

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

The present study was to improve low-achiever's listening ability experimented by fourteen senior high physical education students in Taipei County in Taiwan. Journals on listening to songs and listening to passages were utilized as instruments. This chapter comprises nine sections. Section 3.1 illustrates the research purpose. Section 3.2 explains the research design. Section 3.3 discusses the instruments utilized by the researcher. Section 3.4 introduces the subjects of the present study. Section 3.5 presents the course design. Section 3.6 describes the procedure throughout the study. Section 3.7 illustrates make-up class. Section 3.8 states data analysis. Section 3.9 describes the limitations of the study.

#### **3.1 Research Purpose**

The purpose of this project was to improve low-achievers' listening ability by reviewing the vocabulary, phrases, and grammatical structures they previously learned. In the process of listening treatment, low-achievers in the present study kept journal writing to express their learning problems and promptly got assistance from the researcher in order to motivate their English learning.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

Data for the research were gathered from students' journals. The research period lasted for a semester, from September 2003 to January 2004. During the period of the study, if students missed listening courses due to intensive training or joining athletic

meets, they had to take remedial classes from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m. after regular classes on Wednesday and Friday after they returned school.

Although school administrators demanded physical education students to have five periods of English classes a week, they allowed the researcher to decide the teaching materials and to design courses. There were five English periods (i.e. each period represents fifty minutes) during the week. Two of the five periods were employed for the listening classes, one on Tuesday and the other on Thursday. The other three periods were used for traditional senior high English classes. Both listening classes were designed to review what they should have learned in junior high. The content areas of listening texts were relevant to the level of English for Junior High Schools in order to increase physical education students' self-confidence and to maintain their self-esteem. The first period was used for listening to songs on Tuesday, while the second one for listening to passages on Thursdays. The songs were adopted from *Billboard Hottest Hits (1995)*, Jingo Records Company, Taipei, Taiwan. The passages were adopted from *English for Junior High Schools Book III*, Kang Shiuan Company, Taiwan. A weekly sample lesson was shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Plan of Lesson

Week	Period	Topic	Listening Skills	Grammar	Vocabulary N=new O=old
1	1	song	Listening for the main idea Listening for specific information (i.e. key word, phrase, syntax)	Present tense	N=jungle/village/mighty O=peaceful/fear
	2	passage	Listening for the main idea Listening for specific information (i.e. key word, phrase, syntax) Listening between the lines	Present perfect tense Letter writing	O=several/since/won/end favorite/left/done/shot/ player/hard/wish

After completing each listening class, the subjects had to write journals.

Considering the fact that physical education students were unwilling to spend too much time writing, and that some data needed to be gathered, the researcher designed both multiple-choice and open-ended questions to collect data that the researcher wanted the most.

The cover page of the journal illustrated the purpose of journal writing in the project (see Appendix A). In addition to the cover page, the journal was composed of two parts. The first part focused on listening to songs, made up of seven multiple choices (i.e., two are designed for pre-listening, two for while-listening, three for post-listening) and ten open-ended questions, which provided physical education students with an opportunity to reflect on self-learning process after taking a weekly English song course (see Appendix A1). The second part centered on listening to passages, made up of twelve multiple-choice questions (i.e., two are designed for pre-listening, seven for while-listening, three for post-listening) and eight open-ended questions, which offered students another chance to reflect on the learning process after they completed the second period of listening to passages every week (see Appendix A2).

Physical education students had to hand in journals at the end of every week so that both students and the teacher would get prompt feedback. Besides, the teacher would adapt course design or listening materials for the next week accordingly, deleting some listening materials or providing multiple types of practices while engaging in the listening activities.

### **3.3 Instrument**

Student's journal is the instrument used in this project, including two parts. Part I was designed as questionnaires, Part II as open-ended questions. Journals were collected once a week during the semester (see Appendix A3-A5). Those journals provided the

researcher with a good way to focus her classes to meet low achievers' needs and to make the teaching more process- than product-oriented (Porter, Goldstein, Leatherman, & Conrad, 1990). In addition, low achievers in the present study were not only sensitive and shy in English class, but also reluctant to ask questions publicly during class because they were "super-low" achievers both in English and in Chinese. They feared of expressing their learning difficulties in class. Therefore, they needed a tool, such as a journal, to help them express themselves freely "without undue concern for grammaticality" (Brown, 2001). While keeping journal writing in the present study, low achievers were encouraged to express completely their ideas in Chinese with no worries about English grammar.

Advantages of using journals were listed below:

- (1) Journals promote autonomous learning, encouraging students to take responsibility for their own learning (Porter et al. 1990; Nunan, 1992).
- (2) By exchanging idea with their teacher, students can gain confidence in their ability to learn, and make sense of difficult material (Porter, Goldstein, Leatherman, & Conrad, 1990; Nunan, 1992).
- (3) Students can articulate problems they are having with course content and therefore get help (Porter, Goldstein, Leatherman, & Conrad, 1990; Porter et al. 1990; Nunan, 1992).
- (4) Keeping journals can lead to more productive class discussion (Porter, Goldstein, Leatherman, & Conrad, 1990; Porter et al. 1990; Nunan, 1992).
- (5) Students are encouraged to make connections between course content and their own learning (Porter, Goldstein, Leatherman, & Conrad, 1990; Nunan, 1992).
- (6) Journals create teacher-student and student-student interaction beyond the classroom (Porter et al. 1990; Nunan, 1992).
- (7) Journals make the class more process-oriented (Porter, Goldstein, Leatherman, & Conrad, 1990).

- (8) The introspective journal is considered to be a self-evaluative tool (Nunan, 1992).
- (9) Prompt feedback is provided between teacher and student. Not only do journals help the teacher evaluate teaching efficiency, but also provide a chance for the teacher to afford different kinds of feedback to low-achievers because “journals writing is also a dialogue between student and teacher” (Brown, 2001).

In addition to the above benefits of using journals, the project is suitable for journals research based on the following reasons.

- (1) The research subjects made up a small class, which was composed of 14 PE students, and suitable for qualitative research.
- (2) Journal writing saves time. PE students were busy with school life and sports training programs. They had little time staying at school with a limited time available for English learning. Journal writing was the best way for the researcher to collect data.
- (3) The researcher takes realistic situations into consideration. The rapport between the students and the researcher might have helped the researcher to get complete and accurate data from the journals.

The researcher employed journal writing in the process of learning so that she would understand PE students' needs, and thereby design listening materials as review course and adapt teaching methods suitable for them.

### **3.4 Subjects**

The subjects of all three groups (Level 0 to Level 2) in this project were fourteen physical education students. They are seniors in a senior high school in Taipei County, ranging from seventeen to nineteen years old. When they were admitted to senior high, they were admitted for their exclusive athletic talents. Their academic scores were much lower than other regular enrolled freshmen. Although they have had five-year English learning experiences, most of them had low learning motivation and negative learning

attitudes toward English. As a result, they were labeled as super-low level in academic performance. Their English entry level (i.e. level 0, 1, 2) was illustrated in Table 3 below.

**Table 3 Students' English Entry Levels**

Levels	Entry level	Number of participants
0	-listening 0 (no proficiency) -only recognize 26 alphabets -know nothing about phonetic symbols or grammar	5
1	-listening 1 (elementary proficiency equivalent to the level of the first graders in junior high school) -know few vocabulary, phrases, or grammar	5
2	-listening 2 (intermediate proficiency equivalent to the level of the second graders in junior high school) -know some vocabulary, phrases, and grammar	4

The reason why the researcher decided to enhance the subjects listening skills is that they had a number of opportunities to participate in the World Championship abroad. They need to have listening ability to comprehend the broadcast on the airplane or at the airport, and they also have the opportunity to converse with foreign athletes.

### **3.5 Course Design**

This project aims to improve low-achievers' listening ability through listening to songs and listening to passages. The two features of the course design are (1) course design adjusted according to subjects' journals (see Table 4 & Table 5), and (2) classroom activities integrated with MI theory are presented below (see Table 6 & Table 7).

#### **3.5.1 Course Design for Listening to English Songs**

The purposes of course design for listening to English songs were (1) to motivate low achievers in the present study toward English learning, and (2) to review grammar that they previously learned. Considering cognitive and affective factors, and the results of the pretest, the researcher selected English songs because of Krashen's "Input

Hypothesis”, i.e. comprehensible input. Namely, choose materials which go a little beyond the learners’ current language proficiency. Tapes of English songs were replayed three times throughout the project and sample. Course design of weeks 1, 6 and 12 is described below (see Table 4).

**Table 4 Lesson Plan of Listening to English Songs**

Week	Title	Song Types	Listening Skills Listening for the main idea Listening for specific information	Aims	Grammar	Lexis N=new O=old
1	The Lion Sleeps Tonight	Pop song (top 10)	1.Choosing appropriate words 2.Understanding theme	Reviewing vocabulary	Simple present tense	N: jungle/ village/ mighty O: peaceful / fear
6	I'll Follow Him	Theme song for a movie	1.Understanding theme 2.Understanding specific words	Interpreting a song visually	1.Imperatives 2.Future tense	N: ocean/ destiny/ forever O: follow/ mountain/ touch/hand
12	Rhythm Of The Rain	Advertising song	Understanding and enjoying a song	Intensive listening	1.I wish that+S+V-ed/Were 2.I wish that+S+have+PP 3.Little+V+S	N: rhythm/ brand/ aglow O: fool/ steal/ care/rain

Note: See Appendix B for the whole of lesson plan of listening to English songs.

Song selection was based on both grammar and vocabulary difficulty because the lyrics with simple grammar and vocabulary were both motivating and easy to understand. Originally, the researcher selected pop songs (Top 10) as listening materials for the first four weeks. However, students’ journals revealed that the subjects were unfamiliar with some pop songs which were popular among regular high school students. To motivate the subjects, from the fifth week to the last one the researcher adopted theme songs for movies which had won awards by Academy Awards, and selected advertising songs on TV in Taiwan (i.e., those are commercials for Toyota car and for a brand of chewing gum).

The subjects appeared to have an interest in both advertising songs and theme songs for movies owing to familiar song melody.

### **3.5.2 Course Design for Listening to Passages**

Listening to passages is designed for low-achievers in the present study to review vocabulary, phrases, and grammatical structures. The course seeks to enable low-achievers in the present study to improve their listening ability and to build their self-confidence so as to motivate their English learning. Tapes containing the passages were replayed three times. A sample lesson plan of weeks 1, 6 and 12 is tabulated in Table 5 below.

**Table 5 Lesson Plan of Listening to Passages**

Week	Topics	Listening skills Listening for the main idea Listening for specific information Listening between the lines	Grammar	Lexis old
1	Sports	1.Choosing appropriate responses 2.Understanding sports scores 3.Sentence dictation	Present perfect tense	several/since/favorite won/left/end/done/ player/hard/shot/wish
6	Technology	1.Understanding description of people and things 2.Choosing appropriate responses 3.Understanding questionnaire 4.Sentence dictation	Relative clause (who, which, that)	ideal/mate/handsome/ age/size/strong/talent/star /kind/joke/story/inch/color /software/communication/ machine/after all/enter/tell /shut up/draw/solve/link/ send
12	Pets	1.Choosing appropriate responses 2.Understanding description of people and things 3.Understanding questions 4.Sentence dictation	1.Noun clause 2. When+S+V-ed..., S+was/were+V-ing 3.While+S+was/were + V-ing, S+was/were + V-ing 4. S+will+ V...next time 5. S+keep+sth+adj 6.S+keep+sb+adj/ving 7. S+keep+animals	bedtime/dining room/ towel/box/wall/garden/ into/weed/tonight/toward/ ground/gentle/keep/leave/ spread/save/weed/return/ fall asleep/shine/brown

Note: See Appendix C for the whole of lesson plan of listening to passages.

Course design for listening to passages focused on mastering listening skills (i.e., listening for the main idea, listening for specific information, and listening between the lines) by means of spiraling curriculum. Students were able to review vocabulary, phrases, or grammatical structures through various listening activities.

### **3.5.3 Classroom Activities Integrated with MI Theory**

The purpose of classroom activities was to motivate low achievers in the present study. Those activities included three parts: (1) pre-listening, (2) while-listening, (3) post-listening. Pre-listening activities, done in pairs or small groups, served to review vocabulary, phrases, and grammatical structures, they already knew. While-listening activities, done in pairs or small groups, were the major listening exercises. The tasks included listening for the main idea, identifying specific information (e.g. lexis, phrases, sentence structures), and making inferences. Because while-listening activities featured various tasks, low achievers in the present study were doing the tasks as they listened. Post-listening activities, done individually, included peer correction, oral test (i.e. students recited song lyrics in front of the teacher), and journal writing, providing low achievers with opportunities for introspection.

Adapting the idea from the article “Multiple Intelligences Theory and English Language Teaching” (Lin, 2003), the researcher took MI theory into consideration while designing classroom activities (e.g. listening activities integrated with multiple intelligences) so that low achievers in the present study were given various ways of working with song lyrics and with passages in terms of reviewing lexis, phrases, and grammar.

#### **Activities for Listening to Songs**

At least five ways of knowing beyond the musical/rhythmic were active in this section (see Table 6). Verbal/linguistic intelligence was utilized at pre-listening activities and sentence making, as well as at while-listening, and post-listening activities. Bodily/kinesthetic intelligence was employed at pre-listening stage to aid students with the meanings of lexis and phrases. Visual/spatial intelligence was used at while-listening stage to help students accomplish the task through drawing. Interpersonal intelligence was used at the pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening stages to assist students with

classroom activities. Intrapersonal intelligence was involved at the post-listening stage when students corrected responses (in class), participated in oral test (in class), and wrote journals (after class).

Sample activities for listening to songs of weeks 1, 6 and 12 were tabulated in Table 6 below. Based on feedback from students' journals, listening activities from the third week to the twelfth were adjusted in order to review vocabulary and grammar points that the students had learned in previous weeks. The adjusted activities on listening to songs were presented in Appendix D.

**Table 6 Activities for Listening to Songs**

Week		Classroom Activities	Multiple Intelligence	Listening Skills
1	Pre-listening	1. Handing out the copies of background knowledge (1min.) 2.Explaining background knowledge (1 min.) 3. Introducing and reviewing lexis through the strategy of discussion. (6 mins.) 4. Asking students to write out the meaning of the lexis and its phonetic symbol on the blackboard.	1. Verbal/ Linguistic (through lecture) 2. Bodily/ Kinesthetic (through group work and individual writing on the blackboard) 3. Interpersonal (through pair work)	
	While-listening	1. Giving the copies of the full lyrics with missing words to the students. (5 mins.) 2. Listening Task 1: Listening to the song to grasp the main idea. Then finish word cloze individually. (20 mins.)	1. Verbal/ Linguistic (through listening and listening strategies) 2. Musical/ Rhythmic (through group work)	1.Listening for the main idea 2.Listening for specific information
	Post-listening	1.Peer correction (in class) 2.Oral test (in class) 3.Journal writing (after class)	1. Verbal/ Linguistic 2.Interpersonal 3.Intrapersonal	

(to be continued)

Week		Classroom Activities	Multiple Intelligence	Listening Skills
6	Pre-listening	feedback-adjusted 1. Doing sentence-making exercises by working in groups. 2. Reviewing grammar points and drills. (by group work)	1. Verbal/ Linguistic 2. Bodily/ Kinesthetic (through group work and individual writing on the blackboard) 3. Interpersonal	
	While-listening	feedback-adjusted Task 1: Copies of the full lyrics were given to the whole class. Task 2: Listen for theme, listen to the song and interpret the song visually through group work. Task 3: Draw objects and places mentioned in the song. Write the name of the item under each drawing. (by working individually) Task 4: Listen again to check the correct words related to the drawings.	1. Verbal/ Linguistic (through listening and listening strategies) 2. Musical/ Rhythmic (through group work) 3. Visual/Spatial 4. Interpersonal (through group work)	1. Listening for the main idea 2. Listening for specific information
	Post-listening	1. Peer correction (in class)	1. Verbal/Linguistic 2. Interpersonal	

(to be continued)

Week		Classroom Activities	Multiple Intelligence	Listening Skills
6	Post-listening	2.Small group discussion on individual feelings toward the song (in class) 3. Individually reciting the lyrics in front of the teacher. (in class) 4. Journal writing (after class)	3. Intrapersonal	
12	Pre-listening	feedback-adjusted 1. Handing out the copies of background knowledge (1min.) 2. Explaining background knowledge (1 min.) 3. Introducing and reviewing lexis through the strategy of discussion. (6 mins.) 4. Asking students to write out the meaning of the word and its phonetic symbol on the blackboard. (5 mins.) 5. Sentence-making with lexis and phrases by group work. (5 mins.) 6. Reviewing grammar points. (5 mins.)	1.Verbal/ Linguistic 2.Bodily/ Kinesthetic (through group work and individual writing on the blackboard) 3.Interpersonal	

(to be continued)

Week		Classroom Activities	Multiple Intelligence	Listening Skills
12	While-listening	feedback-adjusted Task 1: Pass out a closed form of the lyrics with word list provided for the whole class. Task 2: Listen for the missing words and fill in the cloze by selecting the word provided. (by working individually) Task 3: Go over the answers to make sure that the subjects understood. Task 4: Listen again to check the lyrics. (by working individually)	1. Verbal/Linguistic (through listening and listening strategies) 2. Musical/Rhythmic (through group work) 3. Interpersonal (through group work)	1. Listening for the main idea 2. Listening for specific information
	Post-listening	1. Peer correction (in class) 2. Oral test (in class) 3. Journal writing (after class)	1. Verbal/Linguistic 2. Interpersonal 3. Intrapersonal	

### Activities for Listening to Passages

In addition to the interpersonal emphasis of this section, verbal/linguistic, bodily/kinesthetic, visual/spatial and intrapersonal intelligences were involved (see Table 7). Verbal/Linguistic intelligence was employed at pre-listening activities and sentence making. Bodily/Kinesthetic intelligence was used at the pre-listening stage to help students understand the meaning of vocabulary and phrases. Visual/Spatial intelligence was accessed through using pictures to help students complete listening tasks at the while-listening stage. Intrapersonal intelligence was involved at the post-listening stage when students checked answers with partners and did journal writing after class.

Sample activities for listening to passages of weeks 1, 6 and 12 were tabulated in Table 7 below. Based on feedback from students' journals, adjusted activities from the second week to the last one were stated in Appendix E in detail.

**Table 7 Activities for Listening to Passages**

Week		Classroom Activities	Multiple Intelligence	Listening Skills
1	Pre-listening	1. Hand out the copies of background knowledge and explain its topic. 2. Review lexis, phrases, and grammatical structures. (through group work)	1. Verbal/ Linguistic (through lecture) 2. Bodily/ Kinesthetic 3. Interpersonal ( through group work)	
	While-listening	Task 1: Listen to tape and circle the word. Task 2: Listen to tape and select the picture. Task 3: Listen to the statement. Write T on the picture related to it. Write F on the picture irrelevant to it. Task 4: Listen to the dialogue. Select suitable answers according to the picture.	1. Verbal/ Linguistic 2. Visual/Spatial 3. Interpersonal	1. Listening for the main idea 2. Listening for specific information 3. Listening between the lines

(to be continued)

Week		Classroom Activities	Multiple Intelligence	Listening Skills
1	While-listening	Task 5. Listen to the dialogue. Choose the correct answer. Task 6: Listen to tape. Fill in the blank with a proper word. Task7: Dictation.		1.Listening for the main idea 2.Listening for specific information 3. Listening between the lines
	Post-listening	1. Peer correction. (in class) 2. Journal writing (after class)	1. Verbal/ Linguistic 2. Interpersonal 3. Intrapersonal	
6	Pre-listening	1. Hand out the copies of background knowledge and explain its topic. 2. Review lexis, phrases, and grammatical structures. (through group work)	1. Verbal/ Linguistic (through lecture) 2. Bodily/ Kinesthetic 3. Interpersonal ( through group work)	
	While-listening	Task 1: Listen to tape and circle the word. Task 2: Listen to tape and select the picture.	1. Verbal/ Linguistic 2. Visual/Spatial	

(to be continued)

Week		Classroom Activities	Multiple Intelligence	Listening Skills
6	While-listening	<p>Task 3: Listen to the dialogue. Fill in the blank with a mark of the people according to the picture.</p> <p>Task 4: Listen to the question and choose the best response.</p> <p>Task 5: Listen to the dialogue. Choose appropriate answer.</p> <p>Task 6: Listen to tape. Fill in the blank with a proper word.</p> <p>Task7: Dictation.</p>	3. Interpersonal	<p>1.Listening for the main idea</p> <p>2.Listening for specific information</p> <p>3. Listening between the lines</p>
	Post-listening	<p>1. Peer correction. (in class)</p> <p>2. Journal writing (after class)</p>	<p>1. Verbal/ Linguistic</p> <p>2. Interpersonal</p> <p>3. Intrapersonal</p>	
12	Pre-listening	<p>1. Hand out the copies of background knowledge and explain its topic.</p> <p>2. Review lexis, phrases, and grammatical structures. (through group work)</p>	<p>1. Verbal/ Linguistic (through lecture)</p> <p>2. Bodily/ Kinesthetic</p> <p>3. Interpersonal ( through group work)</p>	

(to be continued)

Week		Classroom Activities	Multiple Intelligence	Listening Skills
12	While-listening	Task 1: Listen to tape and circle the word. Task 2: Listen to tape and select the picture. Task 3: Listen to the statement. Put scrambled pictures in order. Task 4: Listen to the question. Select suitable answers according to the picture. Task 5: Listen to the dialogue. Choose appropriate answers. Task 6: Listen to tape. Fill in the blank with a proper word. Task 7: Dictation.	1. Verbal/Linguistic 2. Visual/Spatial 3. Interpersonal	1. Listening for the main idea 2. Listening for specific information 3. Listening between the lines
	Post-listening	1. Peer correction. (in class) 2. Journal writing (after class)	1. Verbal/Linguistic 2. Interpersonal 3. Intrapersonal	

The principle of design on the classroom activities was to maintain and promote motivation by making the learning process more stimulating and enjoyable (Dornyei, 2001). Therefore, the reason of arrangement on listening activities was to repeat and to practice a lot in various ways (Horwitz, 1988) so that low-achievers in the present study were able to master language elements (i.e., vocabulary, grammar) and to sustain their involvement.

At the beginning of listening treatment, the subjects were asked to complete listening tasks individually. According to prompt-feedback from students' journals, students enjoyed working with each other; therefore, while-listening activities were adjusted to pair work from week 2 to week 3. Moreover, based on students' prompt-feedback, from week 4 to week 12 students were allowed to take the pre-listening handouts as a reference to help them spell out vocabulary or phrases at the while-listening stage when they worked on the "Listening cloze" and "Dictation" activities.

### **3.6 Procedures of the Study**

The study was carried out through five stages: (1) a pre-test, (2) listening to songs, (3) listening to passages, (4) journal writing, and (5) a post-test.

#### **3.6.1 Pre-Test**

Before listening training, the subjects took a pre-test to check their entry level in late September, 2003. Although subjects were seniors in high school, the listening texts used for the pre-test were adopted from English Listening Comprehension Test for 1<sup>st</sup> year Junior High School students (see Appendix F1-F2) and that for 2<sup>nd</sup> year Junior High School students (1998) (see Appendix F3-F4) due to the poor English proficiency. Surprisingly, most subjects felt that the questions for pretest (i.e. English Listening Comprehension Test for 1<sup>st</sup> year Junior High School students) were too simple. Thus, they

were asked to take pretest two (English Listening Comprehension Test for 2<sup>nd</sup> year Junior High School students) to confirm their diverse entry level.

### **3.6.2 The Procedures of Listening to Songs**

Twelve English songs were selected to be played in the twelve weeks during the semester. On Tuesday of every week, one type of English songs was played. For example, popular songs (top 10) were played on the first four weeks; two theme songs for movies were played on the fifth and sixth weeks; three advertising songs on TV were played from the seventh to the ninth week; during the last three weeks, a pop song, one theme song for a movie, and an advertising song were played based on the feedback from students' journals.

Before the class began, the researcher had to (1) prepare a hand-out with information about vocabulary, grammatical structures, the background information of the song, and its singer (see Appendix G1-G12), (2) make copies of the hand-out for the whole class, (3) type out the full lyrics with key words removed (see Appendix H1-H12), and (4) make a tape for the recording of English songs.

At the pre-listening stage, the researcher delivered the handouts to the students and then helped them review vocabulary, grammar, or learn new lexis through pre-listening activities. At the while-listening stage, students were required to complete listening tasks through group work. At the post-listening stage, students had to check correct answers, to share their thoughts and feelings toward the song by discussing in small groups, to individually recite the lyrics in front of the teacher, and to write journal entry after class.

### **3.6.3 The Procedure of Listening to Passages**

Before the class began, the researcher asked the subjects to decorate classroom based on the listening texts. For example, the subjects regularly pinned up the posters

related to listening materials (e.g. sports, safety, transportation, pets etc.) on the wall. They replaced bulletin board displays with clippings from the China Post or Taiwan News. The teacher prepared a hand-out with vocabulary, phrases, and syntactic structures (see Appendix I), typed out the transcript of the tape (see Appendix J1-J3), and made copies for the whole class.

During the class, the subjects were required to accomplish listening tasks through small group work. At the post-listening stage, the subjects received the transcript of the tape to check the answers. Finally, they kept journal writing after class.

#### **3.6.4 Journal Writing**

The subjects had to keep journal writing after class and handed it in once a week so that they were able to get feedback from the teacher and to have their moments of quiet introspection on progress in listening treatment (see Appendix A4-A5). Besides, the teacher adjusted teaching activities and English songs according to students' journals to meet subjects' needs.

#### **3.6.5 Post-Test**

After twelve weeks of instruction, the researcher gave the subjects a post-test (i.e., the post-test was adopted from English Listening Comprehension Test for 3<sup>rd</sup> year Junior High School students, 1998, Kang Shiuan Company, Taiwan) (see Appendix K1-K2).

### **3.7 Make-Up Class**

#### **PE Students Were Not Able to Attend Classes Regularly**

Although all the subjects were in one class, they belonged to three different sports teams: basketball, taekwondo, and handball. Each team had to take intensive training to participate in different competitions (i.e., they included county contest, Taiwan Area

Athletic Meet, or international championship) during the semester. As a result, they had limited time available for English learning at school. Students, returning to school from the competitions, were demanded to attend remedial English classes on Wednesday and Friday after the regular class periods (i.e., regular classes started from eight o'clock in the morning to four o'clock in the afternoon).

### **3.8 Data Analysis**

The journals in this project consisted of two parts: Part I was designed as questionnaires in the form of a five-point Likert scale (5=100%, 4=75%, 3=50%, 2=25%, 1=0%), which was used to measure low achievers' listening comprehension competence (see Table 8 & Table 9). Part II provided low achievers with open-ended questions, which allowed low achievers to express their views on listening problems in the learning process or on teaching (see Table 10 & Table 11).

### **3.9 Limitations of the Study**

This section describes the limitations of the study. The generalizations of the findings in the present project are restricted by the following aspects.

First, this study is aimed at improving low-achievers' listening ability on the senior high PE students. In other words, the subjects are limited to senior high PE students. It is worthwhile investigating whether the listening treatment will produce the same effect on the other groups of low-achievers, such as the students at art class, dance class, or music class.

Second, the researcher, for sampling convenience, restricted the number of the students in physical education class to only fourteen in the school where the researcher is teaching. If the number of the subjects were increased, the chosen samples would have been more representative.

Finally, journal writing may not necessarily reflect reality. The present study utilized journals as an instrument to provide the participants with channels to communicate with the instructor on their learning barriers, to obtain immediate feedback, and to introspect on listening activities. Although journals are self-report as well as an important introspective tool in language research, the participants may give a report inconsistent with the fact in order to please the teacher and to satisfy the study demand. Nevertheless, journals were adopted due to good rapport between the students and the instructor. Moreover, the instructor also interviewed students individually to confirm the reliability of journals.