

**Perceptions of Secondary Level English Language Teachers towards Testing  
Listening Skill**

**A Thesis Submitted to the Department of English Education  
In Partial Fulfilment for the Master of Education in English**

**Submitted by  
Pabina Regmi**

**Faculty of Education  
Tribhuvan University,  
Kirtipur, Kathmandu, Nepal**

**2022**

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## Declaration

I hereby declare that to the best of my knowledge, this thesis is original; no part of it was earlier submitted for the candidature of research degree to any university.

Date: 26-02-2022

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This is to certify that **Ms. Pabina Regmi** has worked and completed her M.Ed. thesis entitled **Perception of Secondary Level English Language Teachers towards Testing Listening Skill** under my guidance and supervision.

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## **Dedication**

Dedicated to my parents  
for the exceptional love, endless support and sacrifices.

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**Pabina Regmi**

## Abstract

The research entitled **Perception of Secondary level English Language Teachers towards Testing Listening** was carried to explore secondary level English language teacher's perceptions on testing listening. Considering the objectives the primary data were collected using the questionnaire to thirty secondary level English teachers teaching at different schools of Gorkha district. The participants were selected using simple random sampling procedure. A set of questionnaire was used as tools for data collection. The data obtained from respondents have been analyzed and interpreted using statistical tools. The study found that the teachers are positive towards testing listening. Additionally, large number of students in class, noisy classroom environment and inadequate materials are the challenges faced by English language teachers while testing listening skill. Cassette player is only source of testing listening, but there is not cassette player in many schools. The finding shows that all participant teachers expressed curriculum designers and text book writers should give equal importance to designing the test items in testing listening.

This thesis consists of five chapters. Each chapter is an important of this study. The first chapter deals with the introduction of the study which consists of background of the study, statement of problem, objectives if the study, research 'questions, significance of the problem, delimitation of the study and operational definitions of key terms. Similarly, the second chapter consists of review of theoretical as well as empirical literature and implications for the study: more importantly, it includes the conceptual framework. Likewise, the third chapter deals with the methods and procedures of the study which cover design and method of the study, population sample and sampling strategy, research tools, source of data, data collection procedure, data analysis procedure and ethical considerations. Then, the fourth chapter deals with the analysis and interpretations of data. Finally, fifth chapter deals with findings, conclusion of the study and implications of the study.

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### List of Symbols and Abbreviations

CD	:	Compact Disc
CDC	:	Curriculum Development Center
CLT	:	Communicative Language Teaching
Dr	:	Doctor
EFL	:	English as a Foreign Language
ELT	:	English Language Teaching
ESL	:	English as Second Language
etc.	:	Etcetera
Fig.	:	Figure
FoE	:	Faculty of Education
i.e.	:	id est (Latin), that is
ibid.	:	Ibiden (Latin), in the same book or piece of writing
L1	:	First Language
L2	:	Second Language
M. Ed.	:	Masters in Education
Prof.	:	Professor
T.U.	:	Tribhuvan University
T.V.	:	Television
TPD	:	Teachers' Professional Development
TPS	:	Think Pair and Share
WWW	:	World Wide Web

## Chapter 1

### Introduction

This study **Perception of Secondary Level English Language Teachers towards Testing Listening Skill** provides secondary level teachers' views on testing listening skill in the secondary level ESL classes. This chapter consists of background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations of the study and operational definitions of key terms.

### Background of the Study

Listening is the ability to identify and understand what others are saying. This involves understanding a speaker's accent or pronunciation, his grammar and vocabulary and grasping his meaning. Language is a means of communication. It is used to express feelings, emotions, desires, ideas and experiences so on. In fact, all the people in the world speak at least one language. Normally, the first language that the human beings speak is their mother tongue. For many years, listening skills did not receive priority in language teaching. Teaching methods emphasized productive skills, and the relationship between receptive and productive skills was poorly understood ( Richard and Renandya, 2010). In fact, among the four skills, listening is primary language skill. A child becomes able to speak after getting enough exposure to the language through listening.

There are four language skills, and listening is one of them. Listening is an active process of perceiving sounds and constructing a message from a stream of sounds. It is the ability to identify and understand what others are saying. However, only teaching is not enough. There should be the use of right appropriate methodology. In this context, it is imperative to explore whether listening is taught as it should have been or not. Furthermore, it is equally important to find out gap between the teachers' theoretical knowledge of teaching listening and its application in the classroom. Thus, the research was carried out in order to find out the reality.

Different linguists have defined language differently. Crystal (1994, p. 212) defines language as 'the systematic, conventional use of sound, signs, or written symbols in a human society for communication and self-expression. That is to say, language is systematic use of speech for communication. It is always learned in a real situation. So, we learn it in the natural situation.

Language is a primary means of communication; it is taught and learned everywhere. English is widely spoken all over the world. Therefore, English language teaching (ELT) has become a common term for all the teachers worldwide. Language has four skills, viz. listening, speaking, reading and writing. The former two skills are learned as primary language skills, whereas the latter ones are regarded as secondary language skills. Among them, listening and reading are receptive skills, while speaking and writing are productive skills. In real life situation, we use language to exchange our feelings and ideas. It is used in communication. While communicating, interlocutors first listen, and then speak. Without listening, speaking may not be possible and feasible as well. That is the reason why listening is prerequisite to other skills.

Listening is the primary language skill. First we listen, and then we begin to speak. The researches show that congenitally deaf children are not able to acquire language though they are exposed to language for a long time. Therefore, listening is the most important skill of all. The primary purpose of language teaching is to develop communicative competence in the learners. For the development of communicative competence in the learners, listening skill is also equally important including other ones. One of the principles of language teaching is: listening can be developed through listening; speaking can be developed through speaking; and so forth. So, we can develop listening skill in students through teaching listening.

Present English curriculum of secondary level is based on the communicative approach to language teaching. It has incorporated four language skills and language functions in its content. Listening skill is also focused in the curriculum. In the examination, 10% of the total marks is allocated to listening skill. The secondary level curriculum of Nepal aims at developing the communicative competence in students. That is to say, it is based on the communicative approach to language teaching. The teachers teaching at this level, are expected to teach the listening skill

in accordance with the objectives of the curriculum. This skill should be equally focused as other skills of language teaching but in reality, this skill has been neglected. In our context, recent secondary level English book includes different types of listening activities. They are: telephone conversation, description, announcement, instruction, giving direction, radio news etc. These activities are very useful in teaching listening skill.

Testing listening involves a variety of skills. At the lowest level, it involves discrimination among sounds, discrimination among intonation and stress patterns, and comprehension of short and long listening text. Listening is one of the crucial language skills. Therefore, like other skills it should be taught and tested properly and regularly. Why testing listening, different aspects of language should be tested. These generally encompass grammatical knowledge, discourse knowledge, pragmatic knowledge, sociolinguistic knowledge, etc. in this way, testers have to test the different aspects of listening skill. Listening perception and listening comprehension skill are to be taken into account while testing listening skills.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The importance of listening in language learning has been increasing in the present years. In the past it is used to be overlooked and educators supposed that listening abilities would be acquired during the grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation practice (Hedge, 2010). However, it is quite surprising that testing listening is neglected in schools. But, it is impossible to acquire other skills without listening since it is the basic skill of language acquisition.

There are multiple reasons for example -for developing basic skill of language learning, developing or supporting other language skills, making students aware to receive proper message from others and so on for testing listening. Thus, the teachers need to focus on testing listening. It should develop the ability to understand and contribute to communication. Likewise, students have to develop effective listening strategies that will enable them to learn, another-language. However,-it seems neglected in schools. The English teachers do not test listening separately because listening does not have main role in the main-stream testing. Secondary level English course prescribes listening lesson in each unit. However, the teachers will not find

teaching listening according to the course. Most of the teachers will be neglected and they giving less priority to listening in their teaching. Therefore, why listening skill given less priority in teaching? What problems are faced in teaching listening skill? And what may be effective strategies in teaching listening skill? These questions made me curious that is why I am interested to carry out this research.

### **Research Objectives**

The research objectives of this study were as follows:

- i. To explore the perceptions of secondary level English teachers towards testing listening skill.
- ii. To identify the difficulties faced by the secondary level English teachers while testing listening skill.
- iii. To suggest some pedagogical implications.

### **Research Questions**

The following were the research questions:

- i. What are the perceptions of secondary level English language teachers towards testing listening skill?
- ii. What are the difficulties faced by the secondary level English teachers while testing listening?

### **Significance of the Study**

It is essential to make all die concerned people aware of the importance of teaching listening. This study will shed light on the different techniques and activities of teaching listening used by the secondary level English teachers. Moreover, it will find out how English teachers test listening skill in the secondary level. It will also be useful study to. Find out the role of teaching and testing listening skill for learning other skills. Thus, this study will also be a helpful for the teachers to make use of their theoretical knowledge in testing listening. Furthermore, the research findings will be guidelines for syllabus designers, materials writers and other ELT experts to devise appropriate listening materials.

## **Delimitations of the Study**

The study were the following delimitations:

- i. The study was delimited to the community schools of Gorkha district.
- ii. The total population of study was all English teachers who have been teaching in community schools in Gorkha district, as a sample of population thirty secondary level English teachers were selected.
- iii. The design of the study was survey research.
- iv. The tool for collecting data was questionnaire for teachers.

## **Operational Definitions of the Key Terms**

***Listening skill.*** Listening skill refers to the basic skill of developing language. It is a receptive skill of language development. In this research listening skill refers to the listening skill of the secondary level-students in English.

***Secondary level.*** In this research secondary level refers to Class 9 and 10.

***Teaching.*** Here, teaching refers to teaching listening skill in the secondary level. In this research teaching indicates teaching English in Secondary level in Government schools.

***Testing listening.*** Here, testing listening means basic skill of developing language and the ways of evaluating listening skill in the secondary level.

***Testing.*** Here, testing refers to one of the ways of evaluating listening skill in the secondary level. In this research testing symbolizes testing of listening skill in secondary level.

## Chapter 2

### Review of Related Literature and Conceptual Framework

This chapter includes the review of theoretical literature, review of empirical literature, implications of the review and conceptual framework of the study

#### Review of Theoretical Literature

Review of theoretical literature is very important part in the research. It is important for clarifying the concept of deep study of the research. The theoretical literature review helps to establish what theories already exist, the relationship between them, to what degree the existing theories have been investigated, and to develop new hypothesis to be tested. Review of related theoretical literature is important to the researcher since it provides insight to a researcher to a number of aspects.

**Teaching listening.** Teaching may be defined as showing or helping someone to learn how to do something giving instruction, guiding in the study of something providing with knowledge, causing to know or understand. The purpose of teaching listening is to make learners able to listen and comprehend the spoken discourse of the target language. Developing listening skill involves active cognitive processing. Seville- Trokie (2007,p.159) states “Listening is a critically important activity, however both for learner who want or need participate in oral interpretation communication and for learners who want or need to receive information from such oral sources lectures and media broadcast without any proper guideline or instruction it is mostly not good to push the student into listening comprehension. Likewise, listening is the activity of paying attention to and trying to get meaning from something we hear (Underwood, 1989, p. 1). It involves understanding a speaker's accent and pronunciation, his grammar and vocabulary and grasping his meaning. For successful communication, listening skill is essential, so it should be taught to the students.

In order to teach listening comprehension effectively, the teacher should be clear about the skill to be developed in the students. Rivers (1978,p. 142), states

before the teacher can devise a sequence of activities which will train students in listening comprehension, he must understand the nature of the skill he is setting out to develop. Field in Richards and Renandya (2010, p. 242) examines a commonly used format for the teaching of listening, one which involves three stages in a listening activity: pre-listening, listening and post-listening.

Listening skill is one of the-most important language skills, for it exists prior to other language skills. Language exposure to learners acts as a form of ear training. Therefore, the teacher should provide the learners with adequate exposure to English. Without listening, learners cannot learn language. Thus, teaching listening should be done on the regular basis in the classroom.

In order to teach listening properly and effectively, appropriate approach should be used. Without employing the appropriate approach, listening skill can not be taught well. For the development of appropriate approaches to teaching listening skills, it is essential to understand the nature of listening. In this regard, Nunan in Richards and Renandya (2010) mentions two types of models: the bottom-up and the top-down processing models. The bottom-up processing model asserts that listening is a process of understanding meaning from phonemes to complete texts. The top down processing model, on the other hand, views that listening is the process of understanding meaning on the basis of the listener's shared or prior knowledge. In this way, these models are to be taken into account while teaching listening.

Thus, listening skill should be taught properly to the students at school. Instead of leaving it to be developed as part of a pupil's general education training, it is to be taught explicitly to them. Students spend half of the classroom time listening, so it should be developed properly. In this context, Hron (1985, as cited in Rost, 1994, p. 118) suggests that listening should be developed in all school children since it is a vital means of learning that may be as important as reading. Thus, teaching listening should be done developing the listening abilities of the students.

**Listening comprehension.** Comprehension refers to the process by which a person understands the meaning of an utterance. Listening comprehension refers to the mental process of extracting meaning from a stream of sounds or utterances. Simply; it is the construction of meaning or message from sounds. Broadly speaking,

listening comprehension subsumes the process of identifying words, building information and utilizing the information. Thus, listening comprehension is the process of decoding the message or meaning of an utterance.

Listening comprehension checks the comprehension level of the students in listening. Teaching listening enables the students to face challenges dealing with real life situation. The speakers usually speak fairly quickly, spontaneously and naturally in real life situations. Therefore, the listener should be attentive to grasp the ideas within limited time frame. For this, students are to be exposed to the authentic texts so that their comprehension level can be improved.

**Listening skills.** Teaching listening is not a single skill. It is the integration of several skills. Listening basically involves two sub- skills: listening perception and listening comprehension. The former involves the recognition and discrimination of minimal segmental sound units, their combinations, rhythm, stress, intonation, etc. The latter, on the other hand, involves understanding the meaning of an utterance. Different scholars have mentioned different listening skills. These skills should be taken into account by the teachers while teaching listening.

According to Harmer (2008, p. 135) listening skill incorporates the recognizing paralinguistic clues in the text, extracting specific information from the text and getting the general idea of the text.

Regarding the components of listening, Rost (1994, p. 142) presents the discriminating between sounds, recognizing words, identifying stressed words and grouping of words, identifying functions in a conversation. The components of listening is connecting linguistic cues to paralinguistic cues, using background knowledge and context to predict and then to confirm meaning. Furthermore, recalling important words, topics and ideas, giving appropriate feedback to the speaker, reformulating what the speaker has said are the components of listening skill.

Thus, listening is essential skill of language acquisition. While listening, the listener should be active enough to discriminate different sounds and their contextual use. The learners must be quiet sound in receiving sounds.

**Listening strategies.** Listeners while listening to any text employ a number of strategies. Listeners exploit such strategies to comprehend the listening text well. Several researches have also found that people who are successful in listening to a foreign language tend to use several general strategies. Lynch (2007, p. 16) calls such strategies as macro-strategies. Listeners employ such strategies to help themselves before, during and after listening. They are described as below:

***Predicting.*** Thinking about the possible content of the lecture before listening.

***Monitoring.*** Noticing your problem as you listen and identifying areas of uncertainty.

***Responding.*** Giving your own opinion on the ideas presented by the lecturer.

***Clarifying.*** Preparing questions that you can ask the lecturer so as to get a clearer understanding.

***Inferences.*** Making hypotheses when you are not sure of something, such as the meaning of an unfamiliar word or expression.

***Evaluating.*** Assessing how well you have understood the lecture.

In this way, listening is an essential activity for language teaching. The teacher should be more active enough to make the learners able to listen and do activities. There must be the application of number of activities to be applied while testing listening.

**Materials for teaching listening.** Listening skill cannot be taught without using materials. In order to make the teaching listening interesting; lively, and student-centered, different sorts of materials should be used. Since students learn from what they listen, the listening materials need to be a model for them. For this purpose, authentic materials should be exploited in teaching listening. Thus, the teachers should be clear about authentic and non- authentic materials prior to teaching listening. Generally speaking, the material which is prepared for the purpose of teaching is called non-authentic material whereas the material prepared for some other purposes but can be used for teaching listening as well is called authentic

material. In this context, Forman (1986, as cited in Underwood, 1989, p. 98) made the strictest distinction between 'authentic' and 'non-authentic':

Any text is 'authentic' if it was produced in response to real life communicative needs rather than as an imitation of real life communicative needs. The term can be applied to any sort of text, written or spoken, and in relation to any kind of situation of language use. A text purporting to be a radio news bulletin is authentic if it really is a radio news bulletin and is not authentic if it was produced for some other purpose, e.g. as an imitation of a radio news bulletin for purposes of language teaching.

In this way, both the types of materials should be used while teaching listening. If the non-authentic materials are used only, students may not be familiar with the types of listening they hear in the real-life situations.

***Types of listening materials.*** Broadly speaking, two types of materials may be used in teaching listening: live materials and recorded materials. If a teacher uses his/her own voice as the listening material, it is called live material and if the teacher uses the material produced by others, it is called recorded material such as cassette, CD, etc. The actual speech of the teacher, students and other people is known as live materials. Live T.V. or radio programs can be exploited as the live materials as well. They are generally natural. Recorded materials, on the other hand, are the materials recorded in the audio or video tapes. Audio-visual or only audiotapes can be used. In this context, Cross (1992, p. 250) has classified the recorded material for listening on the basis of its content. He has categorized recorded texts under authentic, scripted and semi-scripted texts. They can be described as below:

***Authentic texts.*** These are recordings made from the radio, live recordings made in the street or market place, unedited and unscripted talks or discussions by native speakers, and so on.

***Scripted texts.*** These are recordings of fluent speakers reading exactly what is on a page, but trying to sound spontaneous. Published textbook and support materials are of this sort. They are not at all representative of the ways in which people really speak to each other, but they can be very useful, even so.

*Semi-scripted texts.* These are a useful compromise for teachers who want to exercise some control but who, even so, want a class to hear more or less authentic forms. The speakers are given guidelines but they are free to express these ideas in their own ways.

So, any kind of audio material can be used in the class for testing listening skill. The teacher should select authentic and reliable materials. Moreover, those selected materials should develop listening skill of the learners.

***Criteria for the selection of listening materials.*** While selecting the listening materials (i.e. recorded materials), certain criteria are to be followed. All the types of materials available in the market may not be suitable and appropriate for the students. Even within the same class, different types of materials may be used in accordance with the level of the students. Therefore, the teacher has to adopt certain criteria while selecting those materials. If possible and feasible; the teachers can prepare the materials themselves. In this context, Underwood-1989, p. 102) talks about following criteria:

*Language.* While selecting the materials, the language should be considered. The materials should have the purpose of teaching language. Similarly, the language of the material itself should be appropriate.

*Length.* The materials of appropriate length should be selected. Generally, too short and too long materials are not considered as good ones.

*Content.* All the students cannot comprehend all sorts of texts. Generally, the students want to listen such types of texts which are useful to them. Thus, the content of the materials is to be deemed while selecting them.

*The use of visual support materials.* If visual materials are used while teaching listening, teaching listening becomes effective. The visual materials like picture, chart, map, model, etc. are useful. Thus, whether the listening material has such support materials or not should be taken into account.

*The style of delivery.* The style of the speech of the speakers in the listening text influences the listener's comprehension. Thus, the tone, stress, accent, etc. used in the materials should be appropriate in accordance with the learner's level.

*The speed of delivery.* Different people have different speed of speaking. The tempo of speech varies person to person. The speed of the materials is to be appropriate.

*Spontaneity.* The speech of the materials should be spontaneous. Spontaneous speech is the real one and it is used in real-life situations. In order to make the students familiar with the-real-life situations, spontaneity should be considered while selecting listening materials.

In this way, the teacher must be sound to select appropriate listening material for the learners. The teacher must select such materials which should address the level of the learners.

**Testing listening.** Listening is one of the crucial -language skills. Therefore, like other skills it should be taught and tested properly and regularly. While testing listening, different aspects of language should be tested. These generally encompass grammatical knowledge, discourse knowledge, pragmatic knowledge, sociolinguistic knowledge, etc. In this way, the testers have to test the different aspects of listening skill. Listening perception and listening comprehension skills are to be taken into account while testing listening skills. In this regard, Buck (2010, p. 105) says that test developers would choose the following aspects of language competence which met the requirements of their test.

*Knowledge of the sound system:* This involves the relevant aspects of grammatical knowledge, namely phonology, stress and intonation.

*Understanding local linguistic meanings:* This involves the overall knowledge of grammar. For example, phonology, stress, intonation, vocabulary, syntax as well as the ability to use that knowledge in real life situations.

*Understanding full linguistic meanings:* This includes grammatical knowledge plus discourse knowledge, and calls for the comprehension of longer texts.

*Understanding inferred meanings:* This includes grammatical knowledge, discourse knowledge and pragmatic knowledge.

*Communicative listening ability:* This includes grammatical knowledge, discourse knowledge, pragmatic knowledge and sociolinguistic knowledge.

Different techniques can be used for testing different aspects of listening. For instance, in order to test the knowledge of the sound system, minimal pairs, recognizing intonation and stress patterns, etc. can be exploited. Similarly, different types of comprehension questions can be adopted to test listening comprehension ability of the students. Buck (2010, p. 134) talks about the following types of comprehension questions:

*Short-answer questions.* In order to test the comprehension ability of the students short-answer questions can be used. Scoring will become reasonably fast provided that short-answer questions are designed. In order to make marking easy, the items that have unambiguous responses are to be written.

*Multiple-choice questions.* Multiple choice item with three, four or even five options are in practice. However, constructing these items call for a high-level professional skill. Particularly, while using these items in any high-stakes assessment they should be pre-tested. The options in such items play a crucial role for their effectiveness. That is why, the options should be selected and/or written properly. Wu (1998, as cited in Buck, 2010, p. 143) found that multiple choice items favored more advanced listeners, and that misinterpretations of the options led to test-takers selecting the wrong options, and conversely, test-takers selecting the correct options for the wrong reasons. Thus, options of such items should be selected with great care.

*True/false questions.* This type of question is very common and 'popular'. After presenting a text, one or more statements are given, and- test-takers have to decide whether each statement is true or false. However, Burger and Doherty (1992, as cited in Buck, 2010, p. 147) claim that these questions are not suitable for listening because listeners normally focus on what is said, not on what is not said.

*Inference questions.* These questions assess inferences ability of the testes. These questions go beyond literal meanings. The inference can be about what the speaker means and what the test-developer expects. However, it can be difficult to design such questions, for the answers are not vividly stated in the text. Inference questions can generally address the following sort of information:

- Asking the main idea, or gist of the text;
- Asking about anything which is not clearly stated;
- Asking about any pragmatic implication, or logical entailment, that follows on from what the speaker said;
- Asking the meaning of indirect speech acts.

Listening skill is necessary for a number of purposes in the real life situations: listening to radio; listening to lecture, and so on. Spoken language is much more complex than the written language. Therefore, tests of listening are essential to acquaint learners with the complexities of the oral mode of communication.

**Designing tasks for testing listening.** There may be different kinds of tasks for testing listening. The ESL teacher should be active enough to test listening. Actually, the procedures of testing should be based on some tasks. In this regard, Meys (2015, p. 3) gives the following tasks of testing listening:

- Use format familiar to the students.
- Don't involve other aspects (focus on listening).
- Give context of situation in the rubrics.
- Allow students time to read questions beforehand.
- Focus on information in the test and not issues which might be known due to background knowledge.

Thus, the language teachers can adopt different kinds of tasks for testing listening. The varieties of tasks and multiple ways of testing techniques make teaching full of fun and ultimately, learning becomes meaningful. Therefore, secondary level English teachers should be wise enough to design tasks for testing listening.

**Listening skill in secondary level English curriculum.** Present English curriculum of secondary level is based on the communicative approach to language teaching. It has incorporated four language skills and language functions in its content. Listening skill is also focused in the curriculum. In the examination, 10% of the total marks is allocated to listening skill. For the development of listening skill in the students, there is the provision of listening lesson in each unit of the textbook. For the purpose of teaching listening, CDC has developed audio cassettes for class nine and ten. The curriculum has mentioned the following objectives of teaching listening:

Listen to spoken text, understand the gist and retrieve specific information from it.

Record in note or make summary from the main points of spoken messages.

Respond appropriately to spoken directions or instructions.

In this regard, the curriculum supports listening skill for developing learners' listening skill. The aim of the curriculum, in relation to listening, is to make learners familiar with the real voice of the target speech.

**Teaching and testing.** Teaching and testing has always a whole and part relation. That is, teaching is whole whereas, testing is only a part of it. Actually, listening skill is an important and required skill for every English test and it comes out from the lessons that have been taught. To improve the listening skill learners should practice listening every day. Listening exercises help to improve listening skills in deed.

In this regard, Crosss (1992, p. 191) states the interrelationship between teaching and testing, synonymously taken as evaluation, as follows:

Evaluation is as much a part of language teaching as are the materials, syllabus and approach. There should be an evident and harmonious relationship between course objectives and all these curriculum elements. You should avoid tests which exemplify poor teaching procedures. Many of the teaching activities ... are ideal test instruments in themselves. Most of the tests seen now could be used for teaching purposes, too. They are simple to

contrive, demand little loss of teaching time and are easily marked. What is more, they can be carried out under quite difficult conditions.

In this respect, teaching and testing are interconnected. These two components cannot be separated since these are the core elements of a curriculum. When teaching takes place, testing comes automatically. That is the reason why, teachers must be able to test students immediately after teaching in order to measure whether the objectives of the lesson have been achieved.

**Testing and learning.** Testing and learning are two integral parts of language acquisition. That is to say, testing supports learning, and learning gives a clear way to testing. That is the reason why testing and learning are the two-inherent approaches of learning four skills of language. These two procedures depend upon the attitudes of the objectives of testing and learning. In this regard Cross (1992, p. 191) says:

A great value of classroom tests is their effect upon attitudes. You can indicate where your own priorities lie by the tests you give. If classes have nothing but written and formal grammar tests, they will perceive this as a lack of interest on your part in their listening, reading and speaking abilities.

Thus, testing should be goal oriented. The teacher must make learners able to face the test completely because it is wrathful. Moreover any sort of test which does not arouse interest, that does not come out with meaning. That is only waste of time and effort. Simultaneously a test should judge the value of each learner and should be feedback oriented. It should be a part of diagnostic element that can expose the strengths and weaknesses of the tester and testee both. Cross (ibid.), in this regard, says:

Another important aspect is the diagnostic element - the feedback obtained is of value to you and the students. Individuals can identify weaknesses and make efforts to overcome them. You can pin-point deficiencies in the programme and include needed remedial work in the ongoing instruction. Tests can even be used to enhance learning. By giving advance notice of the ground to be covered in a test, you can virtually ensure that the learning is done beforehand.

In fact, testing and learning are unavoidable elements of language learning. Learners need to be tested to measure their level of learning. On the other hand, the test should diagnose- their level of competence.

### **Review of the Empirical Literature**

Listening skill occupies significance scope in language teaching, though it is not taken importantly in the context of Nepal. Specially, in Nepal, it is received as the attention of educationists, course designers, methodologists and ELT experts and so on. There have been many studies carried on listening comprehension of a foreign language. However, some studies have been carried out on teaching listening. In Nepal, listening has been incorporated in some recent studies.

Singh (2004) conducted a research on "Testing Listening Comprehension of Grade Eight Students". It was a comparative study where he compared the listening proficiency level of the students of grade eight from public and private schools. His finding was that the students of private schools were far better than those of public schools in listening comprehension.

Rana (2007) carried out a research on "Listening Abilities of the Nepalese Learners of English". He conducted this research on the students of PCL first year and Masters Degree first year of different streams and institutes. He administered tests to them in order to find out their listening abilities. He found that the students learning in University level in Nepal have high listening ability. In his finding, he found that the listening ability of the Nepalese learners was 85.95 percent

Acharya (2010) carried out a research entitled "The Effectiveness of Recorded Materials and Live Materials in Testing Listening". It was comparative study carried out in Kaski district on the students of grade four. It was an experimental research where control group was taught by using live materials, whereas experimental group was taught by using recorded materials. He found that there was no significant difference between the scores of both control and experimental group. There was almost the same result.

Aryal (2011) conducted a research entitled "A study on Testing Listening Proficiency of Grade Ten Students". It was carried out in Gorkha district. He wanted to find out whether students performed better in seen text or unseen text. He administered a listening comprehension test using both texts and he found that there was no significant difference in the performance of the students in relation to seen and unseen texts.

Timsina (2013) conducted a research on "The Effectiveness of Recorded Materials over Conventional Techniques in Testing Listening Comprehension". It was the experimental research carried out in Jhapa district on the students of grade nine. He used two types of materials: live and recorded. He taught and tested experimental group using recorded materials and control group using live materials. They were taught for twenty days. His finding was that the live materials were more effective than the recorded ones.

Yadav (2014) carried out a research on "Listening Skill in Secondary English Curriculum". He studied the objectives of listening set in English curriculum of secondary level and then analyzed the listening texts, varieties of listening text, the types of exercises, etc. His finding was that the listening texts given in the course have been taken from authentic sources and the voice recorded in the cassette has maintained tone, pitch and intonation.

Lamichhane (2017) in her study "Listening Comprehension of Grade IX Students in Recorded Materials" found that recorded materials are essential for building up listening skill. Aiming to find out the essentiality of recorded materials, she found that the recorded materials help learners listen carefully, and this sort of listening makes learners perform better. Those students who are exposed to the authentic recorded materials can achieve better in developing listening skill. She concluded that the students of grade nine were found to be good in listening comprehension under recorded materials.

Basnet (2018) carried out a research on "Practice of Teaching Listening Skill at Secondary Level". He conducted this research on the teachers of secondary level. The objective of this study is Exploring practice of teaching listening skill at

secondary level. The finding of this study was majority of the teachers were found good theoretical insights on testing listening skill in the secondary classes.

Khadka (2019) conducted a research entitled "A Comparative Study of Testing Listening Comprehension between Urban and Rural Students". The test was administered in four public schools of Nepalganj Municipality and four public schools of rural areas of Kathmandu valley for the purpose of research. The listening comprehension level of the students of urban area outside Kathmandu valley seemed to be poor as they secured 48.86% mark in average, whereas the listening comprehension level of the students of rural areas of Kathmandu valley seemed to be good as they secured 70.5% mark in average. In this way, his finding was that the listening comprehension level of the students of rural areas of Kathmandu valley is better than those of urban areas outside Kathmandu valley.

However, this research is different from other research works so far in a sense that it attempts to find out the techniques and activities used by the secondary level English teachers of the community based schools. It also attempts to find out the gap between the teachers' theoretical knowledge and its application in the classroom.

### **Implications of the Review**

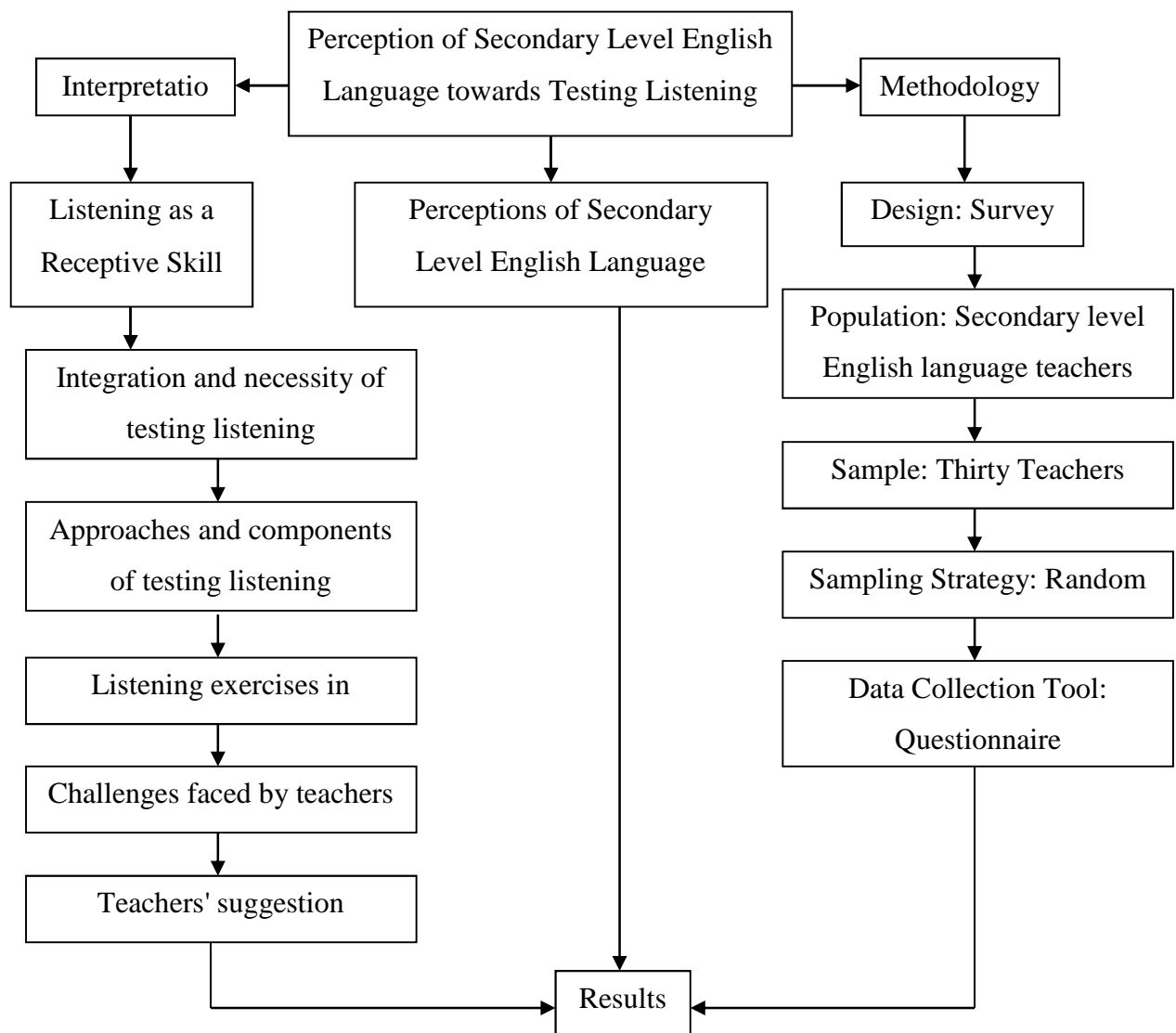
The central focus of the literature review is to find out and analyze what has been done before in the field of testing listening skill. Thus, the review of related literature is an integral part of the research. It makes a valuable contribution to every operational step. The most important function of the literature review is to ensure researcher read widely around the subject area to broaden the horizon of knowledge in the related field. While reviewing the literature, the researcher has gone through the different existing literature, articles, journals, magazines, books and other related materials. They are supportive and helpful to my research study.

The review of the literature has made this research more reliable and informative which could be one of key research works to design curriculum and textbooks for the secondary level. From empirical literature, Singh's (2004) research mentioned that the students of private schools were far better than those of public schools in listening comprehension. In the same way from Aryal (2011) study found

that there was no significant difference in the performance of the students in relation to seen and unseen texts. Similarly Yadav (2014) concludes that listening texts given in the course have been taken from authentic sources and the voice recorded in the cassette has maintained tone, pitch and intonation. In the same way Lamichhane (2017) concludes that the students of grade nine were found to be good in listening comprehension under recorded materials. Similarly Khadka's (2019) study depicts that the listening comprehension level of the students of rural areas and Kathmandu valley is better than those of urban areas outside Kathmandu valley.

### Conceptual Framework

The following conceptual framework is drawn for this research after the detailed study of the related literature.



## **Chapter 3**

### **Methods and Procedures of the Study**

This chapter deals with the methodology and procedures used in the research. It includes the design of the study, sampler-population, sampling procedures, data collection tools, data collection procedures, data analysis and interpretation procedures. .

#### **Design of the Study**

The researcher should follow a certain research design while carrying out a research. Actually there have been different research designs such as; experimental, survey, case studies, action research, experimental, quasi-experimental, ethnographic, qualitative, quantitative, mixed design and so on.

In order to meet the objectives of this study the researcher has adopted the survey research design. Survey research is defined as a brief interview or discussion with individuals about a specific topic. The term survey is often used to mean 'collect information.' It also means to collect related information from the target informants.

According to Cohen and Manion (1985, as cited in Nunan, 1992, p. 140), "surveys are the most commonly used descriptive method in educational research and may vary in scope from large-scale government investigations through to small-scale studies carried out by a single researcher," That is to say, the survey research is carried out either in a large-scale or in a small-scale. They further state, "The purpose of survey is generally to obtain a snapshot of conditions, attitudes, and/ or events at a single point in time." In this sense, survey research is different from other types of research. There is a limited or fixed time for data collection in survey research and is conducted in a natural setting.

Regarding the educational survey research, Cohen, Manion and Marrison (2010, p. 206) state, "Surveys in education often use test results, self-completion, questionnaires and attitude scales." So, surveys are helpful for collecting factual information. The surveys are also descriptive and analytical.

Cohen, Manion and Marrison (ibid. p. 208) state as: Survey can be both descriptive and analytical. Descriptive surveys simply describe data on variables of interest, whereas analytical surveys operate within hypothesized predictors or explanatory variables that are tested for their influence on dependent variables.

Thus, the researcher carried out this research work with the survey research design. The researcher followed the procedures preferred by the survey research. It aims to find out the perceptions of the secondary level English teachers regarding testing listening. The data have been analyzed descriptively and analytically.

### **Population and Sample**

The population of the study were the secondary level English teachers of community schools of Gorkha district. The researcher followed random sampling procedure to achieve the concerned objectives of the study.

### **Sampling Procedures**

The researcher has selected 30 community school teachers from various secondary schools of Gorkha district on the basis of random sampling procedure.

### **Data Collection Tool**

A set of questionnaire for secondary level English teachers was the tool which the researcher used to collect data for this research.

### **Data Collection Procedures**

In order to collect the data, first the research tool was developed. Then the researcher talked to the authorities and took permission to apply the research tools for collecting data. After that, the researcher built rapport with the informants and explained the detail about the research to the target informants. Then, the researcher applied research tools for collecting data. Finally, the researcher collected required information from the informants.

### **Data Analysis and Interpretation Procedures**

Regarding the analysis of data, first of all, the data were collected from the target informants. Then the data were scrutinized in general and they will put under the different headings. After that, sub-headings for data analysis were developed and the data were analyzed descriptively. Finally, the data were analyzed, explained and interpreted on the basis of the responses given by the teachers.

### **Ethical Considerations**

As the most essential and important part to consider the ethical aspects, the participants were informed every information and plan about the study and the data collection time and place were determined based on their approval. No activities were done that may harm the participants' reputation, physical, mental and psychological aspects. Similarly, as participants may wish, the secrecy of the information, was maintained i.e. ethical considerations was maintained by using the pseudonyms of the participants. The collected data, conclusions were presented honestly and systematically with no reduplication. The plagiarism was avoided by showing citations and references. Moreover, every steps of the research were conducted under the guidance of supervisors from Central Department of English Education, Tribhuvan University, kirtipur Kathmandu.

## Chapter 4

### Results and Discussion

This chapter deals with the results and discussion of the data collected for this study from the target informants. The descriptive approach has been adopted to interpret the collected data. The data has been analyzed and interpreted in terms of sub-headings.

#### Teachers Perceptions towards Testing Listening

Listening, is the basic skill of language acquisition, is the foundation skill of language learning. Except the school level, it is also necessary in the university level for the better learning. However, the teachers' perceptions on listening skill:

**Listening as a receptive skill.** Listening is the ability to accurately receive and interpret messages in communication process. The following table presents the secondary level teachers' views on listening as a receptive skill:

**Table 1**

#### Listening as a Receptive Skill

Item No.	Perception on Listening	No. of Teachers	Percentage (%)
1	Productive skill	4	13%
2	Receptive skill	24	80%
3	Passive skill	2	7%
4	No idea	-	-

The table 1 shows the responses regarding the listening as a receptive skill. Among thirty secondary English language teachers, 80% secondary English teachers stated that listening is a receptive skill and rest of the teachers stated that productive and passive skill. The percentage of the teachers is 13% and 7% respectively. Therefore, it is clearly stated that listening is a receptive skill. The learners must listen for developing language. There were no teachers who were unfamiliar about the listening skill.

Thus, it can be said that listening as a receptive skill.

**Necessity of testing listening at early stage.** Listening starts from the early stage of language learning. Therefore, teaching and testing listening skill should go side by side. The following table presents secondary level English teachers' perceptions on testing listening at early stage:

**Table 2**  
**Necessity of Testing Listening at Early Stage**

Question	Response			
	Yes		No	
Necessity of testing listening from early stage	No.	%	No.	%
	30	100%	-	-

The table 2 displays the responses related to necessity of testing listening at early stage. All the secondary level English teachers (100%) stated that listening skill should be tested from the early stage of teaching. Teaching and testing listening have direct impact on language learning.

Thus, all teachers stressed as the necessity of testing listening skill at an early stage.

**Integration of testing and teaching.** Listening skill is one of the most important language skills. It should be taught properly to the student at school. The teachers should create a good environment for teaching and testing this skill. The following table present secondary level teachers' views on integration of testing and teaching:

**Table 3**  
**Integration of Testing and Teaching**

Question	Response			
	Yes		No	
Integration of testing and teaching	No.	%	No.	%
	30	100%	-	-

The table 3 displays the integration of testing and teaching. All the secondary level English language teachers (100%) stated that teaching and testing should go side by side. No Teachers said that teaching and testing are isolated activities.

Thus, teaching and testing are interconnected. Teachers were in favor of integrating testing and teaching.

**Focused language skill in ELT.** The main four language skills, i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing. These all the skills are equally important for the holistic development of language. The following table shows secondary level English language teachers views towards focused language skill in ELT:

**Table 4**  
**Focused Language Skill in ELT**

S.N	Language Skills	No. of Teachers	Percentage (%)
1	Listening	27	90%
2	Speaking	3	10%
3	Reading	-	-
4	Writing	-	-

The table 4 states the question regarding the focused language skill in ELT. The highest number of teachers stated that listening skill should be focused first while teaching. There are 90% secondary English language teachers supporting this view. Similarly, 10% secondary level English language teachers support that speaking should be focused. There are no one teachers supporting the reading and writing skills. It is clear that listening skill is most important skill in teaching learning activities.

Thus, the focused language skill in ELT is listening skill.

**Teachers' views on the testing activities in our curriculum and other materials.** Curriculum is a roadmap of teaching. The activities suggested by the curriculum should be followed by the teachers while teaching and testing. According to the teachers, the following testing activities have been included in our curriculum as mentioned in the table:

**Table 5**  
**Testing Activities in Our Curriculum**

S.N.	Testing activities in our curriculum	No. of Teachers	Percentage (%)
1	Listening comprehension	15	50%
2	Cloze test	8	30%
3	Open ended questions	2	5%
4	Listen and draw	3	10%
5	Listen and act	2	5%

The table 5 exposes the responses regarding testing activities in our curriculum suggested by CDC. The secondary level English teachers view that there are five different kinds of testing activities adapted in the ESL classrooms. There are 50% English teachers adapted listening comprehension and 30% teachers apply close test testing. Moreover, 5% teacher's apply open ended question and as the same percent of teachers apply listening and acting activities. 10% teachers apply listening and drawing activities.

On the basis of the data, it is stated that secondary level curriculum focuses on such activities which basically focus on the comprehension of the learners.

**Materials and activities used by teachers while testing listening.** The teacher should use varieties of materials while teaching. Teaching materials are very important in testing listening. No teaching is complete without teaching materials. If teaching requires materials, obviously testing also requires materials. The following table presents the materials used by the English teachers in testing listening:

**Table 6**  
**Name of the Materials**

S.N.	Name of the Materials	No. of Teachers	Percentage (%)
1	Audio	5	16%
2	Visual	2	7%
3	Audio-visual	23	77%

The table 6 exposes the responses regarding listening materials use while-testing listening. Almost all the English teachers favored the audio-visual materials for testing listening. There are 77% favored the audio-visual materials for teaching

and testing listening skill. Secondly, 16% English teachers suggest audio materials and 7% suggest to visual materials to use in testing listening.

Thus, the best testing materials for listening are the audio-visual materials. If the audio-visual materials have been applied in classroom testing listening will be more effective.

**Application of three stages in testing listening.** The following table presents secondary level English teachers' views on application of the three stages (i.e. pre-listening, while - listening and post listening) while testing listening

**Table 7**  
**Stages in Testing Listening**

Question	Response			
	Yes		No	
	No.	%	No.	%
Application of three stages in testing listening	30	100%	-	-

The table 7 presents the secondary level English teachers views on testing listening activities. All the secondary level English language teachers follow the three stages (i.,e., pre-listening, while listening and post listening) while testing listening skill. All the teachers are completely conscious on the different stages of teaching and testing.

**Pre-listening activities followed by the English language teachers..** Testing listening is a procedural activity. There are many activities which the teachers can apply before the real testing. The following table presents the pre-listening activities followed by English language teachers:

**Table 8**  
**Pre-listening Activities Followed by the Teachers**

S.N.	Activities	No. of Teachers	Percentage (%)
1	Telling about the text	2	7%
2	Making students ready for listening	6	20%
3	Dividing class into different groups	22	73%

The above table 8 shows the pre-listening activities followed by the secondary level English language teachers. The secondary level English language teachers adopt three main pre-listening activities while testing listening. The majority of secondary level English language teachers divide the class into different groups as pre-listening activities. There are 73% English language teachers who adopt this activity. Similarly, 20% teachers, make students ready for listening and 7% English language teachers explain about the text as pre-listening activities.

Thus, secondary level English teachers divide the class into different groups as pre-listening activities. It is the most preferred activity at this stage.

**While-listening activities followed by the English teachers.** While-listening is the stage where actual listening takes place. The teacher presents the tasks and the students listen to the text and do the tasks given by the teacher. The following table presents the while-listening activities followed by English teachers:

**Table 9**

**While-listening Activities Followed by the English Teachers**

S.N.	Activities	No. of Teachers	Percentage (%)
1	Playing the text	21	70%
2	Explaining the text	9	30%

The above table 9 exposes while-listening activities followed by the English teachers in secondary level. The secondary level English language teachers adopt two main while-listening activities while testing listening. The majority of secondary level English language teachers play the text during while-listening. There are 70% English language teachers who adopt this activity. Similarly 30% English language teachers explain the text the students.

Thus, secondary level English language teachers play the text of listening during the while-listening stage.

**Post-listening activities followed by English teachers.** Activities which are conducted after the while listening stage are post listening activities. The students

listen and check their tasks in this stage. Testing listening does not end after playing the testing text. There are some other activities which the teacher has to accomplish. The following table presents the post-listening activities followed by English language teachers:

**Table 10**  
**Post-listening Activities Followed by English Teachers**

S.N	Activities	No of teachers	Percentage (%)
1	Asking to tell what they have heard	4	13%
2	Giving questions	23	77%
3	Asking in group	3	10%

The table 10 shows the responses regarding post-listening activities followed by English teachers. The secondary level English language teachers adopt three main post-listening activities while testing listening. The majority of teachers give questions as post-listening activities. There are 77% English teachers who adopt this activity. Similarly, 13% teachers ask question what the students have heard and 10% English language teachers ask questions in group during the post-listening activities. So, the shows that English teacher give questions to the students in post-learning stage.

Thus, the data shows that English language teachers give questions to the students as the post-listening activities.

**Approaches of testing listening.** Listening is one of the most fundamental and inseparable skills of teaching and learning of English. It is an approach of measuring the listening ability of the students. It should be tested as it is taught. Regarding the approach of testing listening the following question was asked: “*Do you think that listening is to be tested in isolation or along with other skills?*”

The teachers have a common perception on the approach of testing listening. Almost the teachers stated that listening should be tested along with the rest of the four skills of language learning. Listening cannot be tested in isolation. Listening is not complete without any productive skill of language. In this connection the T3 said:

*Listening is to be tested with other skills. Listening cannot be tested in isolation... Likewise, T13 expressed: Listening should be highly focused with speaking... It is not complete without any productive skill of language... [T4]*

From the above responses made by teachers testing listening is a combine approach. The teachers of secondary level teach and test listening skill with other skills of language learning. It is a complex process. In listening, the listener receives the incoming data, an acoustic signal and interprets it on the basis of a wide variety of linguistic and non- linguistic knowledge.

**Importance of testing listening.** Testing listening involves a variety of skills. It should be taught and tested. It is very important skill of language development. Regarding the importance of testing listening, the following question was asked: “*Why do you think it is important to test listening?*”

Secondary level English language teachers have stated various views on the importance of testing listening. However, all the teachers agreed that it is very important skill to be tested. Listening supports other skills of language learning. It is the fundamental skill of language acquisition. The secondary level English language teachers stated their views differently as:

*Testing listening is very important to test listening because listening is key to all effective communication and without the ability to listen effectively, messages are easily misunderstood.[T4]... Listening is the most strongest pillar of language skills so without testing listening we do not judge that the students have known the second language well or not.[T11]...It's important to test listening for better understanding.[T3]*

Moreover, some teachers stated the reasons of testing listening in another ways. They opined as: *Testing listening shapes the language learning process. A good listener is a good language learners too... Listening is the fundamental skill of language acquisition...*

From the above responses made by teachers, testing listening is very important for measuring the listening ability of the learners. Testing listening is essential for

measuring the listening ability of the learners. It should be focused in school levels. It becomes complete only after testing listening.

**Components of testing listening.** The teachers have different views regarding the testing listening. Testing listening is a basic language learning skill. The secondary teachers have different attitudes regarding testing listening. The following question was asked for find out the components of testing listening: “*What does testing listening include?*”

Secondary level English language teachers stated different views regarding the components included in testing listening. Testing listening includes testing of authentic texts. It includes testing of a basic skill. Here, testing listening include testing of all the tests prescribed by the curriculum. In this regard the teachers stated their views as:

*Testing listening includes all the tests prescribed by the curriculum [T25, T16, T28] ... Testing listening includes, testing of words, spelling, language [T1, T15, T9] ... Testing listening skill includes testing of a basic skill [T2, T10] ... Testing listening includes testing of an authentic texts [T20, T30]*

The secondary level English teachers support that listening skill is includes various things. Regarding this view the teacher said: *Testing listening includes discrimination among sounds, intonation and stress patterns [T3, T11, T21]*

On the basis of the analysis, listening should be include in the course of all levels. If this skill is included in the course, there will be proper way of learning. It should be focus and discriminate the level wise learning.

**Inclusion of listening in the curriculum and textbooks.** Secondary level English language teachers do have different perceptions on the inclusion of listening skill in the current curriculum and textbooks. The following question was asked regarding the inclusion of listening skill in the current curriculum: “*Should testing listening be openly mentioned in the curriculum and textbooks?*”

Secondary level curriculum provides well spacing for the listening skill. According to the secondary level English language teachers' most of them, said it

should be mentioned in the curriculum and textbooks. [T11, T3, T4] said, it becomes easier to the language teachers.

Thus, teaching and testing a whole part relation. That is teaching is whole whereas, testing, is only a part of it. Actually, listening skill is an important skill for every English test and it comes out from the lessons that have been taught. So, this skill should be given much priority in the curriculum and textbooks.

**Testing techniques for listening in the present curriculum.** The secondary level present curriculum includes various kinds of testing techniques for listening. The teacher were asked the following question regarding the testing technique existing in the present curriculum of secondary level: *“Does our present curriculum include the testing techniques for listening?”*

Most of the teachers agreed that the present curriculum contains different sorts of testing technique in curriculum. Our present curriculum includes the testing techniques for listening. The teachers have expressed their various views on this question. They said,

*“yes, our present curriculum includes the testing techniques for listening. [T3, T14 T15 T4,] [T11] said, no, the present curriculum has not included the testing techniques for listening. There are only listening texts and testing has done by the teachers according to their own way.*

Thus, secondary level curriculum should be focused on more listening tests. Secondary level curriculum guides various kinds of techniques and strategies for testing listening skill. This skill is given the least importance (i.e., 10%) in the curriculum. There are various types of exercises, techniques, strategies of testing listening skill.

**Testing and teaching.** Teaching and Testing are interconnected. These two Components cannot be separated since these are the core elements of curriculum. When teaching takes place, testing comes automatically. Regarding the interrelation in teaching and testing the following question was asked: *“Many people say that teaching and testing listening is neglected in our case. What would you say about it?”*

Secondary level English teachers have different views on teaching and testing in our curriculum and textbook. Listening should be given much space. Listening is not given much priority than reading, writing and speaking skills. It given a little priority in the curriculum. They stated as:

*Listening should be given much space... listening has occupied the 10% of the secondary level courses, but its not been any affection in language due to the lack of reference materials... it is not given much priority than reading, writing and speaking skills.[T10,T15, T11, T3, T14, T25]*

Thus, listening exercises should more focused on the textbooks. Listening skill is not totally neglected in the curriculum. The secondary textbooks have been contained with the testing items of listening skill.

**Listening exercises in textbooks.** Listening exercises mentioned in our textbooks help testing the listening skill. They provide the contents for listening exercises. Regarding the completeness of listening exercises in secondary level textbooks the following question was asked: “*Are the listening exercises given into our textbooks sufficient for testing listening?*”

The secondary level English language teachers teaching in the community aided schools stated that the more other exercises should also be added. Listening exercises are given with the importance. The exercises are not full of varieties. They stated:

*No only text book's exercises are not sufficient, more other exercises should also practices... The teachers can create other exercises too... listening exercises are given less priority in textbooks. [T25,T3, T10]*

Furthermore, some teachers stated as: *Those listening tests given in our textbooks are sufficient for testing listening if we implement those correctly and an effectively... [T11,T4 ,T 15 ]*

Thus, the secondary level textbooks should contain different types of exercises. They lack the varieties in the testing items in listening. Because the low contain is not effective in teaching learning activities.

**Role of teacher in testing listening.** The teacher have the greatest role in testing listening. A good teacher is a good communicator also. Without the active role of teacher, teaching and testing activities is not possible. The following question was asked under the role of teacher in testing listening: *“What should be the role of teacher in testing listening?”*

Secondary level English teachers stated similar type of views under the role of teachers testing listening. The role of the teacher in testing listening is helper, judge, evaluator, facilitator, manager of classroom environment etc. Secondary level English language teachers expressed their views regarding the role of teachers in testing listening:

*The role of the teacher in testing listening should be the facilitator.... The role of classroom manager... judge, tester, evaluator, observer, manager of classroom environment... helper, mentors [T16, T28, T25, T15, T4, T11, T3]*

Thus, the teacher has a very great role in teaching listening activity. An effective classroom the teacher is not only a knowledgeable and skilled the teacher is a good listener. The teacher should develop specific strategies for listening.

**Role of the testing listening for developing speaking.** Listening supervises the performance of speaking. Speaking is involved in expressing and listening is involved in comprehension. Listening skill helps the speaking skill, because both skills are the fundamental skills of language learning. Regarding this topic the following question was asked: *“Do you think that the testing of listening skill can be supportive for developing speaking?”*

Regarding the support of testing listening for developing speaking skill, secondary level English language teachers expressed testing listening skill can be supportive for developing speaking, without listening a language learner can't speak well, listening has a great role in developing speaking skill. The secondary level English language teachers expressed their views as:

*Testing listening skill can be supportive for developing speaking... without listening a language learner can't speak well... listening has a great role in*

*developing speaking skill... they can utter what they hear from their teachers or any other listening devices....good listener is a good language learner.*

So, the language skills are interrelated to each other. Each skill is supportive for other skills. The main four skills should be taught and learn together so that the students can make a meaningful communication. English language teachers take testing listening and development of speaking has interrelation.

**Role of teacher professional development in testing listening.** Teachers Professional Development (TPD) is important in teaching to promote teachers with creative and critical ideas and skills to bring changes in their teaching. It is very essential for the meaningful teaching. It employs the teachers to be able to teach meaningfully. The following question was asked regarding the role of TPD in testing listening: *“Do you think that the trainings on Teacher Professional Development address the issues of testing listening?”*

English language teachers teaching in secondary level stated that the TPD is one of the key tool of improving teaching skill. The teachers said that TPD is important in teaching learning activities. They said that TPD helps a supporting role for teaching and testing. They said that TPD can address the issues of testing listening, TPD can help change the styles of teaching. They stated as:

*TPD can address the issues of testing listening... Testing and teaching techniques are supported by the teacher... Training helps make positive changes in language skill...TPD helps teachers to bring changes in testing listening skill... [T13,T25, T17]*

TPD helps students learning and it gives more knowledge and techniques for teachers. It plays great role in classroom to understand the activities. TPD helps teachers in testing listening in a great deal. This skill can be well tested and well applied in the class if the teacher is well trained on TPD and at the same time if the testing listening is well administered by the teachers, there will be better opportunity for developing teachers` professional development.

### **Role of curriculum designers and textbook writers on testing listening.**

Curriculum designers and textbook writers both have a great role in determining the testing items. Secondary level English language teachers were asked the following question: “*What would you like to suggest to the curriculum designers and textbook writers regarding testing listening?*”

The secondary level English language teachers stated their different views on the role of curriculum designers and textbook writers on testing listening. They expressed listening to be tested along with other skills, both the curriculum designers and textbook writers can select and grade the appropriate items for testing listening. The secondary level English language teachers make the following remarks:

*Listening is to be tested along with other skills. [T4] ... More emphasize on listening skill. [T3] ... listening skill should be included and focused in our curriculum and textbook. [T1] ... Both the curriculum designers and textbook writers can select and grade the appropriate items for listening. [T28]... If the listening texts are recorded in a chips that will be handed on school or provided to the language teachers easily so listening text should be more focused. [T11]*

Thus, the data shows that curriculum designers and textbook writers should have equal importance in designing the test items in testing listening. The curriculum designers should show the path and the textbook writers should lead the learners towards the right path.

**Practices and challenges of teachers in testing listening.** English teachers face various types of problems while testing listening skill in the secondary level English classes specially because of the insufficient of teaching materials, they do not have listening equipment for teaching and testing. The problem of electricity, unable to find the Cassette player, unable to find out the listening exercises also. Teachers can test in their own way because the insufficient materials. Similarly, some schools lack adequate rooms for teaching and testing listening skill.

**Teachers' techniques used in testing listening.** Testing listening is a tactful job. The teacher should be active enough to test listening. At the same time, the

secondary curriculum requires varieties of testing items while testing any language skill. Listening skill should be taught properly to the students at school. The following question was asked regarding the techniques employed by the secondary level English language teachers: “*What techniques do you use in testing listening skill?*”

Listening is the act of hearing attentively. Secondary level English teachers adopt different testing techniques while testing listening. Secondary level English teachers use different kinds of testing techniques, they are as follows:

*Fill in the blanks*

*True or False?*

*Dictation*

*Questions and answers*

*Group work and pair work*

Some teachers stated: *pre, while and post listening activities. [T3, T11]*

Thus, it is stated that listening skill is best tested through fill in the blanks, true or false items. If the students have been provided with the authentic listening materials and tested through the closed test items, there becomes better performance. English teachers prefer testing listening skill through the cloze test items.

**Complication of testing listening.** Testing Listening is very tough jobs in language learning. It is very tough because the lack of testing materials and authentic materials for testing. Regarding the complication of testing listening, following question was asked: “*Do you think testing listening is more complicate than other skills? If yes, why?*”

Secondary level English language teachers stated that listening is more complicated than other skills. They expressed testing items are not sufficient, there are very limited resources, the classes are noisy and often large too. Some of the reasons they stated are:

*The testing items are not sufficient. [T10] ... There are limited resources.[T3] ... Large classes, lack of materials.[T25] ... Unable to manage the classroom for lack of the teaching materials.[T4]*

Thus, testing listening seems more complicated than other skills. The classroom environment and the availability of the listening materials are the main responsible factors for creating difficulty in listening.

**Emphasis on testing of all skills in the curriculum.** The purpose of teaching and learning a language is for Communication for which particular language skills are necessary to be equipped with the students for effective, purposeful and meaningful communication. Language learning becomes meaningful when four skills of language are given equal emphasis. The following question was asked regarding the emphasis on testing all skills in the curriculum: *“Does our curriculum equally emphasize on testing of all skills?”*

The curriculum has not given equal emphasis for testing listening skill. Listening is given the least priority in teaching and listening. Our curriculum do not equally emphasize on testing listening skill, listening is tested for the coverage of 10% marks in the examination. Secondary level English language teachers stated:

*Our curriculum has emphasized on productive skills rather than receptive skills. Testing listening give less priority. Reading and writing give the top priority. [T11, T17, T3, T25] Moreover, Some teacher stated our curriculum equally emphasize on testing of all skills. [T4, T15, T1]*

Therefore, our curriculum should more emphasized on developing various listening activities. The teachers also stated that listening has no more varieties. The test items are very limited.

**Challenges faced by teachers in testing listening.** Teaching listening activities in Nepalese context, is a very challenging factor. English teacher in Nepal face multiple problems in testing listening skill. However the teachers should come up with them. The following question was asked regarding the challenges faced by

teachers in testing listening: “*What are the challenges for teachers in testing listening?*”

English teachers face many challenges, difficulty while testing listening skill. There are many problems in classroom. One of the challenging situations is lack of appropriate classrooms for testing listening. It is being challenging because of large number of the students, there are not enough varieties of listening materials in the school. Regarding the challenges faced by teachers in testing listening most of the teachers stated similar types of views:

*Testing listening is being challenging because of large number of the students. There are many students in the same class where teacher unable to maintain silence... Lack of listening materials in school not well equipped classroom management...Lack of training whereas untrained teachers are teaching... Over control class... Short period of time... There are not listening materials in the school. [T25, T4, T20, T16]*

Thus, the listening materials should be managed in the schools. English teachers face difficulty in testing listening because of the large classes, insufficient materials. If the classrooms are not learner friendly, there is no possibility of testing learners effectively. Similarly large classes also cause of problems to the teachers. Therefore, these challenges should be solved as far as possible.

**Challenges faced by students in testing listening.** Testing listening is one of the challenging jobs in teaching learning activity. Testing listening becomes tougher question was the classroom is noisy. The following question was asked regarding the challenges faced by the students in testing listening: “*What are the challenges that your students face in testing listening?*”

Secondary level English teachers stated that the students faced different shorts of challenges in testing listening. There are many problems in listening classroom, the noisy classes create the greatest problem, narrow classrooms, time limitation is one of the root causes of testing listening. Secondary level English language teachers stated as:

*Testing listening is very difficult job in the classroom... The noisy classes, narrow classes, create the greatest problem in testing listening.... The limitation of time is also main problem in testing listening. [T21, T28]*

Moreover, the students not able to understand the audio quite clearly and without seeing the comprehension passage they can't answer clearly. [T4] So, problems should be address as far as possible.

**Challenges faced by teacher because of testing materials.** Testing materials play the vital role in testing listening. They should be familiar with testing materials in the classroom. The following question was asked regarding the challenges faced by teachers because of testing materials: *“Do you face any challenges because of the testing materials? If yes, please mention some.”*

The English language teachers stated multiple views regarding this question. The higher number of teachers (i.e.80%) stated that the insufficient materials is the root cause of testing listening. There is only 10% coverage of listening exercises in curriculum, there are very limited resources for testing listening in the schools. Some teachers stated their views like this:

*There are not enough materials for testing listening... There is only 10% Coverage of listening in the text books... The materials are not enough for large students.... Without testing materials teacher can't teach /test listening well. [T28, T25, T4, T16]*

English language teachers find testing is more difficult job because of insufficient materials. Cassette player is only the source of testing listening but there is not cassette player in many schools.

**Challenges faced by teachers due to curriculum and textbooks.** Listening is the process of receiving messages through our ears. It is a fundamental skill. Generally listening seems boring, tough due to the limited resources existing in the textbooks. The following question was asked regarding the challenges faced by the teachers due to curriculum and textbooks: *“Do you face any challenges due to the curriculum and textbooks?”*

The secondary level English language teachers stated different views regarding the challenges they have faced due to the curriculum. The curriculum is much tough to design the contents, there are no more activities for testing listening in course book. The reference materials are not easily available in the market. The English language teachers expressed as:

*Students are far eager to listen the text their teachers voice rather than any recorded materials... There are no more activities for testing listening. [T10, T22] Moreover, In textbooks do not have more listening exercises... The listening / reference materials are not easily available in the market. [T13, T21]*

Thus, Secondary level English teachers are facing many challenges due to the curriculum and textbooks. The test items are not enough in textbooks whereas, the curriculum fails to guide the teachers for testing listening skill. The test items, testing materials, activities should focused in textbooks.

**Challenges faced by teachers according to level of learners.** Secondary level learners are the senior learners in school level. They should have already possessed a certain level of learning .The following question was asked regarding the challenges faced by teachers according to the level of learners: “*What challenges have you face among the higher and lower level learners in testing listening? Please share your experience.*”

Secondary level English language teachers faced challenges in testing listening due to the higher and lower level of learners. Some students are very poor, they cannot grasp any ideas from the listening script. The teacher stated the following problems due to the lower level of learners:

*Some students are very poor. They cannot discriminate sounds. They show not any interest in listening. They cannot grasp any ideas from listening script. [T16, T4]*

Moreover, some students are exceptionally intelligent, they can find out the answer easily. The teachers faced the following changes due to the higher level of learners:

*Some students are very intelligent. They show much interest in all types of activities. They can find out the answer easily. They have a very sound listening power. (T10, T28, T21]*

In this regards, English language teachers feel difficulty in teaching and testing in the secondary classes. The issues are due to the higher and lower level of proficiency of the students.

#### **Teachers` Suggestions to overcome the challenges in testing listening.**

Challenges should not remain challenge forever. They should be solved. A successful teacher can be able to solve the problems which can be faced while teaching and testing. The following question was asked regarding the teachers' suggestions to overcome the challenges in testing listening: “*What would you like to suggest to overcome these challenges?*”

Secondary level English teachers suggest using ICT in the classroom. They want teacher trainings of listening texts. Similarly, they focus students to watch English program on TV and listen radio. Using authentic materials in the classroom. This things will help in overcoming the challenges in testing listening in the classroom. The teachers support developing good listening practices in the classroom. They prefer creating good learning environment in testing listening.

In general, regarding the ways of solving problems related to testing listening, the teachers stated their views as:

*The use of ICT helps in a great deal in testing listening. The arrangement of all types of teaching materials in classroom. Listening exercises should be focused more than any other kinds of skills in textbooks. They should get various trainings. Teacher self-preparation is also important on using of authentic materials... [T4, T10, T16, T28]*

Thus, the use of authentic materials, use of ICT, teacher training, arrangement of needed materials is the based way to overcome the challenges faced by the teachers while testing listening skill. The teachers should use the authentic materials and ICT materials for testing listening skill. Similarly, the best practices on listening should also be developed for solving the listening based problems.

## Chapter 5

### Summary and Implications

#### Conclusion

This thesis entitled “Perception of Secondary Level English Language Teachers towards Testing Listening Skill” is an attempt to identify the difficulties faced by the secondary level English teachers while testing listening skill in the classroom. This thesis consisted five chapters and others many sub chapters. The purpose of this study was to find out the difficulties identified by secondary level English language teachers while testing listening skill and to suggest some pedagogical implications. The conclusion of study can be made on the findings of the study in the following concise form.

Listening is not a single skill. It is the integration of several skills. Listening basically involves two sub-skills: listening perception and listening comprehension. The former involves the recognition and discrimination of minimal segmental sound units, their combinations, rhythm, stress, intonation, etc. Different activities can be exploited for testing listening. The activities vary in accordance with the age, level, background of the students, purpose of listening and so forth. The secondary level English teachers should be use listening skill not only for testing tool in an examination but they should be use this skill for developing the linguistic competence of the students.

All the respondents take listening skill as a receptive skill. Secondary level English language teachers assume that testing listening includes testing of a basic skill and it should be integrated with other skills of language testing. Similarly, secondary level English language teachers perceive that listening skill is satisfactorily included in the curriculum and textbooks. This skill is given little priority in the curriculum. In addition, English language teachers assume that the role of TPD is active in testing listening skill in the secondary level. Similarly, the teachers stated that the role of TPD in testing is very high and dominant. Likewise, the teachers suggest that listening skill should be tested using authentic materials. The teachers use gap filling items, true or false items, question-answer items and tick the best items while testing

listening. Most of the teachers use and prefer to use audio-visual materials for teaching and testing listening skill. The most challenging situation is the lack of appropriate classrooms for testing listening. The testing activities cannot be held in the existing classrooms. So, secondary level English language teachers suggest using authentic materials in the class for testing listening in better manner and they support encouraging students to watching and listening English programs on TV and radio for building their listening habits. In the same way, secondary level English language faced various problems and challenges while testing listening. Testing listening seems more complicated than other skills. The classroom environment and the availability of the listening materials are the main responsible factors for creating difficulty in listening, our curriculum should be more emphasized on developing various listening activities, English teachers face difficulty in testing listening because of the large classes, insufficient materials, cassette player is only source of testing listening, but there is not cassette player in many schools.

Based on the findings of the study the curriculum designers and textbook writers should be give equal importance in designing the test items in testing listening. English teachers faced difficulty while testing listening so, government should be focused on English language teaching for the management of materials and good infrastructure of the school. Similarly, concern agency should make evaluation system to regulate the practice of teaching and testing skill at the school.

### **Implications**

This study is implied in the field of English Language Teaching in future. Some remarks for pedagogical implications of the study have been recommended to help policy level, practice level and further researches in future.

**Policy related.** The following policy level implication have been made:

- The teachers should be encouraged to teach listening skill and it should be made as an important part of their professional development.

- The concerning authority should make the mandatory provision of managing teaching listening materials and this should be tested properly in all the secondary schools of the country.

**Practice related.** The following practice level implication have been made:

- All the secondary level English teachers should be made aware of the worth of testing listening activities. In order to raise their awareness, different programs, seminars, workshops, etc. should be organized.
- The criteria for the selection of listening materials (i.e. audio-visual materials). But, they asserted that they did not have access to the varieties of listening materials in order to use according to the students' level, ability, etc. Thus, CDC should develop other listening materials for that purpose.

**Further research related.** The following research level implication have been made:

- Universities, research centers and other educational institutions should encourage the researchers to carry out researches on listening skill and its development.
- Listening skill should be developed in students for their linguistic development.
- Further research areas listening skill can be as follows:
  - i. Testing listening from the students and students perspectives.
  - ii. Relevance of teaching listening skills in Basic Level in schools.
  - iii. Standardization of testing listening skill in schools.

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## Appendix

### Questionnaire for Teachers

Dear Sir/Madam,

This questionnaire has been prepared to carry out the research entitled "Perception of Secondary Level English Language Teachers on Testing Listening Skill". The research is being carried out under the supervision of Dr.Gopal Prasad Pandey, Lecturer. Central Campus Kirtipur, Kathmandu. The researcher expects your kind co-operation, and promises not to exploit the information besides the research purpose.

Researcher  
Pabina Regmi

Name..... (Optional)

Name of the school: .....

Qualification: ..... (Optional)

Teaching Class: ..... Date: .....

Please, I would like to request you to be collegial to fill this questionnaire with appropriate testing techniques you adopt and you think the most appropriate one for accessing listening.

Perceptions on Testing Listening

1. What type of skill is listening?

a. Productive b. Receptive c. Passive d. No idea

2. Do you think that listening is to be tested in isolation or along with other skills?

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.....  
.....

3. Why do you think it is important to test listening?

.....  
.....  
.....

4. What does testing listening include?

.....  
.....

5. Should we test listening skill from early stage of teaching?

a. Yes

b. No

6. Can testing and teaching go together?

a. Yes

b. No

7. Should testing listening be openly mentioned in the curriculum and textbooks?

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.....

8. Does our present curriculum include the testing techniques for listening?

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9. Many people say that teaching and testing listening is neglected in our case. What would you say about it?

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10. Are the listening exercises given into our textbooks sufficient for testing listening?

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11. Which language skill do you think is to be more focused?

a. Listening    b. Speaking    c. Reading    d. Writing

12. What should be the role of teacher in testing listening?

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13. Do you think that the testing of listening skill can be supportive for developing speaking?

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14. Do you think that the trainings on Teacher Professional Development address the issues of testing listening?

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15. What would you like to suggest to the curriculum designers and textbook writers regarding testing listening?

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#### Practices and Challenges in Testing Listening

16. What techniques do you use in testing listening skill?

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17. Do you think testing listening is more complicated than other skills? If yes, why ?

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18. Does our curriculum equally emphasize on testing of all skills?

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.....

19. What are the strategies suggested for testing by Curriculum Development (CDC) work well in your case?

- a. Listening comprehension.
- b. Cloze test
- c. Open ended questions
- d. Listen and draw

e. Listen and act

20. What kind of listening materials do you use while testing listening"?

- a. Audio
- b. Visual
- c. Audio Visual

21. Do you-follow pre-listening, while-listening and post-listening activities?

a. Yes b. No

22. What activities do you follow in pre-listening activities?

- a. Telling about the text
- b. Making students ready for listening
- c. Dividing class into different groups
- d. Any others

.....

23. What activities do you follow in while-listening activities?

- a. Playing the text
- b. Explaining the text
- c. Any others

.....

24. What activities do you follow in post-listening activities?

- a. Asking to tell what they have heard
- b. Giving questions
- c. Asking them in groups
- d. Any others

25. What are the challenges for teachers in testing listening?

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26. What are the challenges that your students face in testing listening?

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27. Do you face any challenges because of the testing material? If yes, please mention some.

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28. Do you face any challenges due to the curriculum and textbooks?

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29. What challenges have you face among the higher and lower level learners in testing listening? Please share your experience.

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30. What would you like to suggest to overcome these challenges?

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**Thank you very much for your kind cooperation.**