3.3 Subjects

I conducted this research project on two beginner and two upper-beginner classes studying English at Western College. To avoid any disruption to the classes, randomization was not attempted. It can be assumed, however, that random assignment was done at the testing center and at the college. The student distribution in the classes was not based on a deliberate selection of specific characteristics. Intact classes were randomly selected for the study. The beginner classes were arbitrarily designated as the audio only (AO) group and the audio with written script (AW) group, as were the upper-beginner classes. The study initially included 49 subjects. There were 11 and 17 students in the beginner classes (AO and AW groups respectively), and 11 and 10 students in the
upper-beginner classes (AO and AW groups respectively). Over the duration of the study, some students missed classes or stopped attending school. This is not uncommon in the LINC program. Ultimately, data from 34 students were collected. There were 7 students in the beginner AO group, 12 students in the beginner AW group, 8 students in the upper-beginner AO group, and 7 students in the upper-beginner AW group.

The students were from diverse cultural backgrounds. There was a wide range of ages, languages, educational backgrounds, work experiences, and hours of English training. The groups, however, were not too different in terms of diversity as the following tables show.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student #</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Native Country</th>
<th>Language(s)</th>
<th>Education (completed)</th>
<th>Job</th>
<th>English Classes (hours)</th>
<th>Time in Canada (months)</th>
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<td>Job</td>
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<td>Time in Canada (months)</td>
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<td>Accountant</td>
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<td>University Professor</td>
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<td>19</td>
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<td>41</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>Ukrainian</td>
<td>University, 3.5 years</td>
<td>Engineer</td>
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Table 3.3

Upper-Beginner AO Group (data from questionnaires)

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<th>Student #</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Native Country</th>
<th>Language(s)</th>
<th>Education (completed)</th>
<th>Job</th>
<th>English Classes (hours)</th>
<th>Time in Canada (months)</th>
</tr>
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<td>Korea</td>
<td>Korean</td>
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<td>Textile Design</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>College, 1 year</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>F</td>
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<td>Polish, Russian</td>
<td>Grade 13</td>
<td>Bookkeeper Secretary</td>
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<td>15</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Poland</td>
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<td>College, 3 years</td>
<td>Bank Teller</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>M</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Former Yugoslavia</td>
<td>Serbian, Italian</td>
<td>University, 1 year</td>
<td>Student</td>
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<td>Homemaker</td>
<td>780</td>
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</tr>
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</table>
Table 3.4

Upper-Beginner AW Group (data from questionnaires)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student #</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Native Country</th>
<th>Language(s)</th>
<th>Education (completed)</th>
<th>Job</th>
<th>English Classes (hours)</th>
<th>Time in Canada (months)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>Romanian</td>
<td>Institute, 3 years</td>
<td>Kindergarten Worker, Cashier</td>
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<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Former Yugoslavia</td>
<td>Serbo-Croatian</td>
<td>Grade 12</td>
<td>Electrical Technician</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Romania</td>
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<td>Physiotherapist</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>F</td>
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<td>Romania</td>
<td>Romanian</td>
<td>Grade 12</td>
<td>Clothing Design</td>
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</tr>
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<td>32</td>
<td>F</td>
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<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>Chinese, Mandarin, Taiwanese</td>
<td>College, 3 years</td>
<td>Accountant</td>
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<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>M</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Former Yugoslavia</td>
<td>Serbo-Croatian</td>
<td>University, 4.5 years</td>
<td>Mining Engineer</td>
<td>588</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>Chinese, Mandarin</td>
<td>College, 3 years</td>
<td>Judge (China), Cook (Canada)</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. 4 Part One: The Experiment

Prior to starting Part One of the study, the teacher received permission from the students who participated in the study as well as the coordinator of the ESL program.

Part One of the research project was quantitative in nature. It began with a questionnaire and was followed by an experiment. The experiment was a pre-test post-test control group design. This portion of the project investigated the effects of audio only and audio with written script pre-viewing questions as introductions to videos and videos on the listening comprehension of adult ESL learners.

3. 4. 1 Instruments

3. 4. 1.1 The Pre-Test and Post-Test

The listening components of the Comprehensive English Language Test (CELT) Forms A and B (1986) were selected as the pre-test and post-test respectively. They provided a standard measure of listening comprehension for all of the participants in the study. The listening component of CELT contains 50 multiple-choice items. It is "a test of the ability to comprehend short statements, questions, and dialogues as spoken by native speakers of English" (Harris, 1986, p.1). The reliability of the listening items range from .82 to .93 (Harris, 1986). The test is tape-recorded. The students received a test booklet and an answer sheet.

Following is an example of a test question

You will hear: "When are you going to New York?"

You will read: (A) To visit my brother.

(B) By plane.
(C) Next Friday.

(D) Yes, I am.

The best answer to the question “When are you going to New York?” is choice (C), Next Friday. Therefore, if this problem were in the test, you would find the number of the problem on your answer sheet and mark choice (C) as shown below.

( ) ( ) (x) ( )
A B C D

(CELT Form A, 1986, p. 2)

The choice of the CELT was influenced by a study conducted by Chiang and Dunkel (1992). These researchers used the same test in their study with subjects of similar language ability.

3. 4. 1. 2 The Videos

I elected to use videos because research by Tyson (1990), Rubin (1990), Baltova (1994), and Secules et al (1994) supports the use of videotapes in teaching and learning L2. Baltova (1994) noted that

if we want to recreate communication realistically, quickly and efficiently in second language classrooms (if we cannot bring in native speakers), we should use a videotape, rather than the traditional audiocassette.

Teaching listening comprehension with video is not only a more realistic approach, but also matches learners’ needs more closely, since people
who have an imperfect knowledge of a linguistic code can be expected to rely much more on extratextual clues than native speakers usually do. It only makes sense that learners should be provided with all the help they can get. (p. 510)

Videos from Communicating in English LINC 2 (Cameron et al., 1995) were used in the beginner classes while videos from Communicating in English LINC 3 (Cameron et al., 1995) were used for the upper-beginner classes. These videos were selected because they were designed for teaching ESL to LINC students. They were provided by the college.

The videos contain conversations of everyday situations “using different accents, registers, and paralinguistic cues (i.e., posture, gestures)” (Secules et al., 1992, p. 480). Although the videos are not intended for a native-speaker audience, the speech is normal in speed and the interactions appear natural. Natural speech contains redundancies, noise (i.e., literal noises, mispronunciations, misuse of words), and colloquial and street language. Herron (1995) and Secules et al. (1992) used videos with these characteristics in their research.

The LINC 2 videos were from 2 to 4 minutes in length and the LINC 3 videos were from 2 minutes and 15 seconds to 6 minutes in length. The use of short segments of video is thought to prevent ‘cognitive overload’ “that is, too much new information to process in the working memory” (Swaffar & Vlatten, 1997, p.177).

Based on my previous experiences, the topics of each video are appropriate for students seeking to learn about their communities. The video selection is listed in Table 3.5.
Table 3.5

**Video Selection**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beginner</th>
<th>Upper-Beginner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>2.01 Planning a Potluck Meal</td>
<td>3.01 Reporting a Stolen Bicycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.03 At the Dry Cleaners</td>
<td>3.02 Returning a Faulty Product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.08 Renting an Apartment</td>
<td>3.06 Opening a Bank Account</td>
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<td>2.09 Changing Shifts</td>
<td>3.13 Looking for a Job</td>
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<td>2.10 Bad Service in a Restaurant</td>
<td>3.17 A Parent-Teacher Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.11 At the Photo Store</td>
<td>3.19 At the Employment Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.14 Phoning 911</td>
<td>3.20 A Car Accident</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.15 Traveling Plans</td>
<td>3.23 The NSF Cheque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.16 First Day on the Job (Part 1)</td>
<td>3.24 A Job Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.17 First Day on the Job (Part 2)</td>
<td>3.25 Looking for Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.24 Picking Up Prescriptions</td>
<td>3.26 Applying for a Loan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.32 At the Community Center</td>
<td>3.34 An Employee Evaluation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. 4. 1. 3 Pre-Viewing Questions

My choice of pre-listening activities was guided by a number of researchers. Hebert (1991), Herron (1994), and Herron et al (1995, 1998) concur that having some pre-listening activity is more beneficial than no pre-listening activity. Baltova (1994)
and Swaffar and Vlatten (1997) assert that input received in more than one mode allows increased learning. Hebert (1991) found that there was a greater improvement in student listening comprehension when they were able to read the video transcript prior to viewing the video. Herron et al (1995) found that when sentences were read aloud and pictures shown, the listening comprehension of the students improved more than when the sentences were read aloud without any pictures.

Pre-viewing questions were chosen as introductions to the videos. The pre-viewing questions were designed to provide the students with a focus for listening. They were developed and adapted by the teacher using the manuals that accompany the videos, Communicating in English LINC 2 (Cameron et al, 1995) and Communicating in English LINC 3 (Cameron et al., 1995). One set was listened to, or listened to and read prior to each viewing of the video. There were three to five pre-viewing questions per set. Each set took from one to two minutes to listen to, or listen to and read. The pre-viewing questions were tape-recorded.

The following are examples of pre-viewing questions to beginner and upper-beginner videos:

**Beginner – Video 2.24 Picking up Prescriptions**

Pre-viewing Questions – Set 1:

1. Where are they?
2. How many customers come up to the counter?
3. What problems do the customers have?
4. Which customers pick up prescriptions?

**Upper-beginner – Video 3.24 A Job Interview**
Pre-viewing Questions - Set 2:

1. What information did the woman provide?
2. What questions does the woman have for the man?
3. What does the man tell the woman about the company?
4. When will the man contact the woman?

The AO groups listened to a cassette tape of the questions. The AW groups listened to the same cassette tape of the questions and simultaneously read the pre-viewing questions. The pre-viewing questions were printed on two by three feet papers and held up in front of the class for the duration of the cassette tape. There were two sets of pre-viewing questions for each of the 12 videos at the beginner level and two sets of pre-viewing questions for each of the 12 videos at the upper-beginner level.

Please note that no group was told of the conditions of the other groups. That is, for example, the beginner AO group was not told that the other beginner group had an AW condition.

3. 4. 1. 4 Comprehension Questions

Following each viewing of the video, the students listened and responded to comprehension questions. These questions were developed and adapted from Communicating in English LINC 2 (Cameron et al., 1995) and LINC 3 (Cameron et al., 1995) by the teacher. They were designed to test the comprehension of the conversations contained in the videos. There were two sets of comprehension questions. One was a set of true/false questions and the other was a set of multiple choice questions.
After the first viewing of the video the students answered true/false questions. There were eight true/false questions for each beginner video and eight true/false questions for each upper-beginner video. The true/false exercise could not be completed using the information provided in the pre-viewing questions. The true/false exercises were also tape-recorded to keep exposure times consistent among classes. Each exercise took from 3 to 5 minutes to complete.

The following are examples of the true/false questions from a beginner video:

Video 2.24 Picking up Prescriptions

True/False Questions:
1. They are in the drug store.
2. Three customers come up to the counter
3. Customer 1 has a sore throat.
4. Customer 2 picks up his prescription.
5. Customer 2 has a sore throat.
6. Customer 3 does not pick up his prescription.
7. Customer 3 sometimes has a pain in his hand.
8. Customer 4 has a headache.

The students recorded their responses to the questions on answer sheets provided by the teacher. The answer sheets did not have the questions written on them. The answer sheets had spaces for the student's name, the date, the number of the video, the eight responses, and any additional notes the student wanted to write.

After the second viewing, the students answered multiple-choice questions. There were also eight multiple-choice questions for each video at each level. Each
multiple choice question had three possible responses A, B, and C. Like the true/false questions, the multiple-choice exercises could not be completed using the information provided in the pre-viewing questions. They were also tape-recorded. Each exercise took from four to six minutes to complete.

The following are examples of multiple-choice questions from an upper-beginner video:

Video 3.24 A Job Interview

Multiple Choice Questions:

1. When the woman was in Hong Kong, she studied:
   a. at business school
   b. office management
   c. office procedures

2. The woman worked for a company in Hong Kong for:
   a. four years
   b. five years
   c. six years

3. The woman’s duties included:
   a. typing
   b. typing and bookkeeping
   c. typing, bookkeeping, and replacing the receptionist

4. As a volunteer at the community center, the woman works in the office and:
   a. at the front desk
   b. at the front desk and keeping books
c. at the computer

5. The woman is taking:
   a. a bookkeeping course
   b. a book course
   c. a computer course

6. The man says that the company offers good:
   a. benefits
   b. benefits and holidays
   c. benefits, holidays, and opportunities for advancement

7. The woman asks the man if the position is:
   a. full-time
   b. part-time
   c. permanent

8. The man will let the woman know about the position in:
   a. a day
   b. a few days
   c. a few weeks

The answer sheet for the multiple-choice exercise was the same as the one for the true/false exercise.
3. 4. 2 Procedures

The materials designed for the study were piloted on students of the same level and in the same college in January and February 1997. Adjustments were made to the materials at that time.

The administration of the instruments occurred during the students' regularly scheduled listening classes. The students had two 90-minute classes in the listening laboratory each week. The classes were in the mornings and they were scheduled at least one day apart. The beginner AO group, for example, had listening classes on Mondays from 8:30 to 10:00 a.m. and on Thursdays from 10:30 to 12:00 noon. The upper-beginner AO group had listening classes on Mondays from 10:30 to 12:00 noon and on Wednesdays from 8:30 to 10:00 a.m. In each class, the students spent the first half-hour working independently with the books, cassette tapes, and cassette recorders. They were free to work on conversation, stories, plays, songs, vocabulary, or pronunciation. The administration of the instruments occurred following the students' independent work.

Part One of the project was conducted in 15 sessions over a ten-week period. In the first session, the students completed and signed consent forms. Then the questionnaire was administered. In the second session, the listening component of the Comprehensive English Language Test (CELT) Form A was administered. Each student was provided a test booklet and an answer sheet. The test was recorded on a cassette tape. When the tests were complete, the teacher collected and photocopied the answer sheets. The test tape was replayed to the whole class and the test was corrected.

In the next 12 sessions, the beginner classes:
1. received an introduction to new vocabulary;
2. listened to or simultaneously listened to and read the title and the first set of pre-viewing questions;

3. viewed one video from Communicating in English LINC 2 in its entirety without manipulation;

4. completed true/false exercise independently;

5. corrected true/false exercise as a class;

6. listened to or simultaneously listened to and read the second set of pre-viewing questions;

7. viewed the same video as in #2 in its entirety without manipulation;

8. completed multiple-choice exercise independently;

9. corrected multiple-choice exercise as a class.

Each video was played twice because "repeated video viewing offers ideal opportunities to educate students' ears, that is, to encourage them to pay attention to carefully isolated details" (Swaffar & Vlatten, 1997, p. 181). The students were provided duplicate copies of a blank answer sheet and a carbon paper. When the true/false exercise was complete, to prevent the possibility of changing their answers, the teacher collected the original true/false portion of the answer sheets. The exercise was then corrected as a class. The same procedure was followed for the multiple-choice exercise.

The upper-beginner classes followed the same format as above using videos from Communicating in English LINC 3, with the exception of one class. In one upper-beginner class, a student requested that a video be shown a third time. Following the correction of the multiple-choice questions, Video 3.20 A Car Accident was shown a third time to the upper-beginner AO group.
In the final session, the listening component of CELT Form B was administered and corrected following the same procedure as in CELT Form A. All sessions were conducted within an eleven-week period during the months of March, April, and May, 1997.

Table 3.6

Schedule of Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Beginner: AO &amp; AW Groups</th>
<th>Upper-beginner: AO &amp; AW Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Consent Form &amp; Questionnaire</td>
<td>Consent Form &amp; Questionnaire</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>CELT A</td>
<td>CELT A</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Video 2.08</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Video 2.09</td>
<td>Video 2.10</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Video 2.11</td>
<td>Video 3.17</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Video 2.15</td>
<td>Video 3.20</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Video 2.16</td>
<td>Video 3.24</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Video 2.24</td>
<td>Video 3.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>CELT B</td>
<td>CELT B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>Interviews</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. 4. 3 Analysis

The pre- and post-tests and exercises were marked and recorded by the teacher. This data were processed using the mean scores of the pre- and post-tests of each class and the mean scores of the pre- and post-tests of each condition of each level. T-tests were used to analyze the statistical data. “The purpose of the t-test for two independent means is to help the researcher decide whether the observed difference between two sample means arose by chance, or represents a true difference between populations” (Shavelson, 1981, p. 419).

3. 5 Part Two: The Interviews

Part Two of the investigation, the qualitative portion, involved interviewing the students individually to discuss their perceptions of and attitudes to the use of videos on the improvement of ESL student listening comprehension.

3. 5. 1 Interview Questions

The interviews were semi-structured. “When researchers want more specific information, they use a semi-structured (also called focused) format (Merton, Fiske, & Kendall, 1990). The interviewer introduces the topic, then guides the discussion by asking specific questions” (Rubin & Rubin, 1995, p. 5). The interviews were aimed at gaining insights into the pre-viewing questions, the videos, and their value in teaching listening comprehension.

The open-ended interview questions, which were designed by the teacher, consisted of the following and others, for clarification, as necessary.
1. What did you like about the listening comprehension classes we have had for the last 10 weeks?

2. What did you not like about the classes?

3. What was most valuable in the classes?

4. What was least valuable in the classes?

5. Do you have any suggestions for improving the listening comprehension classes?

3. 5. 2 Procedures

The teacher interviewed and audio taped all of the students individually. Initially, all five interview questions were asked. After the first few interviews, however, the questions were limited to #1, #2, and #5. It was difficult for the students to differentiate between what they liked and what was valuable.

The interviews took place in the college during normal school hours. Students were excused from their classes for the duration of the interview. The interviews took from 3 to 15 minutes each, depending on the students' responses.

The interviews were transcribed for analysis. For Part Two of the research project, the qualitative data were examined for consistencies and suggestions. They were coded and summarized in seven areas as reported in Chapter 4.
3.6 Summary

Chapter 3 has outlined the methodology of the study as well as the conduct of the study. It included the hypotheses, research site, subjects, instruments, procedures, scoring, and analysis. Chapter 4 will discuss the findings and observations of the research project.
CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS

In this chapter, the findings and observations will be presented. The findings and observations for Part One, the quantitative portion, and Part Two, the qualitative portion, will be discussed separately.

4.1 Part One: The Experiment

Part One of the study employed a pre-test post-test control group design to explore the effect of two types of pre-viewing questions as introductions to videos on the listening comprehension of beginner and upper-beginner adult learners. There were two conditions at each level. In the audio only (AO) conditions, the students only listened to the pre-viewing questions. In the audio with written script conditions, the students listened to and read the pre-viewing questions. All of the classes began by writing pre-tests; then, over the next nine weeks, completed a number of video exercises under different conditions; and finally took a post-test. The results of the pre- and post-tests follow.
4. 1. 1 Beginner Test Results

Table 4.1

Beginner Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beginner AO Group</th>
<th>Student #</th>
<th>Pre-Test Score</th>
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<td>Beginner AW Group</td>
<td>Student #</td>
<td>Pre-Test Score</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beginner AO Group</th>
<th>Student #</th>
<th>Post-Test Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Beginner AW Group</td>
<td>Student #</td>
<td>Post-Test Score</td>
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<td>29</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note. Maximum score = 50.

4. 1. 2 Beginner Test Analysis

The raw scores as shown in Table 4.1 were statistically analyzed using t-tests.
T-Test #1 sought to discover whether or not there was significant difference between the beginner AO group’s pre-test mean and the beginner AW group’s pre-test mean.

The purpose of T-Test #2 was to determine whether or not the beginner AO group’s pre-test mean and post-test mean were significantly different.

T-Test #3 sought to discover whether or not there was significant difference between the beginner AW group’s pre-test mean and post-test mean.

T-Test #4 was administered to discover whether or not there was significant difference between the beginner AO group’s post-test mean and the beginner AW group’s post-test mean.

**T-Test #1**: This T-Test compares the beginner AO group’s pre-test scores and the beginner AW group’s pre-test scores on Form A of CELT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Beginner AO Group Pre-Test</th>
<th>Beginner AW Group Pre-Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean</strong></td>
<td>15.1429</td>
<td>13.7500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standard Deviation</strong></td>
<td>5.3050</td>
<td>6.4120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standard Error Mean</strong></td>
<td>2.0051</td>
<td>1.8510</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Statistical analysis of the beginner AO group’s pre-test and the beginner AW group’s pre-test mean resulted in a non-significant difference between the means ($t = .485, p > .05$). Hypothesis 1 states that the beginner AO and the beginner AW groups will show no significant differences in the same pre-test. It was supported by the data. This suggests that the listening comprehension ability of both groups was very similar as the study began.

**T-Test #2**: This T-Test compares the beginner AO group’s pre-test scores on Form A of CELT and its post-test scores on Form B of CELT.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Beginner AO Group Pre-Test</th>
<th>Beginner AO Group Post-Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>15.1429</td>
<td>17.5714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>5.3050</td>
<td>6.7788</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Error Mean</td>
<td>2.0051</td>
<td>2.5622</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Statistical analysis of the beginner AO group’s pre-test mean and post-test mean results in a non-significant difference between the means ($t = .897, p > .05$). Hypothesis 2 states that the beginner AO group will show significant gain in the post-test over the pre-test. This hypothesis was not supported by the data. There was no significant difference between the pre- and post-test scores of the beginner AO group indicating that the listening comprehension ability did not improve significantly following the audio only treatment of the pre-viewing questions.

**T-Test #3:** This T-Test compares the beginner AW group’s pre-test scores on Form A of CELT and its post-test scores on Form B of CELT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Beginner AW Group Pre-Test</th>
<th>Beginner AW Group Post-Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>13.7500</td>
<td>20.3333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>6.4120</td>
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<tr>
<td>Standard Error Mean</td>
<td>1.8510</td>
<td>2.1962</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Statistical analysis of the beginner AW group’s pre-test and post-test means resulted in a significant difference between the two means ($t = 3.205, p < .05$). Hypothesis 3 states that the beginner AW group would show significant gain in the post-test over the pre-test. This hypothesis was supported by the data. There was a significant gain in the beginner AW group’s post-test over the pre-test indicating that the listening comprehension ability did improve significantly following the audio with written script treatment of the pre-viewing questions.
T-Test #4: This T-Test compares the beginner AO group's post-test scores and the beginner AW group's post-test scores on Form B of CELT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Beginner AO Group Post-Test</th>
<th>Beginner AW Group Post-Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>17.5714</td>
<td>20.3333</td>
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<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>6.7788</td>
<td>7.6078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Error Mean</td>
<td>2.5622</td>
<td>2.1962</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Statistical analysis of the beginner AO group's and the beginner AW group's post-test means resulted in a non-significant difference between the means ($t = -.793, p > .05$). Hypothesis 4 states that the beginner AW group will show a significantly higher gain in progress than the beginner AO group in the same post-test. This hypothesis was not supported by the data. There was no significant difference between the beginner AW group mean and the beginner AO group mean in the post-test. This indicates that the listening comprehension ability of the beginner group that received the audio with written script treatment of the pre-viewing questions did not progress more significantly than the listening comprehension ability of the beginner group that received the audio only treatment of the pre-viewing questions.

As hypothesized, both beginner groups started at a similar level. The AO group did not show significant improvement in their listening comprehension ability over the course of the study as was hypothesized. The AW group, however, did show improvement in their listening comprehension ability over the course of the study as was hypothesized. Statistical analysis showed that at the beginning level, there was no significant difference between the AO group and the AW group in the post-test. However, comparing the pre- and post-test scores of the individual students, only 2 students out of 7 (28%) from the AO group gained while 11 out of 12 students (91%) in
the AW group gained in the post-test over the pre-test. Although statistically the gains of
the AW group were not significantly greater than the AO group, a larger number of
students in the AW group increased in their post-test scores, suggesting that the listening
comprehension abilities of the AW group could have increased as a result of the
treatment.

4.1.3 Upper-Beginner Test Results

Table 4.2

Upper-Beginner Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student #</th>
<th>Pre-Test Score</th>
<th>Student #</th>
<th>Pre-Test Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
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<th>Student #</th>
<th>Post-Test Score</th>
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<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Maximum score = 50.
4. 1. 4 Upper-Beginner Test Analysis

The data were statistically analyzed employing t-tests.

T-Test #5 sought to discover whether or not there was significant differences between the upper-beginner AO group's pre-test mean and the upper-beginner AW group's pre-test mean.

The purpose of T-Test #6 was to determine whether or not the upper-beginner AO group's pre-test mean and post-test mean were significantly different.

T-Test #7 sought to discover whether or not there was significant difference between the upper-beginner AW group's pre-test mean and post-test mean.

T-Test #8 was administered to discover whether or not there was significant difference between the upper-beginner AO group's post-test mean and the upper-beginner AW group's post-test mean.

**T-Test #5:** This T-Test compares the upper-beginner AO group's pre-test scores and the upper-beginner AW group's pre-test scores on Form A of CELT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Upper-Beginner AO Group Pre-Test</th>
<th>Upper-Beginner AW Group Pre-Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>22.5000</td>
<td>26.5714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>5.5806</td>
<td>5.3184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Error Mean</td>
<td>1.9730</td>
<td>2.0102</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Statistical analysis of the upper-beginner AO group's pre-test mean and the upper-beginner AW group's pre-test mean resulted in a non-significant difference between the means ($t = -1.440$, $p > .05$). Hypothesis 5 which states that at the upper-beginner level, the AO group and the AW group will show no significant differences in
the same pre-test was supported by the data. The result indicated that both groups are starting at similar listening comprehension ability levels at the beginning of the study.

**T-Test #6:** This T-Test compares the upper-beginner AO group’s pre-test scores on Form A of CELT and its post-test scores on Form B of CELT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Upper-Beginner AO Group Pre-Test</th>
<th>Upper-Beginner AO Group Post-Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>22.5000</td>
<td>25.6250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>5.5806</td>
<td>8.9273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Error Mean</td>
<td>1.9730</td>
<td>3.1563</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Statistical analysis of the upper-beginner AO group’s pre-test and post-test means resulted in a non-significant difference between the means ($t = 2.076, p > .05$). Hypothesis 6 states that the upper-beginner AO group will show no significant gain in the same post-test. This hypothesis was not supported by the data. There is no significant difference between the pre- and post-test scores of the upper-beginner AO group indicating that the listening comprehension ability did not improve significantly following the audio only treatment of the pre-viewing questions.

**T-Test #7:** This T-Test compares the upper-beginner AW group’s pre-test scores on Form A of CELT and its post-test scores on Form B of CELT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Upper-Beginner AW Group Pre-Test</th>
<th>Upper-Beginner AW Group Post-Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>26.5714</td>
<td>31.4286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>5.3184</td>
<td>8.1416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Error Mean</td>
<td>2.0102</td>
<td>3.0772</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Statistical analysis of the upper-beginner AW group’s pre-test and post-test means resulted in a significant difference in the means ($t = 2.691, p < .05$). Hypothesis 7
which states that the upper-beginner AW group will show significant gain in the post-test over the pre-test was supported by the data. There was a significant gain in the post-test score over the pre-test score of the upper-beginner group indicating that their listening comprehension ability did improve significantly following the audio with written script treatment of the pre-viewing questions.

**T-Test #8:** This T-Test compares the upper-beginner AO group’s post-test scores and the upper-beginner AW group’s post-test scores on Form B of CELT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Upper-Beginner AO Group Post-Test</th>
<th>Upper-Beginner AW Group Post-Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>25.6250</td>
<td>31.4286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>8.9273</td>
<td>8.1416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Error Mean</td>
<td>3.1563</td>
<td>3.0772</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Statistical analysis of the upper-beginner AO group’s post-test mean with the upper-beginner AW group’s post-test mean resulted in a non-significant difference between the two means ($t = -1.308, p > .05$). Hypothesis 8, which states that the upper-beginner AW group will show a significantly higher gain than the upper-beginner AO group in the same post-test, was not supported by the data. There was no significant difference between the AO group and the AW group means in the post-tests at the upper-beginner level. This suggests that the listening comprehension ability of the upper-beginner group that received the audio with written script treatment of the pre-viewing questions did not progress significantly more than the listening comprehension ability of the upper-beginner group that received the audio only treatment of the pre-viewing questions.
Statistical analysis points to the fact that the upper-beginner groups started with similar listening comprehension abilities. The upper-beginner AO group did not make significant progress in their listening comprehension ability over the course of the study as was hypothesized. The upper-beginner AW group made significant progress in their listening comprehension ability over the study as was hypothesized. There was no significant difference between the upper-beginner AO and the upper-beginner AW groups’ listening comprehension ability by the end of the study as was hypothesized.

However, comparing the pre- and post-test scores of the individual students, only 4 students out of 8 (50%) from the AO group gained while 6 out of 7 students (85%) from the AW group gained. Although statistically the gains of the AW group were not significantly greater than the AO group, a larger number of students in the AW group gained in their post-test score over their pre-test score suggesting that the students in the AW groups could have gained in their listening comprehension abilities.

In summary, at both levels, the AO and AW groups started at the similar listening comprehension abilities. At both levels, the AO groups did not improve significantly in listening comprehension while the AW groups did improve significantly in listening comprehension. At both levels, the difference in the improvement in listening skills between the AW group and the AO group was not significant. However, as mentioned, based on a comparison of the pre- and post-test scores of the individual students, in both levels a greater percentage of the students from the AW group than the AO group increased their listening comprehension ability.
4. 2 Part Two: The Interviews and Reflections

Part Two of the study, the qualitative portion, was designed to investigate the perceptions of the students on the listening comprehension classes for the duration of the experiment. The students were asked what they liked and did not like about the presentation of the videos and about the videos themselves. They were also asked if they had any suggestions for teaching listening comprehension. Their responses can be summarized in seven themes. They responded to the methodology, pre- and post-tests, pre-viewing questions, videos, comprehension questions, vocabulary, and speed of delivery.

4. 2. 1 Observation One

The students were positive about the methodology used for conducting listening comprehension classes but found room for improvement.

Of the 34 students interviewed, 21 commented on the methodology used in the listening comprehension classes during the period of the research project. The responses were favorable. They came from almost an equal number of beginner and upper-beginner students.

Note that the students' comments will be reproduced in italics for the remainder of this thesis. Please note that they are not edited for grammar or punctuation. Please note, also, that not all of the 21 respondents addressed every theme.

Two beginner students said

*When we, when we watching TV, um, it's good for us and when you asking some, some, you have some question for, um, for us, if we
watching and how much we understand from this watch TV we answer
and I like true/false questions and choose A, B, C.

If take this method while I suppose, I, I mean this very useful practice for
language.

Another beginner student, who was a University Professor in Ukraine, stated that
This methologic is very good.

Comments from four of the upper-beginner students follow

I think it's every, every kind this exercise is good for learn students. For
me, everything is good.

I mean everything is helpful. Uh, I have opportunity for getting better my
listening skills. I feel my English getting better.

Um, I like this system. It's very good. It's not too hard, not too slowly, it's
okay.

For me and for my classmates, I think also very important to listening
and put on that paper what you hear. It's for very good because I can't
check myself what I hear but, um, when we did that exercise I can check
what I hear.

They expressed reasons for their positive comments. A number of students
pointed out that they liked being able to monitor their progress. One beginner student
said

I, better, better maybe, now I better listen than two, two months ago.

Comments from upper-beginner students included
I'm glad that we have this exercise because I know that my English is improving before two months.

I think was good this exercise because we had more attention and we have concentration and think more in English and for me was very good because every week we can check the progress.

The notion of having to concentrate was stated by other students as well. Two beginner students claimed that

*I like all these things because when I listening I pay attention and I must understand all the word so that I now I became understand the TV and I am surprised.*

*in that moment I concentrate for the exercise*

An upper-beginner student said

*I learn, I learn much when I doing exercise because I must think.*

In addition to talking about what they liked and did not like, the students made some suggestions for improving the methodology. Two students requested more exercises. Both students were beginner students and they said

*Uh, most valuable is, I think maybe to do more exercises about video tape.*

*You must ask us more, more questions because ask and answer this is, I think that, the way to learn everything, ask and answer, yea.*

Three students suggested that I make the exercises more difficult. A beginner student said

*Maybe you hard exercise change*
When I asked if she wanted me to make it more difficult she said

Yes. I understand everything.

The upper-beginner student said that

It pushes me to learn. I'd like to have more difficult.

The same student also suggested that we have a test each week.

Another upper-beginner student suggested that we have more than one video per day. She said

Good for our mind, it's good if us more than one per day.

One beginner student said that she would like to receive a paper with the exercise on it. She said

I, I think if you teach me watch then exercise, I like give me paper

because, um, we, we don’t understand we can go home then review.

She went on to say that if the video was difficult that she would like the paper before viewing the video, but that if the video was easy that she would like the paper after viewing the video. She said that she would like to take it home to study. The same student also suggested that we have the exercises the day after viewing the video.

One final suggestion was to eliminate the exercises entirely and talk about the video. This student felt that a class discussion on the video would be more valuable. She said

We can talk about the video. ... I like to talk about it.

One exchange between the interviewer and a beginner student suggests that she would find a recap of the video would be valuable:

Interviewer: So, do you have any other suggestions?
Student: *We haven't time, but sometimes we must explain what we, explain situation, it's conversation, but sometimes.*

Interviewer: Are you suggesting that the video be explained before you watch it?

Student: *After.*

Interviewer: So, go over it again?

Student: *Short explain.*

Interviewer: After the true/false questions? At the very end?

Student: *Yes, when test finished.*

4. 2. 2 Observation Two

A few students found the pre- and post-test valuable but a number of them found the tests difficult.

Four students said that they found the tests valuable. Three of those students were upper beginners. Two of them stated

*I like everything especially test, yea, test, I like test. I prefer test than exercise. I think it's test for me, for myself is better. It was better for improve my English than yea sometimes exercise help me, yea, to improve my English but test, it, it was, better that exercise, yea more help.*

*The practice exercise and the final test very nice for me and the exercise helped me to do last test better that first.*
On the other hand, six students claimed that they found that the tests were too difficult. Three of those students were beginner and three were upper beginner. Comments from both levels of students were similar

Test was very difficult.

No, test, no good. My don’t understand how, how to. Test

Our finished last test was very difficult for me

Yes. The first test and the last test were much more difficult

Yes, very difficult.

4.2.3 Observation Three

Few commented on the pre-viewing questions: one said that they were too fast and another found them useful in answering the comprehension questions.

There were only two comments on the pre-viewing questions. The following is an exchange between the interviewer and student from the beginner AW group:

Student: I’m sorry, for me you very quickly show questions. I first and second questions read and after no because I very slowly read.

Interviewer: Okay, so it’s too fast?

Student: It’s only for me, but many, many student good read, yes.

Interviewer: Okay, if it’s too fast for you that’s what I need to know.

Student: I can’t stop many students.

The other comment on the pre-viewing questions was by an upper-beginner student who claimed that they would help her with the true/false and multiple-choice questions. She said
Before when we just beginning, began to our exercise like not big test like exercise for preview question and multiple choice before I didn’t understand I just wrote on my paper, wrote down on what it’s mean preview, preview questions, but after this maybe, maybe, after, when we I know when we have to finish our exercise and when Joan ask on the tape preview questions and after this I just understand that it’s help for us that it’s will be exercise about this one and I like this and help more.

4. 2. 4 Observation Four

The students liked the videos and found the content of interest to their daily lives.

There were a number of positive responses from the students on the videos. Twelve said that they liked the videos. Nine of these were beginner students. One beginner student liked the videos, in his words

Because maybe it similar like life.

Opinions from other beginner students were

Watch video very good.

I like, um, the video, VCR, um.

But I like, really I like video.

The upper-beginner student responses were a bit more explicit

I like when I watch TV and I understand much but when I hear only question and sometimes I don’t understand, I can’t hear. It’s difficult for me, only listening
Watch video is I think, I didn’t hear it, but I saw the watch, I saw the watch, I understand the means but I didn’t hear it.

I don’t every, anyway it’s okay for student anyway they have to listen more difficult than they used to in class because in class teacher, of course, say not difficult, but anyway when student go outside and they speak more difficult speech when in class and it’s good to see the movie like what you show us.

Four students said that the topics of the videos were generally good. One of the two beginner students said that they help stay here life.

The other beginner student said

I learn about medicine, uh, conversation about two people and many people.

The LINC 2 videos specifically mentioned by the beginner students included At the Photo Store, First Day on the Job (Part 1), First Day on the Job (Part 2), and Picking up Prescriptions. The upper-beginner students liked the following LINC 3 videos Looking for a Job, At the Employment Office, A Car Accident, A Job Interview, Looking for Work, and An Employee Evaluation.

One upper-beginner student mentioned that if he was familiar with the topic, it was easier to understand the video.

An exchange between another upper-beginner student and the interviewer on A Job Interview went like this:
Student: Yes, I glad of watch. Yea, because I learn new words for me, and now I know what kind of question can ask an interview, when I saw interview and one woman search a job about computer assistance or secretary like this one and I know what interview what kind of interview, what kind of dresses can I wear in an interview.

Interviewer: Great!

Student: And I talked about this with my husband and I said him and now he knows after me what we did in our school and what movie saw, what kind of movie we see.

The same student said that she found the videos Opening a Bank Account and An Employee Evaluation quite difficult. She also mentioned that she did not find A Parent-Teacher Meeting very meaningful as she doesn’t have any children.

4.2.5 Observation Five

The students were divided in their opinions on the comprehension questions.

In total, eight students claimed that they liked the true/false questions. Four of those were beginner students. One of the beginner students said I like true/false questions. True/false is very easy.

Upper-beginner students stated I like this true/false. Only I like, only.

False/true is best, I think, best hearing. I understand more easy the false/true.

Another upper-beginner student said that she liked the true/false questions a little. Yet another upper-beginner student claimed that she did not like only listening.
I like, I like the paper to do exercise, exercise. I didn't like to hear when I
multiple choice and decide, decide which it true and which is false. ...

Because I always I, I need both. I didn't understand because I, I difficult
to hear to understand. Always I guess, I guess.

What she was saying was that she wanted the questions written on a paper. She was
miming a page in front of herself.

The same student who would have liked a paper in front of herself for the
ture/false questions said the same thing about the multiple-choice questions.

Three other students did not care for the multiple-choice questions. One beginner
student said

_Sometimes multiple choice difficult sometimes no difficult._

An upper-beginner student stated that

_This my problem this no I like this A, B, C, this three exercise, this no
like, this sometimes understand, sometimes no understand._

Another student felt that they were too long, that there was too much to listen to.

A total of seven students, however, claimed to like the multiple-choice questions.

Again, there was a relatively close split between the beginner and the upper-beginner
students. Comments from both levels were comparable

_It's good multiple choice._

_I like when I can choose A, B, C. Yes._
4. 2. 6 Observation Six

Some students learned new vocabulary, but more students were concerned about their lack of vocabulary.

One beginner and two upper-beginner students stated that they learned new vocabulary. The beginner student said

*I like because I learn many, many new words.*

The upper-beginner students stated

*Yes, I glad of watch. Yea, because I learn many new words for me.*

*I learn new vocabulary.*

Eight students, however, found that their limited vocabulary created a problem for them in listening comprehension classes. Again, four of the students were beginners and four were upper-beginners. Comments from some of the beginner students follow

*I think, for me, I need more words, new words. I, I don’t know many English words, translate, and I think in our lessons better for me to translate many, many words and explain.*

*maybe, the, the difficult for us new vocabulary, yea when you have new vocabulary we can’t understand, we must ask you what’s meaning this vocabulary, yea.*

The upper-beginner students said

*Sometimes I couldn’t understand because my vocabulary not, it wasn’t, it wasn’t so good.*

*And now I now I study only few months English and I don’t have enough vocabulary. Sometimes it’s many new words and I don’t understand.*
Sometimes too much new word.

One beginner student suggested repeating the vocabulary and its meaning.

Another beginner student suggested

*maybe to talk to teacher new vocabulary something like that.*

Three students suggested that the teacher write the new vocabulary on the blackboard.

A beginner student, the former professor from Ukraine, said

*I don't understand your word and maybe we must ask you after questions new words, and you maybe please write new word because spelling is very important new word on the desk and when we understand what you ask we can work. It's second, it's first and second same. After test, while test we must write new word on our paper an after we must ask you what is it, and you translate new vocabulary, yes.*

A beginner student suggested that he would like more vocabulary

*also on the listening, maybe new words, new words, maybe new words, about while class listening, while class new words, yes.*

4.2.7 Observation Seven

*Students found it difficult to understand the videos, the pre-viewing questions, and the comprehension questions because of the speed of delivery.*

A total of three, one beginner and two upper-beginner, students felt that the English spoken on the videos was too fast. The beginner student said

*On tape on video tape, this person talk ... maybe quickly?*
The upper-beginner student put it another way

Two repeat, video cassette, I'm understand. Okay. No repeat sometimes understand, sometimes no understand video. First push video sometimes understand. Only repeat, that's okay, I'm understand.

A total of eight students said that the English on the cassette tapes was spoken too quickly. Three of those students were beginners. Some of their comments went as follows

Video exercises likes if you slowly speak I understand. Quickly speak I little understand.

Um. Tape is difficult. Difficult for listening, very often.

Five of the upper-beginner students found the questions on the cassette tapes were spoken too fast. That includes the pre-viewing, the true/false, and the multiple-choice questions. One exchange between the interviewer and an upper-beginner student follows

Student: Too fast for me because I must think and then when I think one exercise and doing I hear another exercise and I can't hear another. It's too quickly for me

Interviewer: So that's one thing that you didn't like. It was too fast.

Student: Yea, but I like. Only it's too fast for me. If will be slowly it's good, I like.

Another exchange between the interviewer and an upper-beginner student went as follows

Student: I don't know, maybe for us it's quickly, a little quickly?

Interviewer: Too fast?

Student: Yes. Fast.
Interviewer: Okay. Is the video too fast or the tape?

Student: *No the tape.*

Interviewer: Alright. So maybe a little slower? Any other suggestions?

Student: *And I think the video, yes.*

Interviewer: The video is fast, too? The video?

Student: *Yes. Yes.*

4. 2. 8 **Summary of Part Two**

Of the 34 participants interviewed for the study, the majority (21) of them said that they liked the methodology that was used during the study, including an equal proportion of beginner and upper-beginner students. There was also an even division of the positive and negative responses to the comprehension questions and vocabulary between the beginner and upper-beginner students.

There were concerns about the difficulty of the pre-test and the post-test although some students (mostly upper-beginner) claimed that they liked the pre-test and post-tests. Another concern expressed by the students in general and upper-beginner students in particular was the speed of delivery of the pre-viewing, true/false, and multiple-choice questions.

4. 2. 8 **The Teacher’s Reflections**

Throughout Part One of the study, I made every effort to ensure that the beginner classes and the upper-beginner classes received the same treatment. Both beginner and
upper-beginner classes were introduced to the same vocabulary; had identical pre-
viewing, true/false, and multiple-choice questions; viewed the video the same number of
times; spent equal time on each segment of the exercise; and asked questions at the end.
The classes felt somewhat unnatural. Although I covered the same material in the two
beginner classes and in the two upper-beginner classes, I do not believe that it was as
meaningful for the students as it could have been. In general, my classes are somewhat
spontaneous and more interactive. I draw on the students’ experiences, answer questions
as they arise, and have students talk to one another. None of the students mentioned
anything about the highly structured classes during their interviews.

I found the interviews to be very valuable. I gained insights into what my
students liked and did not like in their listening comprehension classes. Additionally,
they offered some interesting suggestions for teaching listening comprehension.

Although I found the interviews to be valuable, I am aware that they could be
biased. The students were interviewed by their teacher. It is logical to assume that they
did not describe everything that they did not like about the listening comprehension
classes. Before starting the interviews, I thought about this bias. I chose to conduct them
myself because I wanted to talk to my students, and time and money were
considerations. In the end, I am glad that I did. I gained insights into teaching listening
comprehension and I became closer to my students. It was an opportunity for me to learn
about their problems and their aspirations. It was also a chance for me to thank them;
acknowledge their success; answer questions; and provide reassurance, support, and
encouragement.
4.3 Summary

The findings and observations from Part One and Part Two of the study were presented in this chapter. The following chapter will summarize the study. It will include a summary and discussion of the results of the study, propose a model for teaching ESL listening comprehension, provide the limitations of the study, and offer suggestions for further research.
CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND SUGGESTIONS

In this chapter I am going to state the problem, summarize the study, summarize and discuss the results of the study, propose a model for teaching ESL listening comprehension, provide the limitations of the study, and offer suggestions for further research.

5.1 Statement of the Problem

Researchers and teachers today, "agree that oral comprehension skills are a crucial component of the ability to communicate successfully and appropriately in a target language" (Baltova, 1994, p. 507). As an ESL teacher I can verify that students, too, are aware of the importance of listening comprehension skills and that they are concerned about their inability to understand spoken English.

The significance of listening comprehension in second language acquisition has been readily accepted (Danaher, 1996; Mendelsohn, 1994; Morley, 1990). However, methods for effectively teaching listening comprehension have not been established. The problem is that there is little empirical research in teaching methodologies in the field. Although there are many resources on teaching ESL listening comprehension, there are few studies supporting their use.
5. 2 Summary of the Study

My goal, as an ESL teacher and researcher, is to discover classroom tasks that enhance the listening comprehension skills of my students. My students are beginner and upper-beginner adult ESL learners. They are studying English through the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program. LINC is a federal government program that enables immigrants and refugees to learn English. The immigrants and refugees come from a variety of countries. Hence their nationalities and first languages vary. Additionally, there are differences in their ages, genders, numbers of languages, levels of education, occupations, and amounts of formal English training. Although there are many differences among my students, they have one thing in common. They are all studying English so that they will be able to function in their new communities and they are all concerned about their listening comprehension abilities.

In order to discover classroom tasks that enhance my ESL students' listening comprehension skills, I chose to conduct a two-part study. Part One was quantitative while Part Two was qualitative in nature. In Part One I examined the effects of two conditions of pre-viewing questions as introductions to videos on beginner and upper-beginner adult ESL learners. More specifically the purpose of Part One was to investigate:

1. the effects of audio only and audio with written script pre-listening questions as introductions to videos on beginner adult ESL learners' listening comprehension; and
2. the effects of audio only and audio with written script pre-listening questions as introductions to videos on upper-beginner adult ESL learners' listening comprehension.
The purpose of Part Two was to explore the perceptions and attitudes of the learners and teacher on the methodology and materials used in Part One of the research project. The materials included the pre- and post-tests, the videos, and the accompanying pre-viewing and comprehension activities.

The data for the study were collected during March, April, and May, 1997 in a private college in Burnaby, British Columbia. Part One of the study was conducted in the listening laboratory and Part Two was conducted in an available office in the college.

Forty-nine students in four classes participated in the study. Two beginner and two upper-beginner classes were randomly selected for the study. The beginner classes were arbitrarily assigned to an audio only (AO) group and an audio with written script (AW) group. The upper-beginner classes were also arbitrarily assigned to an AO group and an AW group. Ultimately, data from 34 subjects were used in the analysis, 7 students in the beginner AO group, 12 students in the beginner AW group, 8 students in the upper-beginner AO group, and 7 students in the upper-beginner AW group. Subjects were deleted from the study if they were absent for two or more classes, or if they discontinued their studies in the LINC program.

Part One was conducted during the students' regular listening class times. It began with a questionnaire. Data from the questionnaires were compiled into charts providing subject profiles. Following the questionnaire, an experimental study was conducted to determine the effectiveness of audio only and audio with written script pre-viewing questions as introductions to videos on adult ESL listening comprehension. The effectiveness of the two types of pre-viewing questions was tested at the beginner and the upper-beginner levels.
A pre-test post-test control group design was used in the investigation. This included a pre-test, a series of 12 exercises, and a post-test. The pre- and post-test were the listening components of the Comprehensive English Language Test (CELT) Forms A and B (1986) respectively. The exercises consisted of videos and corresponding questions. The videos were selected from Communicating in English LINC 2 (Cameron et al., 1995) and LINC 3 (Cameron et al., 1995). The LINC 2 videos were used for the beginner classes and the LINC 3 videos were used for the upper-beginner classes. Each exercise involved:

1. exposure to one set of pre-viewing questions;
2. viewing a video;
3. responding to one set of true/false comprehension questions;
4. exposure to a second set of pre-viewing questions;
5. viewing the same video a second time; and
6. responding to one set of multiple choice comprehension questions.

Generally, there were four pre-viewing questions in each set. In four sets, however, there were three questions, and in six sets there were five questions. The questions were aimed at focusing the attention of the students on specific information contained in the videos. One beginner class and one upper-beginner class received the audio only (AO) treatment of the pre-viewing questions. That is, they only listened to a tape-recording of the questions. The other beginner and upper-beginner classes received the audio with a written script (AW) treatment of the same questions. That is, they listened to the same tape-recording of the questions and while they were listening, a large sheet with the same questions printed on it was held in front of the class so that they were
able to read them as well. After viewing the video, the students answered eight true/false comprehension questions and multiple-choice questions. Each multiple-choice question had three possible answers.

Part One of the research project was conducted in the listening laboratory during listening comprehension classes over a ten-week period. Each group had two listening comprehension classes per week. In the first week, the students completed the consent forms and questionnaires. In the second week, they wrote the pre-test and began the exercises. They completed the exercises, with a maximum of one per class, over the next seven weeks. In the last week, they wrote the post-test.

Scores from the pre- and post-test of all four classes were recorded. T-tests were used in the analysis to determine the effectiveness of audio only and audio with written script pre-viewing questions as introductions to videos. The analyses of the beginner classes and upper-beginner classes were done independently of one another.

For Part Two of the study, the teacher individually interviewed each of the students. This part of the study was conducted during the students’ normal school hours. Thirty-two of the interviews were conducted in person in an available office in the college. Two of the interviews were conducted over the telephone. The interviews were semi-structured. The students were asked what they liked and did not like about Part One of the study. Additionally, they were asked if they had any suggestions for teaching listening comprehension. The interviews were audio taped. They were later transcribed, coded, and summarized in seven areas. Part Two also included perceptions and reflections of the teacher.
5. 3 Summary and Discussion of the Results of Part One

Part One, the quantitative portion of the study, involved a pre-test, a series of 12 videos with accompanying exercises, and a post-test. T-tests were done on the pre- and post-test scores to determine whether or not the hypotheses were supported. A significance level of .05 was used. This is most often used in this type of test (Shavelson, 1981). A summary of the research findings study follows.

Hypothesis One was supported by the data. Statistical analysis of the data showed that there was a non-significant difference between the beginner AO and the beginner AW groups’ pre-test scores \((t = .485, p > .05)\), indicating that the listening comprehension ability of each group was not significantly different at the beginning of the study. Both groups started at approximately the same listening comprehension ability.

Hypothesis Two was not supported by the data. Statistical analysis of the data showed that there was a non-significant difference between the pre-and post-test scores of the beginner AO group \((t = .879, p > .05)\), indicating that the listening comprehension ability did not improve significantly following the audio only treatment of the pre-viewing questions.

Hypothesis Three was supported by the data. Statistical analysis of the data showed that there was a significant difference between the pre- and post-test scores of the beginner AW group \((t = 3.205, p < .05)\), indicating that the listening comprehension ability did improve significantly following the audio with written script treatment of the pre-viewing questions.

Hypothesis Four was not supported by the data. Statistical analysis of the data showed that there was no significant difference between the post-test scores of the beginner AO
and the beginner AW groups \( (t = -0.793, p > 0.05) \). This indicates that the difference in the improvement in listening skills between the beginner AW group and the beginner AO group was not significant. Both groups started at approximately the same listening comprehension ability.

Hypothesis Five was supported by the data. Statistical analysis of the data showed that there was a non-significant difference between the two groups pre-test scores \( (t = -1.440, p > 0.05) \), indicating that their listening comprehension ability of each group was not significantly different at the beginning of the study.

Hypothesis Six was not supported by the data. Statistical analysis of the data showed that there was a non-significant difference between the pre- and post-test scores of the upper-beginner AO group \( (t = 2.076, p > 0.05) \), indicating that the listening comprehension ability did not improve significantly following the audio only treatment of the pre-viewing questions.

Hypothesis Seven was supported by the data. Statistical analysis of the data showed that there was a significant difference between the pre- and post-test scores of the upper-beginner AW group \( (t = 2.691, p > 0.05) \), indicating that the listening comprehension ability did improve significantly following the audio with written script treatment of the pre-viewing questions.

Hypothesis Eight was not supported by the data. Statistical analysis of the data showed that there was a non-significant difference between the post-test scores of the upper-beginner AO and the upper-beginner AW groups \( (t = -1.308, p > 0.05) \). This indicates that the difference in the improvement in listening skills between the upper-beginner AW group and the upper-beginner AO group was not significant.
Results indicate that while the AO and the AW groups at both levels started at similar levels of listening comprehension, the AW group showed a significant increase in their levels of listening comprehension. These results lend support to previous research by Hebert (1990) and Herron et al. (1995). Hebert (1990) found that the addition of a written component to the pre-listening activity enhanced the listening comprehension ability of his subjects. Hebert (1990), however, found a more significant gain in the listening comprehension ability of the treatment with the written component over the control than was found in the audio with written script over the audio only in this research project. This difference may be due to the fact that the students in Hebert's study had high reading abilities while the students in the present study had a range of reading abilities.

The results of the current research also support research by Herron et al. (1995). In both studies, when the pre-listening activities were provided in more than one mode there was gain in listening comprehension ability.

Results of the statistical analysis of this study also showed that the gain in the post-test over the pre-test of both levels was not significant. This may be due to the difference in the group sizes or the small number of participants. If, however, we compare the pre- and post-test scores of the students in each of the groups we find that in the beginner AO group, only 2 out of 7 students (28%) gained in the post-test over the pre-test, while in the beginner AW group, 11 out of 12 students (91%) gained. Similarly, in the upper-beginner AO group, only 4 out of 8 students (50%) gained, while in the upper-beginner AW group, 6 out of 7 students (85%) gained in the post-test over the pre-test. Clearly, most of the students gained in listening comprehension ability. Although
this was the case, we cannot assume that the gains were a direct result of the treatments in the study.

5. 4 Summary and Discussion of the Results of Part Two

Part Two involved interviewing each student individually. Overall the responses in the interviews were favorable. Of the 34 participants interviewed for the study, 21 of them said they liked the methodology that was used during the study. An equal proportion of beginner and upper-beginner students responded this way. In addition to saying they liked the pre- and post-tests, pre-viewing questions, videos, and comprehension questions, three students mentioned they liked being able to monitor their progress and two students mentioned that they had to concentrate.

Of the students who responded to the question, three upper-beginner students and one beginner student claimed that they liked the pre- and post-tests. A larger number of upper-beginner students may have liked the pre- and post-tests because of their greater comprehension of the content. However, a number of students said they found both the pre-test and the post-test too difficult. The fact that students found the tests difficult may have had an affect on the outcome of the study.

There were two responses on the pre-viewing questions. One upper-beginner student commented on the fact that the pre-viewing questions assisted in answering the true/false and multiple choice questions. This higher proficiency student used the pre-viewing questions as they were intended to be used. They were to focus the attention of the listener on specific information. One beginner student from the audio with written script group students claimed that she was unable to finish reading the pre-viewing
questions in the time allotted. This suggests that the less proficient student was relying more on her reading skills than her listening skills.

Many students responded favorably to the videos. Videos are a relatively close representation of real life and as such offer opportunities to learn the language and the culture. There was, however, a significant difference in the number of students from each level that liked the videos. Three times more beginner students than upper-beginner students said that they liked the videos. Nine beginner students said that they liked the videos. "Learners will want to watch even if comprehension is limited, because video is intrinsically interesting" (Lonergan, 1984; cited in Baltova, 1994, p. 511). Interestingly, none of the students said that they did not like the videos. This may be because videos tend to be intrinsically interesting, regardless of the level of comprehension of the viewer (Lonergan, 1984; cited in Baltova, 1994).

The beginner students specifically mentioned four LINC 2 videos At the Photo Store, First Day on the Job (Part 1), First Day on the Job (Part 2), and Picking up Prescriptions. Three upper-beginner students also liked the videos. The LINC 3 videos that the upper-beginner students talked about were Looking for a Job, At the Employment Office, A Car Accident, A Job Interview, and Looking for Work, the contents of which are related to the students' everyday lives.

The responses on the comprehension questions varied. Four beginner and four upper-beginner students claimed that they liked the true/false questions. One student said that he preferred these questions because there were fewer choices. One beginner and two upper-beginner students said that they did not like the true/false questions. Four beginner and three upper-beginner students said that they liked the multiple-choice questions while
one beginner and three upper-beginner students said that they did not like them. Could comprehension have been a factor in whether the students responded favorably to the true/false or multiple choice questions? Could this possible lack of comprehension have affected the results of the study?

The responses to the vocabulary varied as well. One beginner and two upper-beginner students stated that they learned new vocabulary. Eight students, an equal number of beginner and upper-beginner students, however, claimed that they had difficulty understanding some of the vocabulary in the questions and videos. Could perhaps a lack of understanding of the vocabulary have affected the findings of the study?

There was a significant difference in the numbers of beginner and upper-beginner students that felt that the speed of delivery was too fast. Approximately twice as many upper-beginner than beginner students found the videos, and the pre-viewing, true/false, and multiple choice questions were too fast. If the delivery was too fast, were the results of the study affected?

In addition to describing what they liked and did not like, the students also offered some suggestions for improving listening comprehension classes. Interestingly, more beginner than upper-beginner students offered suggestions. Two beginner students said that they would like more exercises. One proposed that they receive a paper with the exercise on it. Another suggested that the exercises be eliminated entirely and that they talk about the video. Yet another suggested that the video be recapped following the final exercise.

Two students, one beginner and one upper-beginner, suggested that I make the exercises more difficult. One upper-beginner student suggested that we have a test each
week, while another wanted more that one video each day. These suggestions indicate that the students would like more of the same and the addition of a speaking component. In general, the suggestions also reflect the students’ desire to learn.

Although Part Two may be biased because the teacher conducted the interviews and the students’ responses could have been limited by their language ability, it was valuable. The number and variety of perceptions, attitudes, and suggestions would likely not have been ascertained had it not been for the interviews.

My reflections revealed that for the duration of Part One of the study, the classes seemed rather unnatural. This was largely due to the fact that I was trying to ensure that each class had equal exposure to the material.

5.5 Limitations of the Study

Although the study has yielded positive results, there are limitations which have to be taken into consideration. In the first place, the sample size might be a limitation of this study. A study with a higher number of participants could yield more substantial results. Second, the study did not compare the pre-viewing question conditions with any other conditions. A study that included a group with no pre-viewing questions or a group with visual only pre-viewing questions may have provided greater insights into the effectiveness of pre-viewing questions as introductions to videos. Third, the linguistic levels of the students may have been a limitation. A study using subjects with a greater command of the English language may affect the findings. Fourth, the duration of Part One of the study or the number of exercises may have been a limitation. A study spanning a longer period of time or containing more exercises may have provided more
substantial results. Fifth, the study was conducted by the teacher/researcher. This was a limitation in that it may have caused bias in the students’ responses. A study where the teacher is blind to the hypotheses could have eliminated such bias. Finally, the students’ level of proficiency was a limitation. This was particularly true of Part Two of the study. The interviews were conducted in English, and the student responses were limited by their language ability. Interviews in the students’ first language could have been more informative.

5. 6 Teaching ESL Listening Comprehension

Based on the research that I have done, the study that I have conducted, and the experience that I have acquired in over five years as an ESL listening comprehension teacher, I would like to suggest a model for using videos to teach listening comprehension.

1. Provide the title or topic of the video. Access background knowledge by asking questions and/or generating discussion on the topic. “Background knowledge is shown to improve listening comprehension” (Rubin, 1994, p. 209).

2. Introduce new vocabulary and new grammatical structures. Write the vocabulary and grammatical structures on the board. Demonstrate and practice pronunciation, reductions, stress, and intonation of the spoken English.

3. Provide a pre-viewing activity. This activity is aimed at focusing the attention of the learners on some aspect of what they are about to listen to. Additionally it serves “to arouse curiosity, to give a reason to listen which goes beyond and obligation to do what the teacher says” (Chambers, 1996, p. 25). “A variety of advance organizer
presentations can be effective in facilitating extensive listening in a foreign language” (Herron et al., 1998, p. 245). The advance organizer/pre-viewing activity may include pictures/drawings, verbal descriptions, statements, questions, or brain-storming. Additionally, presenting the pre-viewing information in more than one mode has proven to be effective in enhancing listening comprehension (Herron et al., 1995).

4. View video without interruptions (Herron, 1998). The length of the video segment will depend on the video, the level of the students, and the objective of the activity. “Segments under 2 or 3 minutes focus viewer attention on the precise language used; recall of longer segments generally requires students to produce their own language to generalize about ideas registered” (Swaffer & Vlatten, 1997, p. 177).

5. Check comprehension. This can be done through discussion, questions, exercises, etc. depending on the objective of the lesson.

6. Provide a pre-viewing activity. (optional)

7. View video a second time without interruptions. “Repeated video viewing offers ideal opportunities to educate students’ ears, that is, to encourage them to pay attention to carefully isolated details” (Swaffer & Vlatten, 1997, p. 181).

8. Check comprehension.

It is my hope that my study and my suggestions provide curriculum planners, authors of resources, administrators, and teachers some basis for continuing in the direction that they are going or changing to enhance the listening comprehension skills of L2 learners.
5. 7 Further Research

Research in the area of L2 listening comprehension is limited. There is, however, support for the use of pre-listening activities and videos as a means of enhancing listening comprehension under certain conditions. There is a need for further research exploring different types of conditions. This could include the utilization of other pre-listening activities (such as pictures, verbal descriptions, or statements), types of taped material (such as movies, documentaries, or lectures), kinds of comprehension test items (such as immediate recall protocol or short answer questions), and/or student proficiency levels.

Additionally, there is a need for qualitative research in the area of L2 listening comprehension. Interviews, case studies, and action research could broaden the current understanding of L2 listening comprehension.
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