

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 General Background

English is a major world language and means of communication. It has become a vital tool for the students in local, national and international communication. It is taught and learnt as a compulsory subject from primary level to bachelor level in many countries. The aim of teaching and learning English is to produce the manpower to face the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century in many fields.

In Nepal, English was introduced during the period of the establishment of Darbar High School in 1954 A.D. by the Rana prime minister Janga Bahadur Rana. After the implementation of National Education System Plan (NESP) 1971, the systematic development of education system of Nepal was established. It studied the whole education system and gave suggestions to revise the existing curriculum. It introduced vocational education to produce skilled manpower. Then, new curriculum based on the oral structural and situational approach was developed for English. With the development of that approach, English language teaching was systematically introduced in the curriculum of primary level to bachelor level as a compulsory subject and from secondary level to post graduate level as an optional subject. This proves its need, popularity and significance.

Due to the technological progress in transportation and communication, explosion of knowledge for communication was required. As English occupies a significant status in school and university

curriculum in Nepal, the improvement on teaching-learning process and training of English teachers is the concern of these days. Teaching and learning English here is problematical because of various reasons. Students do not have good proficiency of the oral English due to the lack of sufficient exposure. Similarly, people ignore the value of listening and speaking skills of English language in the comparison of its reading and writing skills.

With the development of science and technology, the curriculum of the different levels and subjects have been revised and reformed. So, after the evaluation of the programmes implemented in the recommendation of NESP 1971, Curriculum Implementation Plan (CIP) was brought into action in 1981, which made some changes in the existing textbooks and teaching-learning procedures.

Later on, National Education Commission was formed. It submitted its educational report in 1992. This commission, studied the whole education system of past and present. It gave some suggestions regarding the policies that were to be implemented in near future. After the implementation of the suggestions of this commission, Curriculum Development Center (CDC), a vital institution of government, revised and developed curriculum based on communicative approach; the most famous and prevalent approach to language teaching at present. Along with the development of new curriculum and text books based on communicative approach, different language skills- listening, speaking, reading and writing are introduced and integrated to develop the communicative competence of the learner.

In fact, after the implementation of new curriculum 1998 A.D., there has been made a provision of teaching and testing the listening and

speaking skills along with reading and writing in English. According to the new curriculum of secondary level in English, 80 percent of total marks is allocated for reading and writing (written exam) and 20 percent of total mark is allocated for listening and speaking (oral examination). After the implementation of this curriculum, seven SLC examinations have been taken and the results also have been published.

In the present research, the researcher focused his study on the different language skills, the difference in the scores of those skills in SLC examination along with the causes of difference in those scores.

### **1.1.1 Language Skills**

While learning language, four language skills-listening, speaking, reading and writing are emphasized. These skills are integrated not only for the learning a language but are also realized in a real life situation. A second language is basically and entirely learnt in order to use it in a real life situation to communicate and grasp the pieces of information by listening to someone or reading some texts. In the situation of Nepal, it is completely a foreign language. So far as the English language situation in Nepal is concerned, its oral exposure is neither in the family nor in the community.

Focusing on the uses of different language skills, Harmer (1991-16) expresses his views, "---we have said that our choice of language may depend upon the channel of communication. If we examine this concept more fully, we can identify language skills that native speakers and competent language users possess. Literate people who use language have a number of different abilities. They will be able to speak on the telephone, write letters listen to the radio or read books. In other words

they possess the four basic language skills of *speaking writing, listening and reading.*"

Though the different language skills can be studied or learned separately, language users, of course, employ a combination of skills at the same time. Speaking and listening usually happen simultaneously and people may well read and write at the same time when they make notes or write something based on what they are reading. Harmer (1991: 17) summarizes the four major language skills in the following ways:

SKILL/MEDIUM	SPEECH	WRITTEN WORD
Receptive	Listening and understanding	Reading and understanding
Productive	Speaking	Writing

### **1.1.2 Importance of the Teaching Language Skills**

Language is a medium of communication. Literate people can listen to the radio, talk on the telephone, read books and newspapers and write letters. Thus, we can make use of language in its various modes and manners. These modes are called language skills. There are four language skills-listening, speaking, reading and writing as mentioned above. These micro skills can also be classified into two types. They are – receptive skills which are involved in receiving message whereas productive skills which are involved in the production of language for conveying message. Thus, both receptive skills (listening and reading) and productive skills (speaking and writing) are needed to learn while learning a language.

Focusing on the importance of listening, Underwood [1989: 1] views, "Listening is the activity of paying attention to and trying to get meaning from something we hear. To listen successfully to spoken language, we need to be particular ways or particular occasions, and not

simply to understand the words themselves. ....It is a skill which seems to develop easily for mother-tongue listening, but requires considerable effort where listening in a foreign language is concerned." The importance of language skills is a lot in learning a language. Someone who listens to a lecture may take notes and then write a report of the lecture. The same person might also describe the lecture to friends or colleagues, and follow it up by reading an article that the lecture suggested. Anyway, we are using different language skills according to our need. Without using such language skills, communication is not possible.

In these cases, and in many more, the same experience or topic leads to the use of many different skills and in our teaching we will try to reflect this where students practise reading. We will use that reading as the basis for practising other skills. Students involved in a oral communicative activity will have to do some writing or reading in order to accomplish the task which the activity asks them to perform. Students will be asked to write, but on the basis of reading, listening or discussing.

Focusing on the importance and uses of different language skills of English, Lado (1961:204) says, "- - - Much attention has been given to teaching and testing language in integrated listening, reading, speaking, writing, and translation. Whether we test the elements of language separately or as apart of one of these skills we are still testing language."

To sum up, learning language skills is compulsory while learning and teaching a language. Though the above mentioned four language skills may be taught or learnt in isolation, those skills are interdependent and integrated. One skill of language helps to learn other language skills.

Therefore, learning a language ignoring different language skills is like a body without soul because they all go side by side.

### **1.1.3 Curriculum Objectives in Compulsory English of Secondary Level (Skill wise)**

Language teaching is the teaching of different skills. The present secondary level English curriculum has some specific objectives under different language skills.

#### **1.1.3.1 Listening Skill**

In Nepal, listening in English was first introduced after the implementation of National Education Plan – 2049. Out of the hundred marks twenty marks is allocated for the oral examination. Among 20 marks, listening carries 8 marks. Listening text has been prescribed right from primary level. However, importance differs from level to level. In primary level, listening text is concerned to rhyme, chant and song. But the objectives of listening text in secondary level are quite different from other levels. The objectives of listening skill set in curriculum are mentioned below:

L1: The students should be able to make note or summary from what they have listened.

L2: They should be able to follow or respond appropriately to the command or instruction given to them.

L3: They should be able to show understanding of any authentic listening text.

L4: They should be able to retrieve specific information after they have listened to the text and understand the gist.

### **1.1.3.2 Speaking Skill**

Students should be able to speak fluently and accurately in a variety of authentic situations, especially they should be able to:

S1: Speaking intelligibility with in the structural and lexical levels of the secondary curriculum.

S2: Engage effectively in informal spoken discourse, using appropriate discourse devices e.g. pauses, tag – questions, hedges etc.

S3: Communicate appropriately in a variety of formal and informal situations.

S4: Engage in group discussions expressing opinions and arguing a point of view effectively.

S5: Narrate a sequence of events

S6: Describe an object or a process.

S7: Convey simple messages effectively.

S8: Produce and respond to different question types (e.g. closed, open, alternative).

S9: Express a range of emotions using the appropriate phonological features.

### **1.1.3.3 Reading Skill**

Students should be able to apply different silent reading techniques in order to comprehend a variety of authentic texts. Specifically, they should be able to:

R1: Read short texts intensively for detailed understanding.

R2: Read longer texts extensively for general understanding.

R3: Show understanding of the underlying themes and ideas of texts.

R4: Show understanding of an argument.

R5: Retrieve specific information from texts by means of a variety of reading techniques, e.g. skimming, scanning and synthesizing.

R6: Recognize the structure and organization of paragraph and longer texts, through developing an awareness of cohesive devices.

R7: Anticipate the likely continuation of interrupted texts.

R8: Appreciate literary texts of an appropriate level

R9: Deduce the meaning of unfamiliar lexical items by means of contextual, syntactic, and semantic clues.

R10: Use an appropriate English dictionary effectively.

R11: Understand and interpret information presented in diagrammatic form.

### **1.1.3.4 Writing Skill**

Students should be able to produce a variety of written texts: cues for the production of these texts will range from controlled to free. Specifically students should be able to:

W1: Express ideas in clear and grammatically correct English, using appropriate punctuation marks.

W2: Plan, organize and develop an argument.

W3: Describes an object or a process

W4: Narrate a sequence of events

W5: Use a variety of style appropriate to different texts.

W6: Transfer information from diagram to prose and vice versa.

W7: Produce a variety of authentic text types (e.g post cards, questionnaire, phone messages, letters, curriculum vitae, job applications, notices, advertisements)

W8: Make notes on a variety of texts.

W9: Produce summarizes based on such notes.

W10: Write creatively about personal experiences.

### **1.1.4 Testing Language Skills**

The development of modern linguistic theory has helped to make language being tested. Modern descriptive grammars are replacing the older Latin-based prescriptive grammars. Linguists are examining the

whole complex system of language skills and patterns of linguistic behavior. Indeed, language skills are so complex and so closely related to the total context in which they are used as well as to many non-linguistic skills (gestures, eye-movements etc.) that it may often seem impossible to separate them for the purpose of any kind of assesement.

Four major skills used in the communication of languages are often broadly defined as listening and speaking, reading and writing. In many situations where English is taught for general purposes, these skills should be carefully integrated and used to perform as many genuinely communicative tasks as possible. Questions which test the ability to understand and respond appropriately to polite requests, advice, instructions, etc. would be preferred to test of reading aloud or telling stories. In the written section of a test, questions requiring students to write letters, memos, reports and messages would be used in place of many of the more traditional compositions used in the past. In listening and reading tests, questions in which information of a particular nature would be preferred to questions testing the comprehension of unimportant and irrelevant details. Thus, there is no rigid distinction drawn between the four different skills as in most traditional tests in the past, a test of reading now being used to provide the basis for a related test for writing or speaking.

Thus, testing of language skills is an integral part of language teaching. In the absence of testing such skills, one's performance in language skill may not be observed.

There are many ways of assessing performance in the four major skills. According to Heaton (1975:8), the ways of assessing performance in the four major skills may take the form of test of:

- ) listening (auditory) comprehension, in which short utterances, dialogues, talks and lectures are given to the testees;
- ) speaking ability, usually in the form of an interview, a picture description, role play and a problem solving task involving pair work or group work.
- ) reading comprehension in which questions are set to test the students' ability to understand the gist of a text and to extract key information on specific points in the text; and writing ability, usually in the form of letters, reports, memos, messages, instructions and accounts of past events, etc.

Moreover, it is the test constructor's task to assess the relative importance of these skills at the various levels and to devise an accurate means of measuring the student's success in developing these skills. Several test writers still consider that their purpose can best be achieved if each separate skill can be measured on its own.

#### **1.1.4.1 Testing Listening**

Listening comprehension was neglected in the past. The reason behind this may be the feeling that this skill is automatically acquired by the learner as he/she speaks the language. Another reason why this skill is not given due attention is the fact that incompetence in it is easy to hide through nodding and shaking of the head, which may give the impression of understanding even where there is none. Third reason is that some audio-lingual courses give the impression that they are teaching listening comprehension when in fact they are teaching other skills. In this sense, listening effectively involves a multiplicity of skills. It is a composite skill.

Listening and speaking often go together except in a very few situation. Therefore, the test should also reflect the integration of language skills. Some of the real life listening that we encounter in our daily life are:

- ) Listening to the news/weather/sports reports.
- ) Discussing work/current problems with family or colleagues.
- ) Making arrangements/exchanging news (face to face and over the telephone).
- ) Chatting at a party/other social gathering.
- ) Hearing announcements over the loudspeaker (airport, station)
- ) Receiving instructions on how to do things.
- ) Attending a lesson/seminar.
- ) Being interviewed/interviewing
- ) Watching a film/theatre show/TV
- ) Hearing a speech/lecture
- ) Recorded songs/broadcast
- ) Attending formal occasion (prize giving/ wedding)
- ) Getting professional advice (doctors)
- ) Being tested orally in a subject study.

This shows that listening often goes together with speaking. However, there are occasions, such as listening to the radio, listening to lectures, or listening to railway station announcements, when no speaking is called for. Thus, listening is included in test for its backwash effect on the development of oral skills. Since the spoken test has to be used for testing listening, one has to be very careful in selecting the appropriate text for testing listening comprehension. Some of the important features

of listening speaking text are as follows: [A Two-Days Training on Oral Skills Testing 2005. OCE, Sanothimi, Bhaktapur]

- ) Listeners can not usually move backwards and forwards over what is being said in the way that they can be a written text.
- ) Lack of control over the speed at which speakers speak.
- ) The spoken language is much more complex than the written text.
- ) There is a large element of redundancy.
- ) Use of pause fillers.
- ) Vocabulary gap between the speaker and listener.
- ) Failure to recognize the signals and paralinguistic features.
- ) Problems of interpretation.

#### **a. Levels of Testing Listening**

Under the level of testing listening, following skills are needed:

##### **i. Macro-Skills**

These skills are directly related to candidates' need or to course objectives.

These test might include:

- a) listening for a specific information
- b) obtaining gist of what is being said
- c) following directions
- d) following instructions

## **ii. Micro-Skills**

These include:

- a) interpretation of intonation patterns (recognition of sarcasm etc)
- b) recognition of function of structures (such as interrogative as request, for example, could you pass the salt?)
- c) discrimination such as sound discrimination test.

## **b. Types of Text in Testing Listening**

The following text types can be used for a listening test:

- a) Monologue
- b) Talk
- c) Statement and dialogues
- d) Understanding talks and lectures
- e) Multi-participants
- f) Instructions
- g) Announcements
- h) Directions
- i) Phoneme discrimination tests
- j) Tests of stress and intonation
- k) Testing comprehension through visual materials.

## **c. Setting the Tasks in Testing Listening**

The following points are mentioned while setting the tasks in testing listening:

**i. Selecting samples of speech authentic versus non-authentic**

) real speech, not especially designed for foreign learners, natural conversation, what people say in real life, what native speakers say when talking to each other.

) language used in the street, at home, on some radio programmes, at meetings, in school etc.

**ii. Writing items**

Multiple choice, information transfer, partial dictation, recording of live presentations.

**d. Listening Instructions for Monitors**

The following instructions are prescribed to the monitors in order to conduct the listening (test) examination:

- i. Create a peaceful environment
- ii. Ensure that the cassette, cassette player and power supply are OK.
- iii. Play the tape to ensure that all the students can hear comfortably.
- iv. Distribute the question ask the students to read it. Also ask them to write their name, symbol number etc. On the question paper. Give them 3 minutes to read the questions and write their names etc.
- v. Tell them that you will play the cassette three times. First time they will listen and do the first question, second time they will listen and do the second question and the third time they will listen and check their answers.

- vi. Play the cassette. Give them 3 minutes to do the first question say that your are going to play the cassette last time.
- vii. Play the cassette. Give them 5 minutes to do the second question. Say that you are going to play the cassette last time.
- viii. Play the cassette. Give them 1 minute to check their answers.
- ix. Collect the answers sheets.

#### **1.1.4.2 Testing Speaking**

Testing speaking generally refers to testing speaking ability. But, specially speaking skill consists of two component skills namely production skill and communication skill. Pronunciation skill, under speaking, deals with sounds, stress and intonation on production level. Communication skill under speaking indicates the skill of communicating message by using language orally. In other wards, communication skill is the ability to convey our message (which we frame in the mind) selecting the appropriate linguistic elements, paralinguistic elements and nonlinguistic elements so that it would arouse in the receiver the meaning we are trying to convey. For this we should have the knowledge of grammar as well as the knowledge of what grammatical forms are used to carryout what communicative purposes and the knowledge of when and whom to use the sentences.

Testing ability to speak is a most important aspect of language testing. However, at all stages beyond the elementary levels of mimicry and repetition, it is an extremely difficult skill to test as it is far too complex skill to permit any reliable analysis to be made for the purpose of objective testing. Questions relating to the criteria for measuring the speaking skills and to the weighting given to such components as correct pronunciation remains largely unanswered. It is possible for people to

produce practically all the correct sounds but still be unable to communicate their ideas appropriately and effectively.

In many test of oral production, it is neither possible nor desirable to separate the speaking skills from the listening skills. Clearly, in normal speech situations, the two skills are interdependent. It is impossible to hold any meaningful conversation without understanding what is being said and without making oneself understood at the same time. Moreover, this very interdependence of the speaking and listening skills increase the difficulty of any serious attempt to analyze precisely what is being tested at any one time. Lado (1961: 242-247) suggests the following techniques to test the students speaking ability:

- ) General technique (clues are given to students to produce utterances).
- ) Specific stimuli to elicit the key utterances (pictures along with vocabulary and some structures).
- ) Oral production test designs (picture series sustained speech conversations in different parts and levels).
- ) Improving the objectivity of scoring.
- ) Group testing of oral production.

As our present syllabus suggests, we need to test our student in the use of language functions and this can be done best if we give them situations and ask them to perform in them. In many occasions, the exercises used in classroom for practice can also be used in the tests. It is, of course not possible to include all language functions in every test. The teacher can test the students' performance of four or five language functions. To test whether learners can speak, it is necessary to get them part in direct spoken language activities. To test speaking ability, we

should require candidates to demonstrate their ability to use language in ways, which are characteristic of *Interactive Speech*.

Thus, we want candidates to perform relevant language tasks and adopt their speech to the circumstances, making decisions under time pressure, implementing them fluently, and making any necessary adjustments as unexpected problems arise. The more direct we can make a test and the more we can incorporate contextual and interactional features of real-life activity into our tests, the more confidently we can extrapolate and make statements about what candidates should be able to do in that real life context. In making decision on what activities to test it would be useful to refer to a listing of what has been taught or is necessary in the target situations.

#### **A. Criteria Levels of Performance**

The following criteria levels of performance should be taken care while testing speaking skill: [A Two-Days Training on Oral Skills Testing 2005. OCE, Sanothimi, Bhaktapur]

##### **a) Accuracy**

Pronunciation still obviously influenced by L1 though clearly intelligible. Grammatical Lexical accuracy is generally high, though some errors which do not destroy.

##### **b) Appropriacy**

The use of language generally appropriate to function. The overall intention of the speaker is always clear.

**c) Range**

A fair range of language is available to the candidate. He/she is able to express himself without overtly having search for words.

**d) Flexibility**

It is able to take the initiative in a conversation and to adopt to new topics or changes of direction though neither of these may be consistently manifested.

**e) Size**

Most of the contribution may be short, but some evidence of ability to produce more utterances and to develop those into discourse should be manifested.

**B. Instructions to the Monitors for Testing Speaking**

The instructions prescribed to the monitors in testing speaking examination are as follows:

- i) Greet the students in English (e.g. say hello or good morning/afternoon, ask his/her name...) Write his/her schools name and symbol number on the scoring sheet.
- ii) Show the student the set of pictures provided by OCE. Let him/her study the pictures for a couple of minutes.
- iii) Ask the student to describe the pictures as given in the question sheet. Allow at least 15 seconds to respond to each picture, but don't go on looking at your watch.

- iv) Don't ask leading questions to help the student answer the question. You have rephrase the question for the benefit of the student. Encourage him/her to speak with your smile or gesture.
- v) Never interrupt the student when she/he is trying to say something even if it's wrong.
- vi) Tick the mark (on the score sheet) you decided to give for the student's performance. Don't show it to the student.
- vii) Say, "You may go now" to the student when you finish with him/her.

### **1.1.4.3 Testing Reading**

Reading is a process that involves recognizing graphic symbols, vocalizing them and getting message that the writer has expressed by means of those symbols. Out of these different aspects of reading, vocalizing the graphic symbols is called 'loud reading' and getting the message of the writer is known as 'reading comprehension'.

In spite of the wide range of reading materials specially written or adopted for English language learning purposes, there are few comprehensive systematic programmes which have been constructed from a detailed analysis of the skills required for efficient reading. Much text material is still limited to short reading extracts on which general 'comprehension' questions are based. As with listening comprehension, reading comprehension test material is very closely related to the type of practice material used by the teacher to develop the reading skills. Focusing on the testing reading comprehension, Weir [1988: 43-51] suggests the following techniques:

- ) Multiple-choice questions.
- ) Short answer questions.
- ) Cloze procedure.
- ) Selective deletion gap filling.
- ) C-Tests.
- ) Cloze elide.
- ) Information transfer.

Along with different reading skills, two different kinds of complementary reading activities to which students are usually exposed are generally classified as *intensive* and *extensive* reading. Short reading extracts of a moderate degree of difficulty and containing features which merit detailed study form a basis for intensive reading practice. Whole articles, chapters and books (usually simplified readers) are used for extensive reading practice; in this case, however the material selected is generally slightly below the language attainment level of the students using it.

According to Heaton (1975: 107-133), the different levels and the test items suitable to those levels under reading skills are listed below:

- A. Initial stage of reading (matching tests)
  - a) Word matching
  - b) Sentence matching
  - c) Picture and sentence matching
- B. Intermediate and advanced stages of reading (matching tests)
  - a) different signs (shapes) and their description given in the dictionary extracts.
  - b) Give/write the words from the passage next to the appropriate definition.

- c) match appropriate words or information in the text with the correct parts of a diagram.
- d) Matching of paraphrase or phrases and sentences in a text with the original words in the text.
- C. True/false reading tests
- D. Multiple – choice items
  - a) In short texts
  - b) In longer texts
- E. Completion items
- F. Arrangement items
- G. Cloze procedure
- H. Open – ended and miscellaneous items
  - a) one – word answer
  - b) answer in a few words
  - c) sentence answer etc
- I. Cursory reading

#### **1.1.4.4 Testing Writing**

Writing Skill, here means writing composition which refers to a piece of written work produced to practice the skills and techniques of writing or to demonstrate a person's skill as a writer. Mainly there are two types of composition writing in language teaching and testing. They are:

- ) Controlled Composition Writing
- ) Free Composition Writing

Controlled composition writing is controlled by various means such as by providing questions to be answered, sentences to be completed or pictures to follow.

Free composition refers to free writing. In free composition the writing is not controlled or limited in anyway. The writer is free in selection of vocabulary and sentence. Free composition, writing includes: essay writing, writing about any topic, report writing, letter writing etc.

The writing skills are complex and sometimes difficult to teach and test, requiring mastery not only of grammatical and rhetorical devices but also of conceptual and judgment elements. According to Heaton (1975: 135), the following analysis attempts to group the many varied skills necessary for writing good prose into five general components or main areas:

**a. Language use**

The ability to write correct and appropriate sentences.

**b. Mechanical Skills**

The ability to use correctly those conventions peculiar to the written language – e.g. punctuation, spelling.

**c. Treatment of content**

The ability to think creatively and develop thoughts, excluding all irrelevant information;

**d. Stylistic Skills**

The ability to manipulate sentences and paragraphs, and use language effectively;

### **e. Judgement Skills**

The ability to write in an appropriate manner for a particular purpose with a particular audience in mind, together with an ability to select, organize and order relevant information.

Writing skill is one of the most important skill which is also more advanced in comparison to other skills. The actual writing conventions which it is necessary for the students at the elementary stages to punctuation and spelling. Focusing on the importance of writing skill, Heaton (1975:135) says, "Of far of greater importance in the teaching and testing of writing are those skills involving the use of judgment. The ability to write for a particular audience using the most appropriate kind of language is essential for both native-speaking and foreign student alike. The use of correct registers becomes an important skill at advanced level of writing."

Thus, a piece of continuous writing may take the form of a narrative, description, survey, record, report, discussion or argument. In addition to the subject and the format, the actual audience (e.g. an examiner, a teacher, a student, a friend etc) will also determine which of the various registers is to be used.

### **A. Testing Composition Writing**

An attempt should be made to determine the types of writing tasks with which the students are confronted everyday. Short articles, instructional and accounts of experiments will probably form the main body of writing. A successful candidate should have passed an examination designed to test ability based on the following types of writing:

**a) Basic Level**

letter, postcard; diary entry; forms

**b) Intermediate Level**

as Basic level, plus guide, set of instructions

**c) Advanced Level**

as intermediate level, plus newspaper report; notes. The candidate's performance will have met the following minimum criteria:

**i. Basic Level**

No confusing errors of grammar or vocabulary; a piece of writing legible and readily intelligible; able to produce simple unsophisticated sentences.

**ii. Intermediate Level**

Accurate grammar, vocabulary and spelling, though possibly with some mistakes which do not destroy communication; handwriting generally legible; expression clear and appropriate, using a fair range of language; able to link themes and points coherently.

**iii. Advanced Level**

Extremely high standards of grammar, vocabulary and spelling; easily legible handwriting; no obvious limitations on range of language candidates is able to use accurately and appropriately; ability produce organized, coherent writing, displaying considerable sophistication.

In the composition test, the students should be presented with a clearly defined problem which motivates them to write. It provides the students with an opportunity to demonstrate their ability to organize the language material, using their own words and ideas and to communicate. In this way, composition tests provide a degree of motivation which many objective type tests fail to provide. The writing task should be such that it ensures they have something to say and a purpose for saying it. They should also have an audience in mind when they write. Thus, whenever possible, meaningful situations should be given in composition test. For example, a brief description of a real-life situation might be given when requiring the students to write a letter.

Moreover, the composition should be presented with a clearly defined problem which motivates the students to write. The writing task should be such that it ensures learners something to say and a purpose for saying it. They should also have an audience in mind when they write.

Apart from the above mentioned things on testing composition writing, the following types of composition test may be used in testing composition writing:

- a) Setting the Composition
- b) Grading the Composition
- c) Treatment of written errors
- d) Objective tests (mechanics)
- e) Objective tests (style and register)

### **1.1.5 Controlled Writing**

There are several ways of controlling students freedom of expression in their written work and as a consequence, increasing the

reliability of the scoring. However useful such methods are as teaching devices, they will only prove useful for testing purposes if each student is completely familiar with the particular task to be performed: hence the importance of clear instructions followed by at least example. Sometimes there is even the danger that certain students will feel inhibited rather than helped by such control. Some of the types of controlled writing are:

- i. The students are given a short reading extract and then required to write a similar paragraph, using the notes they have been given.
- ii. Use the given notes to write complete sentences.
- iii. Several types of writing tasks can be based on the following reading extract. Any similar text can also be used for:
  - ) Copying with minor alternations: e.g. tense/person changes
  - ) Changing the point of view e.g. write this story as seen by .....
  - ) Changing the style and register: e.g. write this story in the form of a newspaper report/ a humorous account, etc.
  - ) Adding further information.
  - ) Several methods of practising or measuring the ability to link sentences, involving subordination and co-ordination feature. Some tasks involve writing up notes in the form of sentences.
  - ) In some tests of composition, especially at the elementary and intermediate levels, sentences and clauses are provided at first in order to help to students to start writing.
  - ) One of the most useful devices for exercising control over the kind of written response required and yet, at the same time, giving the testees considerable freedom of expression is the two sentence text designed to measure the ability to form a coherent unit of language.

## 1.2 Review of the Related Literature

After the implementation of Educational Report 1992 A.D., the English language curriculum of different levels have been changed and placed the communicative approach in those curriculums. Through the communicative approach, different aspects/skills of language teaching and testing are equally emphasized. Before the implementation of this new curriculum, especially the oral skills were not received due attention. Only the reading and writing skills i.e. written medium of examination were used. As a result, the basic and the most important language skills (listening and speaking) were neglected. But, later on, the importance of these skills in real life communication was realized. As the concept of teaching and learning, listening and speaking skill are not new, however, their testing is quite new. The researches existing in the Department of English as well as in the Department of English Education are not directly related to the present topic. However, very near ones are reviewed below.

Awasthi (1979) carried out a research on, 'The study of Attitudes of Different Groups of People Towards the English Language in the Secondary School of Kathmandu District.' He found, as a whole that the different groups of people had positive attitudes towards the English language.

Giri (1995) carried out a research entitled 'A Survey into People's Attitudes towards the exiting SLC Examination in Nepal'. He found that people were positive towards SLC examination. They had suggested that SLC examination should be usually administered twice and SLC examination should not be privatized.

Singh, (2000) carried out a comparative study between the students of grade eight of public and private sectors on the achievement of listening comprehension. In this study, he found that the performance of the students of private school is far better than those of their counterparts of public schools. This study is in consonance with Awasthi (1995).

Timilsina, (2000) also carried out a research on 'The Effectiveness of Recorded Materials over Conventional Techniques Teaching Listening Skill to Grade Nine Students of the Public School'. He found that the controlled group, for whom the live voice of the teacher (conventional technique) was employed, gained achievement than the experimental group, for whom the recorded materials were employed.

Aryal (2001) carried out a research entitled 'A Study of Listening Proficiency of grade ten Students of Gorakha'. He found that there was no significant difference in the performance of the students in seen and unseen texts.

Rana (2002) studied 'Listening Abilities of Nepalese learners of English' and found that the listening abilities of the Nepalese learners of English are determined to be 85.9 percentage. Similarly, he also found that the students having Tibeto-Berman language background have better listening abilities than those of the student having Indo-Aryan language background.

Oli (2003) has carried out the research entitled 'The Proficiency in the Speaking Skill of the Ninth Graders.' He found that the situation of speaking (skill) proficiency of the students from the public secondary schools in our country is not satisfactory and adequate to meet the specified objectives of the English curriculum.

Dahal, (2005) has carried out a research on 'Difficulty Level of the Five Sets of Listening Tests in the case of SLC Examination'. He found that the five sets of cassette which were used for testing listening comprehension of SLC examinees of 2000 A.D. by the office of the controller of examinations were not of the same difficulty level. He concluded in his finding that the sets 'B' and 'C' have been found easier to follow in comparison to the rest ones (the sets A, D and E).

No research yet has been carried out on the comparison of different language skills and the scores made by the learners. So, the researcher is interested in this area to find out the differences in scores made by the students in the SLC examination of different language skills in English (listening/speaking and reading/writing) and the causes of differences in the scores obtained by the students in those examinations.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study were as follows:

- i. To find out the differences in the scores of reading/writing and listening/speaking examinations.
- ii. To find out the causes of differences in the scores of those examinations.
- iii. To point out some pedagogical implications.

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

The students, teachers, syllabus-designers, administrators, textbook writers, materials producers of auditory talks and all those who are directly and indirectly involved in teaching and learning English will be benefited from this study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **METHODOLOGY**

The methodology adopted in carrying out the study is described below:

#### **2.1 Sources of Data**

Both types of source are used in this research.

##### **2.1.1 Primary Sources of Data**

The primary sources of data are the students who have got through SLC examination in 2007A.D. and studying in different colleges in Kathmandu valley and the secondary level English Teachers of Kathmandu Valley involved on those examinations.

##### **2.1.2 Secondary Sources**

The researcher applied the different records and sets of questions prepared by the Office of the Controller of Examination, curriculum of secondary level (English), and other related materials.

#### **2.2 Sampling Procedure**

Five colleges from Kathmandu Valley were purposively selected and ten students from each of the selected colleges were randomly chosen. Thus, the total number of students for this study were fifty. Similarly, fifteen secondary level English Teachers (involved in SLC examination) teaching in Kathmandu valley were also randomly chosen.

### **2.3 Tools for Data Collection**

For this research, the researcher used two sets of questionnaire. One set of questionnaire addressed to the students who have got through the SLC examination in 2007 A.D. and studying in different colleges. Another set of questionnaire addressed to the secondary level English Teachers involved in SLC examination.

### **2.4 Process of Data Collection**

First of all, the researcher visited the Office of the Controller of Examination (OCE) and requested for the mark ledger of English obtained by the students in SLC examinations to the concerned officials. After finding those records of scoring, he compared those scores (scoring in listening/speaking and reading/writing) obtained by the hundred examinees in SLC examination and found out the differences between those scores. Then he prepared two sets of questionnaire with the help of his guide and the works of great scholars like Grant, Harmer etc. Then, to ensure complete return of the responses and fairness in the returns, the researcher visited the different selected colleges of Kathmandu valley. At first, the researcher visited the concerned colleges and took permission from the principal. After getting permission, the researcher gathered the selected students. He explained the task and gave the prepared questionnaire to them. The researcher explained each question, then asked them to give their responses. After getting responses of all the students, the questionnaire had taken back. Then he thanked his respondents.

Similarly, the researcher prepared another set of questionnaire for secondary level English teacher involved in SLC examinations. Then, the

researcher visited the District Education Offices of Kathmandu Valley and found the name list of those teachers involved in the SLC examination with their concerned schools. The names of the teachers were selected randomly then the researcher personally visited the selected teachers and requested for their responses providing them the questionnaire. After taking the responses given by the teacher, the questionnaire were taken back and were thanked to all the respondents.

## **2.5 Limitations of the Study**

The study had the following limitations:

- i. The research was limited to find out the differences in the scores obtained by the students in listening/speaking and reading/writing examination.
- ii. The research was limited to only fifty students of Proficiency Certificate Level first year of five different colleges taking ten students from each of those selected colleges in Kathmandu Valley.
- iii. The research was based on the responses made by the fifteen secondary level English teachers teaching in Kathmandu Valley, (involved in SLC examinations).
- iv. The research was limited to the findings of the causes of differences in the scores of different examinations in English (listening/speaking and reading/writing) obtained by the students in the SLC examination.

## **CHAPTER – THREE**

### **ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

This chapter is mainly concerned with the analysis and interpretation of the data. As mentioned in the objectives of the study, the secondary data was collected from the Office of the Controller of Examination [OCE] and the collected data was described and interpreted to find out the difference in the scores obtained by the students in listening/speaking and reading/writing examination in the SLC examination. After detecting the difference in the scores of those examinations, two separate sets of questionnaire were formed to administer to the population of the study. Then the data were collected and the collected data were described and interpreted to find out the causes of difference in the scores of listening/speaking and reading/writing examinations. Questions asked in the questionnaire had two parts: closed-ended and the open-ended. Most of the closed-ended questions were to be answered with three alternatives; 'Yes', 'Uncertain' and 'No' numbered 'i', 'ii' and 'iii'. While analyzing the data the total number of the students of each response was counted and the total number of response was changed into percentage.

There were nine questions addressed to the teachers and eleven questions addressed to the students. The facts and the responses received from the data have been discussed separately in the subsequent sections.

### 3.1 Analysis of the Scores Obtained by the Students in Listening/Speaking and Reading/Writing Examinations in SLC Examination

In this category, one hundred students' scores were taken. The difference in the scores of those examination obtained by the students is presented in the following table [appendix I].

**Table No.1: Difference in the scores obtained by the students**

S.N.	No. of students (out of 100)	Marks obtained in listening/speaking exam (out of 20 marks)		Marks obtained in Reading/writing exam (out of 80 marks)	
		Marks	Percentage	Marks	Percentage
1.	50	12-19	60-95	04-40	5-50
2.	15	13-19	65-95	41-47	51-59
3.	13	16-19	80-95	49-66	61-82
4.	13	08-11	40-55	05-36	6-45
5.	08	07-13	35-55	40-59	50-61
6.	01	11	55	44	55

The above table shows the scores obtained by the students in listening/speaking and reading/writing exam in SLC examination. Out of the hundred students, fifty students obtained better marks in listening/speaking than in reading/writing exam. To put it in figures, out of the 100 students, 50 students obtained 60% -95% marks in listening/speaking whereas 5%-50% marks in reading/writing exam. Similarly, 15 students obtained 65%-95% marks in listening/speaking exam where as they obtained 51%-59% marks in reading and writing exam. Out of the 100 students, 13 students obtained 80%-95% in listening/speaking exam where as they obtained 61%-82%marks mark in reading and writing exam. Out of the total students, 13 students secured 40%-55% marks in listening/speaking exam where as they secured 6%-

45% marks in reading and writing exam. Out of the total students, 8 students secured 35%-55% marks in listening/speaking exam where as they secured 50%-61% marks in reading/writing exam. Out of 100 students, only one student secured 55% marks in both types of examinations.

Finally, the difference has been found in the scores of different examination. So, in order to find the causes of difference in the scores of those examinations, the researcher prepared two separate sets of questionnaire as test items to be administered to the concerned respondents [teachers and students]. Respondents were chosen randomly. Responses made by those respondents have been discussed separately in subsequent sections.

### **3.2 Description of the Questionnaire Addressed to the Teachers**

The questionnaire addressed in this group consisted of nine questions. Among them, eight questions were closed-ended and one was open-ended. As mentioned earlier, those closed-ended questions were asked to be answered with three alternatives. Respondents were also requested to mention the reasons to support their answers to those questions. The question no. 9 was an open-ended question addressed to the teachers to collect their over all views towards the existing SLC exam of English. The description of each of those closed-ended and open-ended questions with the responses made by the teachers is presented in the subsections.

### 3.2.1 Analysis of the Closed-Ended Questionnaire

The analysis of those questions along with responses made by the teachers is presented here with the help of the given table.

**Table no. 2: Reponses Made by the Teachers**

S.N.	Statement/Question	Responses made by the teachers (in percentage)							
		Yes	Uncertain	No					
1	Need of teaching and testing different language skills of English at secondary level	93	07	0					
3	Sufficient availability of the curriculum, text books, teacher guides, materials and trained teachers in learning of different language skills in English	33	0	67					
4	Satisfactory provision of specification grid, model questions and the time to the students by the SLC Examination Board	40	0	60					
6	Appropriateness of the existing SLC Examination for reading and writing skills in English	20	07	73					
7	There is difference in the scores of different examinations of English obtained by the students in SLC examination	93	07	0					
		Skill-wise Responses made by the Teachers							
		L	S	R	W	LSWR	LRW	RW	LSR
2	Language skills practiced in the classroom					33	27	13	27
8	The greatest number of unsuccessful students	0	20	0	80				
		Level of Examination							
		School		District			Regional		
5	Appropriate level to test Listening/speaking skills at secondary level	80		13			07		

L=Listening, S=Speaking, R=Reading, W=Writing

Though some questions (including no.1) were not directly concerned with the study but they were addressed to the respondents in order to find out the opinion of teachers towards the necessity of teaching and testing different language skills in English. The first question was about the need of teaching and testing different language skills of English at Secondary level. Maximum number of teachers [93%] agreed with the statement that different language skills of English [Listening, speaking, reading and writing] are necessary to develop the communicative competence of the learners. Out of the total teachers, 7% teachers were uncertain whether those language skills are needed at the secondary level or not.

The second question was about the different language skills practiced in the classroom. The above table shows that 33% teachers agreed with the practice they had given to the students in the classroom. Out of the total teachers, 27%, accepted the reality that they had given practice to their students only in listening, reading and writing skills because practice in speaking skill would be the time consuming and the class would be noisy. Out of the total teachers, 13%, gave practice only in reading and writing skills to their students. They gave the reasons that the materials like tape recorders, cassettes recorded with the voices of native speakers and other equipments needed in the practice of listening/speaking skills were not available sufficiently as it would be. Out of the total teachers, 27%, gave practice only in listening, speaking and reading. They did not give enough practice in writing in the comparison of other skills because practice of writing skill was time consuming. Even a small part of writing [short composition] was not completed by some students in the classroom. Similarly, students were not interested to practice writing at home too.

The third question was about the sufficient availability of the curriculum text books, teaching materials and trained teachers in teaching-learning different language skills in English. The above table shows that 67% teachers disagreed with the statement. They gave the reason that nobody was responsible to provide such materials in all the schools in time. As a result, students faced difficulty in the practice of those language skills. They have been forced to learn grammatical items by heart in order to get success in those examinations of English. Out of the total teachers, 33%, agreed with the issue because they got sufficient materials to practice in those skills.

The fourth question was about the sufficient provision of specification grid, model questions and time to solve all the questions asked to them during the period of examination. The table no. 2 shows that most of the teachers [60%] were not agreed with the statement. They gave the reasons that the board of SLC examination might be produced and managed the necessary materials and time to the students but the distribution of those prescribed materials have not been done effectively in all the schools. They also viewed that teaching/learning activities in school has been affected by the external factors such as strikes, unnecessary holidays, traffic jams, political activities etc. As a result, an academic session have not been completed according to the calendar made by those institutions. So, the result of those examinations have been affected. Out of the total teachers, only 40% were agreed with the issue because they did not find any problem regarding the materials concerned with the examinations. They viewed that due to the lack of students' interest towards the sufficient practice in those language skills, the result might have been affected.

The fifth question was about the testing in listening/speaking exam with its suitable level to the students of secondary level. Out of the total students, 80%, agreed that listening/speaking exam would be suitable if it was tested in school level because the students could answer the questions asked to them by their examiners easily in this level. They also viewed that students would be familiar with the environment and could make confidence to be faced such examinations. Out of the total teachers, 13%, supported the district level exam whereas 7% were in favour of regional level exam for testing listening/speaking skill. They gave the reasons that such exam could maintain the quality and the fairness in the result.

The sixth question was about the appropriateness of the existing SLC exam for reading/writing. The above table [table no. 2] shows that out of the total teachers, 73%, disagreed with the statement asked to them. They gave the reason that the questions asked to them in reading/writing examinations were not according to their standard/level. Only 20% of the total teachers agreed with the suitability of the existing SLC exam in reading/writing skill because the questions asked to the students were based on the specification grid, curriculum and the question models.

The seventh question was about the difference in the scores obtained by the students in their listening/speaking and reading/writing exams. The above table [table no. 2] shows that out of the total respondents, 93%, agreed with the statement. They gave the reason that most of the students in government schools have focused their studies in learning grammatical items to get success in the exam rather than focused their studies in the learning of other language skills. They viewed that the proficiency level of the students have not found equal. The exposure and

the provision of the sufficient materials provided to them have not been found sufficiently to all the students. Only 7%, of the total teachers became uncertain with the issue.

The eighth question was about the greatest number of unsuccessful students in anyone or different exams of English. The above table shows that out of the total teachers, 80%, found that the greatest number of unsuccessful student were in writing exam. They gave the reason that it was due to the lack of sufficient practice given to the students and the lack of students' interest towards the practice of writing skill. They also viewed that no trained teachers have been encouraged and placed to serve in all the schools. Out of the total teachers, 20%, have found that the greatest number of students were in speaking examination due to the insufficient practice given to them in the class or before the exam.

Thus, a wide range of teachers' responses express that there are many reasons responsible in the differences of the scores obtained by the students in their listening/speaking and reading writing exams. According to the teachers, the main cause is the level of question asked to all the students i.e. same question asked to all the levels of students seems unmatched. Similarly lack of the provision of trained teachers and the sufficient materials to practice those language skills are also responsible in the difference of the scores as stated by the teachers.

### **3.2.2 Analysis of the Open-Ended Questionnaire**

The researcher also developed an open-ended question with the blank space to supply the responses addressed to the teachers. The responses made by the respondents is described in this section.

The open ended question i.e. question no. 9, addressed to the teachers was about their overall views towards the existing SLC exam of English. Out of the fifteen teachers, 14 teachers responded this question. The majority of the teachers (9 teachers) viewed that questions asked to the students in the examination were not according to their standard because no materials such as specification grid, model questions, practice books were available to all the students in time. They also stated that most of the students, especially, in the rural areas have been suffered due to the lack of qualified and trained teachers. As a result, the scores they secured in different exams have been found varied.

Three teachers viewed that they had not found the fairness in the marking of listening/speaking exam due to their bad attitudes towards the students of neighbouring schools.

Out of the fourteen teachers, two teachers viewed that the implementation of the plan and policies in the field of education have not been so effective. So, all the educational activities have been affected. They also focused in the establishment of the separate university to form the plan and control all the educational activities.

Thus, most of the teachers viewed that some reformation in the existing SLC examination are needed. Focuses should be given to the student of rural areas rather than the students of urban areas.

### **3.3 Analysis of the Questionnaire Addressed to the Students**

In this category, there were altogether eleven questions. Among them, ten questions [Q.no. 1-10] were closed-ended and one question [Q.no.11] was open-ended. Closed-ended questions were addressed to be answered with three alternatives. A short space is also provided to

mention the cause to support their responses. Similarly, an open-ended question was addressed at the end to elicit the students' response towards the existing SLC examination in English. The analysis and description of the responses made by the students in those types of question is presented in the subsequent sections.

### 3.3.1 Analysis of the Responses Obtained from Closed-Ended Questionnaire

In this category, the responses made by the students in closed-ended questions, is presented with the help of the following table :

**Table no. 3: Responses made by the students**

S.N.	Statement/Question	Responses made by the students (in percentage)		
		Yes	Uncertain	No
1	Need of the listening/speaking and reading/writing skills at secondary level	84	10	6
2	Different language skills will be helpful to the students in future	88	8	4
3	Involvement in the listening/speaking and reading/writing examinations before SLC Examination	54	6	40
4	Questions asked in SLC Examination were based on specification grid, materials and the model questions prescribed by the board of SLC examination	74	16	10
5	They faced any problem during their reading/writing examinations	30	6	64
6	Any uncomfortable situation faced by them in listening/speaking examination	62	6	32
7	Satisfaction with the scores obtained by them in SLC	12	0	88

	examination.			
8	The difference in the scores of listening/speaking and reading/writing examination made by students	92	5	3
10	Appropriateness of the existing reading/writing Examination at Secondary level	58	14	28
		Level of Examination		
		School	District	Regional
9	Appropriate level of examination for listening/speaking examination skill	70	20	10

The first question was about the necessity of listening/speaking and reading/writing skills at secondary level. The above table shows that 84% of the total students agreed with the statement. They gave the reasons that if those skills were taught and practiced in the classroom, they would become proficient in the uses of the English language skills. They also viewed that they could easily develop their fluency in those language skills and could be able to communicate [orally and in written] locally and with foreigners. Out of the total students, 5%, were uncertain about the necessity of language skills because those language skills were not practiced in the classroom properly. Out of the total students, only 6%, disagreed with the statement because they did not find the persons who got job easily after the completion of SLC examination.

The second question was about the different language skills in English would be helpful to them in the future. Above table shows that 88% of the total respondents agreed with the statement. They gave the reasons that teaching/learning activities for a single language skill may not be sufficient to learn the language. So, the integration of all the language skills would be helpful to learn the language perfectly. Out of the total students, 8% were uncertain with the statement where as 4% of

the total students disagreed the matter because of the lack of sufficient practice within those language skills.

The third question was about the students' involvement in listening/speaking and reading/writing examinations before their SLC examination. Table no.3 shows that 54% of the total students agreed with the statement. Most of them were involved in those examinations at secondary level whereas some of them involved from lower secondary level, especially from class eight. Out of the total students 40% disagreed with the statement and stated that they often involved in reading and writing examinations than listening/speaking examinations. 6% of the total respondents were uncertain in this issue.

The fourth question was whether the questions asked in SLC examination were based on the specification grid, materials for practice and the model questions produced by the board of SLC Examination or not. The above table shows that 74% of the total students agreed with the statement and gave the reason that they found similarity between the questions they had practiced in school and the questions asked in SLC examination. Out of the total students, 16% were uncertain with the statement. Similarly, 10% of the total students disagreed that they did not find the similarity between the questions they had practiced in school and the questions asked in SLC examination especially, in the case of listening and speaking examinations.

The fifth question was about the problem they had faced during their reading/writing examinations. Table no. 3 shows that 64% of the total students disagreed that they did not face any problem during their reading/writing examination where as 30% respondents agreed that they had faced some problems at that time. According to them, they were

disturbed by the unnecessary talking of the guards and by the friends who cheated from others in the examination. Only 6%, of the total respondents were uncertain because they did not find any problem during the period of examination.

The sixth question was about the problem they had faced during their listening/speaking examination. Table no. 3 shows that 62% of the total respondents agreed with the statement. They gave the reasons that they faced problems with their examiners, especially they felt hesitation, nervousness and did not answer easily due to their insufficient practice. They also said that the materials in listening examination [cassette player, cassette, electric plugs etc.] were not found standard. As a result, their listening/speaking examinations were affected. Only 32%, of the total students disagreed with the statement because they found the devices better used in the examination and did not face any problem. Out of the total students, 6%, were uncertain about their listening/speaking examination. They neither faced problems nor faced fully comfortable.

The seventh question was about the satisfaction in the scores they obtained in listening/speaking and reading/writing examinations. Table no. 3 shows that 88% of the total respondents disagreed with the statement. They gave the reasons that most of them obtained better marks in listening/speaking in the comparison of their reading/writing examinations. But some of them gave the reasons that they secured better marks in reading/writing exam than in listening/speaking exam. Out of the total students, only 12%, were satisfied with the statement because they obtained more or less similar marks in listening/speaking and reading/writing exams.

The eighth question was about the difference in the scores of listening/speaking and reading/writing examinations in English. table no.3 shows that 92% of the total students agreed with the statement. Most of them secured better marks in listening/speaking than in reading writing exam where as others secured a little bit better marks in reading/writing exam in the comparison of listening/speaking. The main cause of the difference according to them were the lack of sufficient materials and the practice given to them in such skills in the school. Similarly, lack of qualified and trained teachers, and sufficient guidance provided to them were other causes. Out of the total students, 5%, were uncertain and 3%, disagreed the statement because they found the similarity in the scores of those examinations obtained by them.

The ninth question was about the suitable level of examination in listening/speaking examination. Table no. 3 shows that 70% of the total students were in favour of school level exam because they would be familiar with the environment and could answer the questions asked to them with confidence. But if such examination took place in district or regional level, they would feel uncomfortable with the examiner. Only 20%, supported the district level exam and 10% of the total respondents supported the regional level examination in listening/speaking. They gave the similar reasons that examination would be fair if such exams were taken in those levels.

The tenth question was about the appropriateness of existing reading/writing examination at secondary level. The table presented above shows that 58% of the total respondents agreed with the statement because the questions asked in reading/writing examination were according to the specification grid and the model questions provided to them. But 28% of the total respondents disagreed with the issue because

the model questions specification grid and the materials to practice those skills were not available in time. So they missed the sufficient practice in those language skills. They also dissatisfied with the existing reading/writing examination that these skills had been taught only from examination point of view. According to them, creativity and originality had not been developed from those skills as it would be. Out of the total students, only 14 %, were uncertain for this issue.

Finally, the students are not so satisfied with the existing examinations of English. Most of the students have faced difficulty during their listening/speaking exam due to the lack of sufficient materials and the practices provided to them. Regarding reading and writing exam they have realized the necessity of sufficient materials, trained teachers to practice those language skills sufficiently and more than two sets of questions according to the proficiency level of students.

### **3.3.2 Analysis of the Open-Ended questionnaire**

In this category, there was only one question. The question was about their views towards the reformation in the existing examinations of English.

Out of 50 students, 45 students responded to this question. This question was attached, with the closed-ended leaving the space. Most of the respondents [35 students] viewed that slight changes were needed in the existing examination system of English because only the theoretical knowledge was gained through the learning of those skills. Examination was taken for the determination of the position. No practical knowledge learnt from those skills was utilized in the learners' real life. The learning of those language was limited for the sake of examination. They have

suggested that listening/speaking examination should be taken in school level and practices in such language skills should be done from the beginning of the secondary level.

Out of the total students, 45 students suggested that listening/speaking examination should be taken in school level and reading/writing examination in regional level to maintain the quality in those skills. Examinations taken in those skills should be focused to the students of rural areas.

Thus, a wide range of students' responses reveals that all the language skills are essential to develop the communicative competence of the learners. So, those language skills should be practiced in balance.

## **CHAPTER – FOUR**

### **FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter deals with the major findings of the research. It also deals with some recommendations and pedagogical implications which are made on the basis of the description and interpretation of the data.

#### **4.1 Findings**

After the description and interpretation of the data, the findings of the study can be summarized in the following points:

1. Out of the hundred students, only one student secured the distinction marks in reading/writing exam whereas more than thirty-five students secured distinction marks in listening/speaking exam.
2. The scores obtained by the students in listening/speaking exam have been found high than the scores obtained in reading/writing exam.
3. The majority of the teachers and students accepted the fact that there were differences in the scores obtained by the students in listening/speaking and reading/writing exams of English.
4. The main cause of difference accepted by the majority of the respondents was the same question asked to the students of all levels. As a result, brilliant students were benefited and most of the average and poor level students became unsuccessful.
5. Majority of the teachers found that many students had focused their studies on the learning of grammatical items by heart in order to

get success in the exam. So, they had been found weaker in other skills such as listening, speaking and writing.

6. Most of the teachers and students accepted that there were not much practices done in all the language skills due to the lack of sufficient materials and time. As a result, the scores obtained by the students in the exam have been affected.
7. Majority of the students realized that they secured better marks in listening/speaking exam than in reading/writing because examiners gave average marks to all the participants in listening/speaking exam but that was not the case in reading/writing exam.
8. In the case of listening/speaking exam students did not feel comfortable with the examiners. They felt nervous and hesitation with the examiners. So, some of them secured less marks especially, in speaking exam.
9. Most of the students felt difficulty in their listening/speaking exam due to lack of well equipped materials and practices.
10. Majority of the teachers viewed that the result of listening/speaking exam have been affected due to the bad attitudes of the teacher towards the students of other schools.
11. Most of the respondents realized that listening/speaking exam would be suitable if they were taken in school level in comparison of district and regional level.
12. Most of the respondents agreed that the greatest number of unsuccessful students have been found in the writing exam.
13. Most of the respondents realized that the causes of getting low marks in reading and writing exams are due to the insufficient practices in all the language skills. Unavailability of the sufficient materials and the lack of students' interest towards practices in writing skill is also one of the causes.

14. Majority of the teachers viewed that the external factors such as strikes, traffic jams, unnecessary holidays, political activities etc. hampered in order to complete an academic session successfully on time and insufficient practices in all the language skills have also affected the result of those examinations.
15. The teachers expressed that the separate university of SAARC standard would be useful, for planning and controlling all the educational activities.
16. The students feel that more than two sets of question are useful to avoid cheating in reading/writing exam.
17. The respondents think that learning of different language skills are not based on the creativity and the interest of the learners due to the lack of time and materials. Only teacher-centered methods [explanation and description] are used to practice those skills. As a result the scores of the examination are affected.
18. Most of the teachers viewed that no trained teachers have been available in all the schools. No encouragement and the facilities are provided to the trained teachers to work especially, in the rural areas.

## **4.2 Recommendations**

On the basis of the findings given above, the following recommendations have been made:

1. The difference in scores of listening/speaking and reading/writing exams has been found. To minimize this difference, examiners have to be informed of this fact and trained to conduct the exam accordingly.

2. The majority of the respondents accepted the fact that low scores have been obtained by the students in reading/writing exam than in listening/speaking due to the lack of sufficient materials and practices provided to them. So, enough materials and time should be provided to the students to learn and practice such language skills.
3. Majority of the teachers and students agreed that the questions asked in SLC exam have not been found suitable according to the standard of the students. Many students have not succeeded especially in reading/writing examination. So, the questions should be formed focusing on the different levels of the students.
4. Most of the students felt difficulty during their listening/speaking exam due to the lack of well equipped materials and the lack of sufficient practice provided to them in those skills before the exam. So, enough practice should be given to the students in those skills and the marks in these exams should be provided according to their proficiency level. Materials used in those exam should be well equipped and managed properly.
5. It has been found that the marks in listening/speaking exam been affected due to the bad attitudes of teachers towards the students of other schools. So, to avoid such bad attitudes towards the students of other schools, exam should be taken by more than one examiner.
6. Most of the teachers and students realized that listening/speaking exam would be suitable if such exams are taken in school level. So listening/speaking exam of secondary level should be taken in the school as internal and external exam. As an internal exam, fifty percent of the total marks should be provided by the concerned teachers and as an external exam, one examiner should

be called from other school to take the exam for the another fifty percent marks. Total marks from internal and external exam should be provided to the students.

7. Majority of the teachers expressed that all the educational activities have been affected by the external factors such as strike, unnecessary holidays, traffic jams, political activities etc. So, strict rules and regulations should be formed and implemented. Otherwise, the educational plans/activities mentioned in the calendar may not be completed in time and the result of the student will be affected.
8. The teachers realized the necessity of separate university of SAARC standard in the field of education which will form the plan/policies and control all the educational activities. If it is done by the government, the quality of education will be maintained.
9. Regarding the case of differences in the scores of different examinations in English, answer-sheet of exam should be exchanged between the teachers of government schools and the teachers of private schools. It can be helpful to mark the students' answer paper fairly.
10. The students realized that only one set of question for all the students is not suitable. So, more than two sets of question should be formed according to the proficiency level of the students to avoid cheating in the exam.
11. The teachers and the students viewed that the practical knowledge should be given to the students. For this, teaching-learning activities should be based on student-centered methods. The creativity and interest of the students should taken care while learning/teaching. Similarly, focuses should be given on all the

language skills in a balanced way rather than focusing on the grammar while learning English.

12. The teachers and the students suggested that necessary materials and the time to practice all the language skills in English should be provided focusing on the students of rural areas. Similarly, trained teachers should be encouraged to complete their work in those areas providing them the opportunity of promotion earlier than the teachers of urban areas. Proper incentives and facilities should also be provided to those teachers. If these steps are taken in to the consideration, the differences in the scores of different examinations will be certainly decreased.

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## APPENDIX – 1

### SLC Exam 2063 Government of Nepal

#### Ministry of Education and Sports, OCE, Nepal

#### SLC Mark – ledger

S.N.	Symbol No.	Name	English			Percentage	
			Th.	Pr.	Total	Out of 80 marks	Out of 20 marks
1.	0280012R	Bhagwan Thapa Magar	30	14	44	37.5	70
2.	0280014T	Sarita Shahi Thakuri	26	09	35	32.5	45
3.	0280015U	Sakuntala Deuja	26	13	39	32.5	65
4.	0280019Y	Salina Shrestha	28	15	43	35	75
5.	0280020Z	Ratna Shova Ranjitkar	41	19	60	51.25	95
6.	0280021A	Buvin Rayamaji	35	16	51	43.75	80
7.	0280022B	Rita Duwal	30	17	47	37.5	85
8.	0280011Q	Alish Khadka	18	14	32	22.5	70
9.	0280010P	Madan Gurung	08	15	28	10.0	75
10.	0280009D	Nagendra Pd. Yadav	08	16	24	22.5	80
11.	0280008N	Sanjaya Basnet	45	16	61	56.25	80
12.	0280007M	Amug Raj Bajracharya	33	17	50	41.25	85
13.	0280006L	Susma Dhungana	12	16	28	15.0	80
14.	0280004	Preeti Bade	27	15	42	33.75	75
15.	0260002H	Jaya Ram Shyaju	43	18	61	53.75	90
16.	0280013S	Basanta Bartya	20	17	37	25	85
17.	0280014T	Sarita Shahi Thakuri	26	09	35	32.5	45
18.	0280016V	Preeti Lamichhane	34	12	46	42.5	60
19.	0280017W	Usha Basnet	57	17	74	71.25	85
20.	0280018X	Surya Laxmi Prajapati	14	17	31	17.5	85
21.	0280029I	Rabin Kalu	41	14	55	51.25	70

22.	0280030J	Supriuya Ranabhat	56	17	73	71	85
23.	0280037Q	Khim Pd. Limbu	06	14	20	7.5	70
24.	0280038R	Nabin Shrestha	41	18	59	51.25	90
25.	0280039S	Manoj Tamang Lama	40	13	53	50.0	65
26.	0280041U	Anjta Bhandri	35	18	53	43.75	90
27.	0280043W	Raj Kumar Nayaju	05	14	19	6.25	70
28.	0280057K	Sumit Shrestha	35	12	47	43.75	60
29.	0280063Q	Danjeev Kumar Moktan	18	15	33	22.5	75
30.	0280071Y	Navaraj shrestha	27	10	37	-33.75	50
31.	0280072Z	Suresh Shrestha	26	13	39	32.5	65
32.	0280073A	Mohan Silpakar	29	10	39	-36.25	50
33.	0280075C	Pramila Thapa	16	10	26	-20	50
34.	0280076P	Ram Govinda Bawamala	43	14	57	53.75	70
35.	0280077E	Srijana Rajthala	45	12	57	56.25	60
36.	0280081I	Tenzin Ngawang	47	13	60	58.75	65
37.	0280083K	Salik R. Paudel	36	16	52	45	80
38.	0280094V	Ishwor Dahal	44	11	55	55	55
39.	0280099A	Sundari Maya Tamang	16	11	27	-20	55
40.	0280101C	Sanu Maya Tamang	26	08	34	-32.5	40
41.	0280105B	Ambika Disti	05	10	15	-6.25	50
42.	0280111M	Nabendra Manandhar	36	10	46	-45	50
43.	0280112N	Rakesh Silpakar	45	11	56	56.25	55
44.	0280115Q	Bijen Kurunju	36	12	48	45	60
45.	0280116R	Sujan Kurunju	38	11	49	-47.5	55
46.	0280120V	Suresh Dubuju	55	13	68	68.75	65
47.	0280125A	Shreejana Rajthala	30	14	44	37.5	70
48.	0280135K	Ram. K. Kibachhen	26	13	39	32.5	65
49.	0280143S	Laxmiswori Phaju	17	15	32	21.25	75
50.	0280204B	Rajendra Prajapati	08	16	24	10	80
51.	0280377S	Deepa Neupane	32	19	51	40	95
52.	0280378T	Dinesh Lama	41	18	59	51.25	90
53.	0280379U	Deewakar Bhatta	28	11	39	-35	55
54.	0280380V	Dinesh Lama	41	13	54	51.25	65
55.	0280381W	Dipesh Acharya	26	13	39	32.5	65
56.	0280382X	Gita Dhamala	37	15	52	46.25	75

57.	0280384Z	Kumar Shrestha	41	14	55	51.25	70
58.	0280385A	Kanchan Krishna Shrestha	39	17	56	48.75	85
59.	0280387C	Kapil Tamang	53	18	71	66.25	90
60.	0280389F	Milan Nepal	45	16	61	56.25	80
61.	0280678H	Sumit Das	66	18	84	82.5	90
62.	0280679I	Sapana Bothe	60	16	76	75	80
63.	0280680J	Naresh Kasula	59	18	77	73.75	90
64.	0280683M	Jamuna Phanju	52	16	68	65	80
65.	0280684N	Rita Vaidya	49	17	66	61.25	85
66.	0280685O	Ganaga Phanju	44	17	61	55	85
67.	0280687Q	Subash Basent	49	19	68	61.25	95
68.	0280694X	Kumari Alimagar	40	17	57	50	85
69.	0280695X	Subash Bakhunchhe	56	17	73	70	85
70.	0280697A	Bikram Pancha	51	19	70	63.75	95
71.	0281035A	Amar Krishna Banmala	50	17	67	65.5	85
72.	0281036B	Ganesh Kasula	16	13	29	20	65
73.	0281037C	Jalijala Haleyo Joshi	28	13	41	35	65
74.	0281038D	Jayanti Tamrakar	56	16	72	70	80
75.	0281039E	Kripa Silpakar	33	13	46	41.25	65
76.	0281040F	Krishna Shova Ulak	43	15	57	53.75	75
77.	0281041Ca	Niru Gosain	49	16	65	61.25	80
78.	0281043I	Rajan Ranjitkar	20	14	34	25	70
79.	0281045K	Roshan Rajbahak	34	14	48	42.5	70
80.	0281087A	Ratna Pd. Shilpakar	41	10	51	51.25	50
81.	0281698N	Sangita Kafle	26	10	36	-32.5	50
82.	0281701G	Sunita Tamang	32	16	48	40	80
83.	0281703S	Susma Khadka	18	12	30	22.5	60
84.	0281704T	Bamali Burung	13	12	30	22.5	60
85.	0281705U	Sunita Gurung	30	10	40	-37.5	50
86.	0281709Y	Sunita Kafle	16	14	30	17.5	70
87.	0281711A	Suman Bastola	30	19	49	37.5	95
88.	0281736Z	Man B.Tamang	04	12	16	5	60
89.	0281758V	Sanjeev Adhikari	32	12	44	40	60
90.	0281759W	Laba Gurung	35	18	53	43.75	90
91.	0281877K	Satya Ram Pukar	45	10	55	56.25	50
92.	0281878L	Ranjeet Giri	43	18	61	53.75	90

93.	0281879M	Suresh Raj Girir	47	11	58	58.75	55
94.	0281880N	Rabi Thapa	40	07	47	50	35
95.	0281883Q	Rima Nagarkotu	26	15	41	32.5	75
96.	0281884R	Rinu Twati	40	15	55	50	75
97.	0281856T	Sharmila Sukubhata	26	14	40	32.5	70
98.	0281889W	Ram Gopal Thapa	49	10	59	61.25	50
99.	0281890X	Sunil Hengaju	26	14	40	32.5	70
100.	0281895C	Nipesh Nhemhafuki	44	09	53	55	45