CHAPTER III

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REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The review of related literature is a crucial aspect of the planning of a study, the objective of which is to justify the rationale of an ensuing study. It involves systematic location, scrutiny and evaluation of reports of relevant researches, study of published articles, abstracts, and books on the subject and related manuscripts that contain information regarding the specific research problem. The review provides a source for research ideas, an orientation to what is already known, a conceptual context, deviations and new departures of research in an area and also suggests methods of research appropriate to the problem under investigation. It helps the investigator to find out the research gaps, if any, so that, he can bridge them. According to Best (1977), “A familiarity with the literature in any problem area helps the investigator to discover what is already known, what others have attempted to find out, which methods have been promising or disappointing, and what problem remains to be solved.” Review enables the investigator to know the means of getting to the frontier in the field of his research. It furnishes the researcher with indispensable suggestions about comparative data, good procedures, likely methods and tried techniques. It helps in providing placement and direction for the study to be fitted into the existing body of knowledge. Therefore, a review of the related literature in relevant area of the present study is attempted and presented in this chapter.

3.2 IMPORTANCE OF DEVELOPING LISTENING COMPREHENSION SKILL

In the evolution of language teaching, listening instruction had been ignored until 1960s. Listening was commonly characterized as a receptive language skill in which the
listeners passively assimilate the messages presented to them by the speakers (Morley, 1984). However, listening involves a more complex process than just hearing (Burley-Allen, 1982). From the 1980s to the 1990s, research highlighted the important role that listening plays in language acquisition (Brown and Yule, 1983; Faerch & Kasper, 1986; Ellis, Tanaka & Yamazaki, 1994). Yet, listening remains one of the least understood processes in language learning, despite the recognition of the critical role it plays both in communication and in language acquisition (Morley, 1991).

However over the last two decades, with a new wave of interest in the development of communication competence in language teaching, there came an increasing awareness of the significant role of listening in communication (Nord, 1980; Rivers, 1981; Joiner, 1984). After a long period in which listening was viewed as a mirror of reading, recently, listening has been considered as a skill in its own right (Brown, 1990). Listening comprehension is now recognized to be a complex and active skill involving many processes (Richards, 1983). In retrospect, listening comprehension has taken a long and struggling journey evolving from a long ignored skill to pivotal and crucial component in language acquisition.

Teaching listening has, in fact, become a polestar of foreign or second language instruction (Byrnes, 1984; Ur, 1984; Brown, 1987; Anderson and Lynch, 1988). In his research Feyten (1991) showed that 70 percent of the average adult’s working day is spent on verbal communication, with 45 percent of that spent on listening acts. He added that listening skill was a good predictor of language achievement and the most frequently used mode of human communication. Dunkel (1993) echoed the importance of listening that, “the development of communicative competence and oral fluency was achieved by putting the horse (listening comprehension) before the cart (oral production).” To put it in
another way, the key to achieving proficiency in speaking is developing proficiency in listening comprehension.

Additionally, numerous scholars (Long, 1985; Rost, 1990; Dunkel, 1991) stressed that listening is fundamental to language acquisition in providing the input, which is the raw material, necessary for the process to occur. The obvious reason why listening serves as the input of language learning is that, it has long been recognized as the most frequently used language skill in the foreign language classroom and hence, it is shown to help the pupils to capitalize on the language input they receive, and achieve greater success in language learning (Vandergrift, 1999). Due to the importance of listening comprehension, several researchers have advocated that listening comprehension should be the crucial first step and essential skill for communication and the focal methodology in foreign language teaching (Krashen, 1982; Omaggio, 1990). One may say, as Vandergrift (1999) in fact did, that listening is a highly integrative skill, which plays an important role in the process of language learning and facilitates the emergence of other language skills.

The importance of listening can’t be underestimated and treated trivially in foreign language curricula (Morely, 1991). Listening has emerged as an important and distinct foreign language skill leading teachers to look for ways to improve the learner’s performance in this skill (Thompson & Rubin, 1996).

Vanasco (1994) argues that more emphasis should be given to the neglected skills of listening comprehension, since most training in oral communication at the secondary and college level focuses on effective speaking. He gives guidelines for listening proficiency for second language acquisition and reviews research on the relationship
between listening comprehension and language learning. He argues that enhancement in listening comprehension skills would positively contribute to language learning.

Cheung (2010) in his paper discusses the importance of listening comprehension in learning English as a foreign language (EFL) and argues that more emphasis should be given to listening comprehension. He cites significant research findings in second language acquisition and reviews the relationship between listening comprehension and language learning. The paper suggests that listening is a prerequisite to other language skills, speaking, reading, and writing, and listening should be the primary skill to be acquired in learning a new language. There are many reasons for applying the listening-first approach. Listening comprehension sets a foundation for the future acquisition of speaking. Emphasis on aural comprehension training, and relaxation of the requirement for oral production in the initial phase of instruction, fosters development of linguistic competence, and produces better results than those obtained through intensive oral practice.

Campbell (2011) in her paper has stated that communicating effectively is a skill that must be taught and practiced, and the act of listening is a large part of this skill. She conducted a survey about the importance of listening skills in the classroom that she presented to the faculty of a rural high school. Teachers agree that listening is important, but they do not spend enough time building the pupils' listening skills. The author suggests many classroom-tested strategies. These strategies focus on ‘active listening skills,’ in other words, listening that requires a great deal of concentration and focus. The three basic principles prevalent in the author's findings are: preparing for listening, defining a purpose, and teacher-modeled listening.
3.3 DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED IN TEACHING LISTENING COMPREHENSION

English listening comprehension is such a complicated process that the learners, one way or other, encounter some difficulties when they listen.

Chastain (1976) pointed out that short interest span is an obstacle in listening comprehension. Because of short interest span, the learners often fail to put together the messages they have heard and they tend to forget what they listened when the sentence is too long.

Clark & Clark (1977) observed that listening comprehension is a complex, problem-solving skill because of three major aspects; (i) speech is continuous (ii) phonetic segments lack consistent characteristics and (iii) phonetic segments do not have one-to-one relation to the speech stream.

Ur (1984) points out that personal knowledge shortage of phonology, blocks off listening comprehension. From the viewpoint of phonology, on the one hand, some English sounds do not exist in learner’s native language, and on the other hand, some English sounds may disappear in words.

Ur (1984), as far as syntax is concerned, referred to the fact that the sequences and juxtapositions of English words are different from those of learner’s native tongue which makes listening comprehension difficult.

Dunkel (1991) points out that intonation and stress patterns play an important role in supplying ground for certain kinds of expectations and it often influences the meaning of an utterance. He mentioned that different stressed words in the same sentence imply
variant denotation in English. That is, intonation in English functions as criteria for distinguishing the overtones of the speaker. Therefore, if a learner has no idea how to identify the implication by distinguishing intonation patterns, they will miss such emotional hints as anger, humor or seriousness.

Griffiths (1992) pointed out that speech rate has long been proposed as an important factor affecting communication, and that listening performance declines significantly as passages are delivered at fast speech rates.

Chiang and Dunkel (1992) points out that, lack of background knowledge about the context or passage would affect listening comprehension. In their study, they showed that the high and low achievers score higher when listening to a culturally familiar topic instead of a culturally unfamiliar topic.

McDonough and Shaw (1993) points out that, when the listeners are allowed to listen to the listening activity only once, they feel frustrated easily because they have little time to decode the content and this would adversely affect the listening comprehension.

Vandergrift (1996) states that, the learners without learning strategies face difficulty in overcoming physical limitation (short memory span) which would hinder listening comprehension. He also points out that, the listeners without the ability to apply adequate listening strategies tended to concentrate only on the text or word-for-word decoding and therefore becomes unsuccessful in comprehending spoken texts.

Lin (2003) observed from the feedback questionnaire in her study that, the limited vocabulary of listeners increased difficulty in listening comprehension. Since the speakers control choice of words, the learners with limited vocabulary are likely to stop to think the meaning of a new word and thus miss the information that follows.
3.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR EFFECTIVE TEACHING OF LISTENING COMPREHENSION

Brooks (1964) suggested that, in teaching listening comprehension, teachers should provide sufficient practice by letting the learners listen to the same text three to five times.

Another significant aspect of teaching listening is the use of the target language for instruction. From simpler notions like teaching English through English (Willis, 1981), through teaching ‘sheltered content’ courses in the target language to full scale immersion programmes (Genesee, 1984), the benefits are far reaching. Not only do the learners have an ongoing demonstration of the importance of listening, but they also have continuous opportunities for integrating listening with other language and academic learning skills and for using listening for authentic purposes.

Widdowson (1983) has highlighted three sources which, a listener utilizes in the process of comprehension. He has referred to them as (a) systemic and linguistic knowledge (knowledge of phonological, syntactical, and semantic components of the language system) (b) contextual knowledge (knowledge of situation and context) and (c) schematic or background knowledge (factual, socio-cultural and procedural knowledge).

Ur (1984) emphasizes the importance of making the listening instruction resemble ‘real life listening’ so that, the learner will develop a sense of purpose and expectation for listening which will in-turn evoke listener response.
Underwood (1989) describes the importance of pre-, while- and post-listening activities in the teaching of listening comprehension. She also emphasise the use of ‘authentic’ conversations.

Richards (1990) proposed an interactive model, integrating ‘bottom-up’ and ‘top-down’ processing in the listening comprehension development. He claimed that both play a crucial part in listening comprehension.

Chiang and Dunkel (1992) investigated the effect of speech modification, prior knowledge, and listening proficiency on EFL listening comprehension. The Chinese EFL pupils’ listening comprehension was measured over listening to a lecture. The pupils were required to answer a multiple-choice test which contained both passage-dependent and passage-independent items. The results indicated that the pupils outperformed on familiar-topic lecture than on unfamiliar-topic lecture.

Rost (1994) presents a framework for incorporating five types of listening strategies into classroom instruction: (i) predicting, (ii) monitoring, (iii) inferencing, (iv) clarifying and (v) responding.

Schmidt-Rinehart (1994) points out that, topic familiarity would affect listening comprehension as it affects the amount of listener’s recall. In his exploration of the correlation between the listener’s comprehension and topic familiarity, he suggested that all subject score higher on familiar passage while unfamiliar topics make comprehension difficult.

Noblitt (1995) and Ur (1984) agree that using audio-tape in listening training is convenient, and that practicing with audio-tapes facilitates the learners to build norms,
and that repetition of listening to the same tape script helps the learners to master listening comprehension.

Nunan (2002) suggests that, in teaching listening, we should design activities that teach bottom-up and top-down processing skills as they both play important, but different, roles in listening. It is also important to teach learner specific strategies that can help them understand the process underlying listening so that, gradually they can assure greater control of their own learning.

Salahshuri (2011) in his research describes the effects of topic familiarity on the foreign language listening comprehension, and makes an attempt to find out whether proficiency level affects recall measures of listening comprehension. To this end, an experiment was conducted with 56 pupils studying English at one of Iranian universities. The results of the between-within analysis of variance clearly indicated that topic familiarity affected the scores of recall measures and the course-level groups revealed a consistent increase in comprehension scores. There was also no interaction effect: subjects regardless of their level scored higher on the familiar passage. The researcher has also left some relevant issues for further research at the end of the paper.

3.5 STUDIES RELATED TO DEVELOPMENT OF LANGUAGE SKILLS

Joseph (1979) shares the view that all the language skills are not given adequate emphasis in classroom teaching and that verbal ability was the most important single factor contributing to success in school.

Patel (1982) conducted a study on the listening comprehension in Guajarat of the pupils of Class V of Central Gujarat. The important finding of the study revealed that there was positive relationship between listening comprehension and listening habits, and
the pupils with low text anxiety did better on listening comprehension tests than their counterparts with higher anxiety.

Lynch (1983) described a scheme designed to enable individual learners of English to complete a series of interrelated comprehension tasks based on a set of written and spoken texts. The specific teaching context in which the programme was set up and the learning needs that shaped the eventual format of the materials is described. Suggestions are given for ways in which the programme might be adopted for use by teachers in varying teaching circumstances and locations.

Sriussadaporn (1990) conducted a study in which 224 pupils from 9th grade and 107 teachers were asked to respond to questionnaires. The responses showed that the pupils felt excited when English was used in the class room in a variety of learning activities. Teachers were of the opinion that listening and speaking are the important skills to be developed for effective communication in the target language. The content should be based on pupil’s need and language functions. Learning experience can be any activity that brings the pupils into contact with the target language and allows them to use authentic language in real life situation.

Gordan (1994) compared the effectiveness of Play Intervention Approach and Language Based Activities in language teaching. The findings of the study revealed that the Language Based Activity group made significantly greater progress than Play Intervention Approach group in the areas of cognitive and affective domains.

Rhonda (1994) in a qualitative study supported the view that comprehension could be facilitated, without translation, with consistent use of the target language. Two-way communication was found to be interesting and successful.
Gaya (1998) attempts to address the problems of listening as a subject of research investigation in the area of relationship between listening and other abilities, its effect on listening, listening skills and training to listen. One of the major findings of the study is that listening ability is used to a greater extent than any other communication ability such as reading writing or speaking.

Chusanachoti (2009) carried out a study to explore how Thai learners of English as a foreign language engaged in activities outside of classrooms to learn and practice the English Language. The study employed a qualitative multiple case study approach, grounded in the ethnographic tradition. The four focal participants were all third-year female undergraduates majoring in English education at a Thai University. Data sources include participant observation, field notes, interviews, self-reflection journals, and self-report activity diaries. The study suggested that out-of-class English activities can be beneficial for language learning and merit special consideration by English educators.

Riley (2009) conducted a study to compare two adult ESL instructional methods. The two methods being compared were ‘Authentic Design’ and ‘Structured Design.’ ‘Authentic Design’ instruction is where the pupils practice their English conversational skills by telling and re-telling real-life authentic stories, experiences, and day-to-day events, with each other in a group participation format. ‘Structured Design’ instruction is that which focuses on the use of text book material, sentence structure, reading and grammatical form. The population for this study consisted of 336 adult ESL pupils randomly selected and was then randomly assigned to seven randomly selected ESL instructors. The findings of the study confirmed ‘Authentic Design’ instruction to be the superior method for adult English language acquisition at the .01 level of significance.
3.6 STUDIES RELATED TO EFFECTIVENESS OF GAMES IN DEVELOPING LANGUAGE SKILLS

Cherian (1999) conducted a study on the effectiveness of language games to teach vocabulary in English in Standard VIII. The study revealed that the Language Game Method Group is significantly superior to Lecture Method Group with respect to post-test achievement and the language games were effective in realizing various educational outcomes.

Beena (2002) studied the effectiveness of Language games for teaching Malayalam in Standard VIII. The major objectives of the study were: (i) to prepare language games to teach Malayalam in Standard VIII and (ii) to test the effectiveness of the prepared games. The study revealed that Language game method was significantly superior to the normal classroom method in teaching Malayalam. The study also revealed that the performance of the pupils belonging to rural locality, and government schools were superior. The study also revealed that English medium pupils outperformed the pupils in Malayalam medium in the achievement in Malayalam after being exposed to language games. The study also pointed out that majority of the teachers does not use games as a technique in language teaching.

Sabitha (2003) carried out a study on the effectiveness of KIM’s games for learning Hindi in Standard VIII. The major objective of the study was to prepare and test the effectiveness of KIM’s games for learning ‘Vibhakthi’ in Hindi. The analysis of the data revealed that the experimental group exposed to the KIM’s game was superior to the usual method group in their post-test achievement.
Babu (2003) in her study entitled, ‘Effectiveness of language grids for learning English in Standard VIII’, prepared and tested the effectiveness of language grids for learning English. The study also tested the comparative effectiveness of Language grid method, lecture method and self learning method. The statistical analysis of the data revealed that the language grid group was superior to the other two groups. It also revealed that the locality, income of parents or gender did not have any influence on the achievement of the experimental group exposed to the language grid method.

Tomlinson and Masuhara (2009) in their article focuses on the potential of competitive games involving physical movement to facilitate the acquisition of a second or foreign language, and argues that such activities can promote educational development too. It first provides a critical overview of the literature on physical games in language learning. Then, it outlines theoretical position and puts forward a flexible framework for the development of principled learning materials that are designed to make use of physical games in language lessons at all levels and for all ages. The framework is text driven, in that it treats the game as a text that provides the learners with a rich, engaging, and purposeful exposure to language in use. It is also task driven, in that it provides the learners with a physical outcome that can only be achieved through language use. This framework operates in ways designed to stimulate the multidimensional mental representation and the deep processing required for effective and durable learning. The framework is exemplified by reference to physical games they have played with language learners of different levels and ages in different cultures, and then the principles and potential benefits of these games are discussed. In the conclusion part of the article, they have summarized the benefits of physical games for language learners and point out the potential benefits of physical games in all educational contexts.
Liu and Chu (2010) in their study aimed to investigate how ubiquitous games influence English learning achievement and motivation through a context-aware ubiquitous learning environment. An English curriculum was conducted on a school campus by using a context-aware ubiquitous learning environment called the Handheld English Language Learning Organization (HELLO). HELLO helps the pupils to engage in learning activities based on motivation theory, involving various educational strategies, including ubiquitous game-based learning, collaborative learning, and context-aware learning. Two groups of pupils participated in the learning activities prescribed in a curriculum by separately using ubiquitous game-based learning and non-gaming learning. The curriculum, entitled "My Campus", included three learning activities, namely "Campus Environment", "Campus Life" and "Campus Story." Participants included high school teachers and juniors. During the experiment, tests, a survey, and interviews were conducted for the pupils. The analysis of the results of the learning outcomes and learning motivation, demonstrated that incorporating ubiquitous games into the English learning process could achieve a better learning outcomes and motivation than using non-gaming method. They further revealed a positive relationship between learning outcomes and motivation.

Miller (2010) in her book has stated that strong oral language skills must be in place before children can learn to read. In "Before They Read: Teaching Language and Literacy Development through Conversations, Interactive Read-Alouds, and Listening Games," she helps educators teach those early literacy skills with engaging games and activities that are based on her three big ideas for early literacy development: great conversations, good listening skills, and interactive read-alouds. Developed from Miller's successful work with families and early childhood educators around the country, "Before They Read", makes it easy to help every child move through
the stages of literacy development at their own pace. The book shows how to: take advantage of the learn-through-play style of the preschool and kindergarten child; play simple and effective games and activities that build core early literacy skills; and engage a child in the experience of reading a picture book to target essential concepts.

Mubaslat (2012) in the study attempts to determine the role of educational games on learning English as a foreign language, and to compare games with more traditional practices as effective learning tools on the basic educational stage students at governmental schools in Jordan. An experimental research is conducted using three groups out of six randomly. To determine the relationship between learning a foreign language and educational games among the participants, a one way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) is performed based on achievement levels. For the relation between educational games and learning a foreign language a Pearson's Correlation analysis is used. The results of the post-test for the experimental group are significantly superior to the controlled group, which show that games have a good effect on improving the language skills at the primary stage and to create an interactive environment. It is recommended to use games since they are very effective, especially in the primary stages in teaching a second language and since games are helpful for the language teacher as a procedure for language acquisition.

3.7 STUDIES RELATED TO EFFECTIVENESS OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Sasscar (1974) carried out a study on the development, implementation and evaluation of a modularized, pupil centered general biology curriculum at the college level. In the curricular design, major units of study were isolated and broken into units. In each one of them, a basic module was planned to be exercised by all the pupils. In that
module a concept was introduced with a minimum of information. Following that there was a set of option modules from which the pupil could select to complete the unit, the minimum path being the basic module and one option module. The experimental group used the modules whereas the control group used a standard method. The study revealed that the modular group with option modules gained significantly and they had a positive attitude in science when compared to control group.

Babu (1975) studied the effectiveness of programmed learning materials in teaching certain structures in English in Standard VIII. The experimental group was exposed to the programmed learning material. The study revealed that the programmed learning material was effective in terms of the achievement of the pupils.

Puttorak (1975) worked on the development and field testing of a lab module for instruction in ‘Vascular Plant Taxonomy’. A self paced lab module in Vascular Plant Taxonomy was developed to aid undergraduate biology pupils in understanding both traditional and contemporary activities of the plant taxonomist. Results showed that the general biology pupils preferred the modular method of instruction than the traditional type.

Heller and Date (1976) conducted a study to compare the effectiveness of instruction using a ‘Learning Module Approach’ with that of instruction using a ‘Traditional Lecture Discussion’ in an undergraduate course entitled ‘Psychology of Exceptional Child.’ The result of the study revealed that module programme resulted in significant gain for the pupils.

Wilkinson (1976) developed a ‘Learning Package’ for teaching science. The prepared learning package was a collection of materials to effect specified learning outcomes with minimum teaching contact. The conclusion was that learning package can
offer a great variety of learning experience, and allows selection according to individual styles of learning and that it also allows the pupils to learn at their own pace and time.

Halyard (1977) carried out an experimental study to determine empirically if the use of biology module which made available optional learning materials resulted in greater achievement than the use of a module containing the same content with no optional learning materials. Two modules and optional learning materials were developed by the investigator. One was a control module and the other, the experimental one. The modules were used for one week. The pre-test and post-test were given. The major findings of the study were the following:

(i) No achievement difference were detected to any cognitive level between the groups

(ii) Modules with no optional learning materials were as effective as module that made optional learning material available.

Shajahan (1980) conducted an experimental study on teaching science in Standard VI and VII through modules. Matched group design was used for the study. Data were collected using achievement test, module evaluation check list and attitude scales. The major findings were: (i) the modular way of teaching was more effective than the conventional method, (ii) the teacher’s reaction to the modular approach of instruction was favorable, and (iii) the pupils had a positive attitude towards modules.

Charles (1981) prepared an auto instructional and support material in English for the development of language skills. The major findings of the study were: (i) The course, in general, with all the particular techniques used there in was found to be effective in terms of learners’ reaction. (ii) Highly intelligent and less intelligent adults gained
significantly from the course. (iii) Both graduates and undergraduates gained significantly from the course.

Justus (1981) conducted a study entitled “Preparation and Comparison of Supervised Study Module with Text Book Approach in the Teaching of Biology in High Schools of Kerala.” The objectives of the study were; (i) to determine the effectiveness of supervised study module in teaching biology and (ii) to compare its effectiveness over textbook approach in teaching under the categories of objectives; Knowledge, Understanding, and Application. The study found that supervised study module is more effective than textbook approach in the teaching of biology in high schools and again it is more effective than textbook approach in the teaching of biology under the categories of objectives; Knowledge, Understanding, and Application

Stroller (1988) recommended commercially produced films and video-tapes as effective tools for developing listening, speaking, and writing skills in English as a second language or English as a foreign language. It is concluded that careful video selection, purposeful lesson planning, and the integration of pre-viewing, viewing and post-viewing activities into the content based lesson encourage natural language use and language skill development.

Kumar (1990) conducted a study on the effect of Teacher Assisted Modular Approach in teaching Physics in Secondary schools of Kerala State. The objectives of the study were; (i) to prepare a module for teaching the topic ‘Sound’ in Physics for Standard IX, and (ii) to find out the effectiveness of teacher assisted modular approach in teaching Physics. The study concluded that the Teacher Assisted Modular Approach is more effective than Textbook Approach in teaching Physics.
Mohan (1990) conducted a study on the Teacher Assisted Modular Approach in teaching Chemistry at secondary schools of Kerala. The objectives of the study were; (i) to compare the effectiveness of teacher assisted modular approach with textbook approach in the teaching of Chemistry, and (ii) to find out whether there is any relationship between intelligence and pupil achievement when teacher assisted study module and textbook approach are used in learning. The study revealed that the Teacher Assisted modular Approach is more effective than Textbook Approach in teaching Chemistry. The study also revealed that in textbook approach there was no relation between intelligence and pupil achievement, whereas, in teacher assisted modular approach there was relationship between high intelligence and achievement.

Annie (1991) conducted a study on the effectiveness of modular approach in the teaching of Zoology in the first year B.Sc. Degree class. The major objectives were to prepare a module for teaching the topic ‘Echinodermata’ in Zoology for first year Degree students and to compare the effectiveness of modular Approach over Text Book Approach in teaching Zoology. It was concluded that Modular Approach is a better device than traditional method of teaching Zoology.

Gopalan (1992) conducted a study entitled, ‘Preparation of a teacher assisted study module in Botany at Degree level for teaching about Agaricus and Mushroom farming’. The objectives of the study were to assess the theoretical and occupational awareness level of B.Sc. Botany students about mushroom farming and to prepare a teacher assisted study module in Botany at Degree level for teaching about ‘Agarics and Mushroom farming’ and test its effectiveness. The finding of the study revealed that the theoretical and occupational awareness of the students about mushroom farming was
poor. It was also revealed that the teacher assisted modular approach was more effective than the conventional approach of teaching.

Merce (1993) in her study states the importance of the use of technological materials for teaching English as a second language. The study showed that English emerged only when users were required to produce, either in spoken or written form, a considerable amount of the target language to accomplish a task.

Bindu (1995) carried out a study to test the effectiveness of a guided study module in Zoology at Degree level for learning about ‘Domestic fowls and Poultry farming’. The objectives of the study were; (i) to assess the familiarity and theoretical knowledge of B.Sc. Zoology pupils about ‘Poultry farming’, and (ii) to prepare and test the effectiveness of a guided study module in Zoology at Degree level for learning about domestic fowls. The study revealed that majority of degree students were not familiar with poultry farming and their theoretical knowledge was poor. The analysis of the data revealed that, the prepared material was effective in teaching the particular topic.

George (1997) conducted a study on the preparation and testing of teacher assisted learning module on ‘identities’ for Standard VIII. The objectives of the study were; (i) to prepare teacher assisted learning module on the topic ‘identities’ in Mathematics for Standard VIII, (ii) to study the effectiveness of modular approach and formal approach, and (iii) to study the feasibility of implementation of modular approach. The results showed that teacher assisted learning module is more effective than the conventional methods. The study also revealed that the modular approach was feasible only to some extent and the study also identified many practical difficulties in implementing modular approach.
Mathew (1998) conducted a study entitled ‘Preparation and testing of learning package in Zoology for final year Degree students on the topic ‘Sericulture’. The objectives of the study were to prepare a learning package on the topic ‘Sericulture’ and to test its effectiveness. The result of the study showed that the prepared learning package was more effective than text book in the teaching of the topic ‘Sericulture’.

Bindu (2001) conducted a study entitled ‘Preparation & testing of a learning package on Apiculture for second year degree Zoology students’. The objectives of the study were; (i) to study the extent of familiarity of B.Sc. Zoology students with ‘Apiculture’ and related aspects, (ii) to prepare a learning package on ‘Apiculture’ for second year degree Zoology students and (iii) to test the effectiveness of the learning package prepared by comparing it with that of the formal method. The major findings were; (i) present teaching learning process (Lecture method) is ineffective in developing practical occupational awareness among B.Sc. Zoology students in ‘Apiculture’ that they have learnt in their B.Sc. Zoology Syllabus and (ii) the learning package is more effective than text book in the teaching Zoology in colleges.

Binumon (2002) conducted a study entitled, ‘Effectiveness of three approaches in instruction – modular, lecture cum modular and conventional lecture in learning the topic Fisheries at plus-two level’. The objective of the study were to prepare a module in Zoology at plus-two level on the topic ‘Fishery’, and to find out pupil performance when lecture method cum modular approach, self instructional module alone approach and conventional lecture method are used for learning the topic ‘Fisheries’. The study concluded that lecture cum modular approach is more effective than the other two methods such as self instructional module alone and conventional lecture method.
Rosa (2002) prepared a learning package for developing environmental awareness among secondary school students and tested its effectiveness. Analysis of the data revealed that the learning package is very effective in developing awareness about different environmental issues and related aspects among secondary school pupils. It is also found that the prepared package is effective in enhancing the achievement of secondary school pupils, at Knowledge, Understanding and Application level.

Ozdilek and Ozkan (2009) in their study examined the effect of instructional materials for the topic - classification of matter as solids, liquids and gases that were developed using a holistic instructional design model on pupil achievement. In the study a pre-test / post-test with control group experimental design was used. The study was conducted in the 2004-2005 school year using a sample of 120 pupils in the 7th grade (Experimental group (1) = 30, Experimental group (2) = 30, Control group (1) = 30 and Control group (2) = 30). At the beginning of the study, it was found that there was no statistically significant difference between the pupils of the experimental and control groups, but at the end of the study, levels of achievement of the pupils in the two experimental groups were higher than both control groups. It was concluded that the prepared instructional material was effective with respect to pupil achievement.

Martell & Hashimoto-Martell (2011) in their research study examined the students at an ethnically and economically diverse high school and the impact of replacing the corporate-produced textbook with teacher-created reading packages and questions that asked the pupils to take a critical stance on historical events in United States history. Using critical theories of education as a lens, this study analyzed survey and interview data. The results revealed that the teacher created package increased pupils' interest in reading about history, improved pupils’ ability to recall information and complete
homework, developed pupils’ ability to see history as interpreted perspectives, and helped non-White pupils better identify with the people in history.

3.8 STUDIES RELATED TO EFFECTIVENESS OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS AND STRATEGIES IN DEVELOPING LISTENING COMPREHENSION

Apraj (1991) conducted a study on developing auditory abilities through language exercises in teaching English as a second language in secondary schools. One of the major findings of the study was that there was a significant positive relationship between the listening exercises and integrative listening skills of the learner of English as second language.

Pandya (1998) studied the effect of the presentation of easy and difficult listening materials at five different rates, on listening comprehension. One of the findings of the study was that there was significant interaction effect among rural and urban children on concept development task

Chandran (2008) carried out a study to test the effectiveness of a learning package for developing language skills in English at secondary level. The objectives of the study were; (i) to prepare learning package ‘Fun with English’, (ii) to study the effectiveness of the package, and (iii) to compare the level of anxiety of the pupils of the experimental group and control group. Experimental cum survey method was used. The experimental group was exposed to the package. The study revealed that learning package was effective in developing language skills in English. The study also revealed that the pupils in the experimental group have a lower level of language anxiety when compared to the control group exposed to the normal activity based teaching.
Kraemer (2009) investigated the effects of listening to expository text on first graders listening comprehension and book choice. The participants for this study included 77 first grade pupils from four heterogeneous classes at a suburban elementary school in the New York City metropolitan area. A chi-square analysis revealed that initially 76.6% of the pupils chose expository text over narrative text. There was no change in these findings after intervention. Further analysis revealed a significant difference between the pupils' performance on the two types of passages on the listening comprehension measure indicating that the first graders performed significantly better on the narrative comprehension test than the expository comprehension test. However, after the intervention, a MANOVA revealed that the experimental group performed significantly better on the expository listening comprehension measure. There was a weak correlation between the pupils' listening comprehension abilities and book choices. It is clear from the findings that primary grade pupils enjoy and are capable of understanding expository text.

Jiang (2009) found certain potential obstacles that the pupils encounter in their listening class, which she believes should be removed by a good teaching method. She goes on to explore integrating strategies into listening class, among the many strategies, she choose the prediction strategy and describes it in three stages: Pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening. Then a real model of applying prediction in listening class is given, whose effects are tested and proved efficient.

Ishler (2010) studied the reasons for Tunisian EFL learner’s difficulty in understanding oral English transactional texts. Using qualitative research and a cognitive strategy-based theoretical framework, the study used questionnaire, interviews, listening diaries, and think aloud protocols with Tunisia University EFL learners to identify the listening strategies that they use and the obstacles that they encounter while they listen to
oral English transactional texts. The findings of this study show that Tunisian EFL learners are active in listening process and use some strategies which help them understand some text. However when they encounter listening obstacles during the listening process, they are unable to orchestrate their strategy use, and fail to comprehend the texts. The study is concluded by proposing ways for listening comprehension teachers to incorporate strategy teaching, graded oral texts, and culturally appropriate tasks so that obstacles in listening can be minimized and strategy orchestration can be maximized.

Hayati (2011) examined the effect of speech rate on listening comprehension of Iranian EFL learners. Initially, a sample of 108 EFL learners majoring in English translation was selected based on systematic random sampling from Abadan Islamic Azad University. Then, based on a proficiency test, 62 participants were chosen and divided into two homogeneous groups of 31. One group had exposure to natural speech rate and the other to slow speech rate of listening materials. After thirteen academic sessions, the results of the paired t-test regarding the pre-tests and post-tests of the two group means, showed that both differences (group one: 2.83 and group two: 1.22) were significant at 0.05 levels (P < 0.05). These findings suggest that each speech rate, whether natural or slow, could improve EFL learners listening comprehension; however, natural speech rate could demonstrate greater improvements than slow speech rate in EFL learners’ listening comprehension.

Aly, et.al. (2011) carried out a study aimed at exploring the effectiveness of using explicit language learning strategy-based instruction in developing secondary school students’ EFL listening comprehension skills. It was hypothesized that using explicit strategy-based instruction would develop pupils’ EFL listening comprehension skill and its sub-skills. An EFL listening comprehension test was used for measuring pupils’
development in listening comprehension. The subjects of the study were randomly drawn from two classes at El-Shimaa Secondary School for girls, Egypt. The experiment lasted for five weeks at a rate of three sessions a week (90 minutes each). The strategy instruction used in the present research study was the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA). The sessions included listening comprehension activities which followed the five phases of the CALLA approach. T-value, mean scores, standard deviation, and degree of freedom were calculated. It was found that the experimental group achieved more gains in their EFL listening comprehension skill and each sub-skill due to using the explicit language learning strategy instruction.

Amin, et.al. (2011) undertook a study to investigate the correlation between EFL students’ strategic listening and their listening comprehension skills. Eighty secondary school pupils participated in this study. Participants’ strategic listening was measured by a Strategic Listening Interview (SLI), a Strategic Listening Questionnaire (SLQ) and a Strategic Listening Checklist (SLC) with think-aloud protocol. Their listening comprehension skills were measured by an EFL listening comprehension test. A Pearson correlation analysis was run to test the correlation between strategic listening and listening comprehension test scores. The findings revealed that the relationship between strategic listening and listening comprehension was positive and significant. The higher the level of strategic-listening these pupils obtained, the higher the score they attained on the listening comprehension test and vice versa.

Zhang (2011) in the study explains the process of the learners’ listening comprehension within Halliday’s information theory in functional grammar, including the skills of identifying focuses while listening in college English teaching. Identifying
information focuses in listening is proved to improve the pupils’ communicative listening ability by means of a classroom research, in which 87 pupils were involved.

Ghaderpanahi (2012) conducted a study to examine the influences of authentic aural materials on listening ability of thirty female undergraduate psychology majors studying English as a foreign language. It basically focused on using authentic materials and real-life situations as part of the communicative approach. The results of the listening comprehension post-test were compared to that of the pre-test using a 2-tailed t-test (P< .05). Results showed a statistically significant improvement in listening ability of the EFL pupils. Analysis of the interviews and the questionnaire revealed that the use of authentic materials in the EFL classroom enhanced EFL pupils’ listening comprehension ability. Recommendations were offered to ease the pupils’ frustration that resulted from the speed of authentic speech. Pedagogical implications of the results were discussed along with the impact on EFL pupils’ listening comprehension development.

Farrokhi & Modarres (2012) in their study attempted to find out the extent to which two pre-task activities of “glossary of unknown vocabulary items” and “content related support” assisted EFL language learners with their performance on listening comprehension questions across low proficiency (LP) and high proficiency (HP) levels. Each level consisted of three groups, two experimental groups and one control group (twenty participants in each group). One experimental group received “glossary of unknown vocabulary items” with the pronunciation, while the other group received content related support (in written form) with the aim of activating prior knowledge before administering post-lecture listening comprehension questions. The statistical analysis of the data revealed that in low proficiency level, vocabulary group outperformed both content and control groups while in high proficiency level, content group
outperformed the other groups. The study concluded by suggesting that pre-task activities need to be used taking account of the support type and the learners’ proficiency level.

The review of related literature helped to identify various aspects related to the development of listening comprehension and related areas. It gave the investigator a deep insight into the various theoretical and methodological aspects of the study.

It was also realized that not many studies related to preparation and testing of instructional materials for developing listening comprehension has been attempted so far. The investigator in his limited capacity couldn’t trace any study in Kerala related to preparation of materials to develop listening comprehension and any study related to the testing of effectiveness of any available material in developing listening skills. The review revealed that listening skill is being neglected not only in education but also in research in Kerala. These factors make a study of this type relevant.