

CHAPTER – ONE

INTRODUCTION

This study is about the listening comprehension ability of Master level students of Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur based on IELTS. This part consists of background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations of the study and operational definition of the key terms.

1.1 Background

Language is one of the most remarkable characteristics that humans have been endowed with, which sets us apart from other species. We are the only species who can share our messages through speaking the language. Language is the medium of communication by the help of which human beings are able to communicate, interact, share and interchange their ideas, opinions, thoughts and emotion to each other.

Without language, the world would not be like this as it is now. “Our development of everything from music to warfare, from literature to technology could never have come about in the absence of language” (Farrokhi, 2015, p.1). It is still the unknown matter on how people started to use the language and how they started to use the particular codes has, too, been the matter of unknown fact. People of the different societies have their own styles, system and ways of using the language. But let there be any of the ways of using the main purpose of using language is to facilitate the living standard of the human beings.

There are four skills of language namely; listening, speaking, reading and writing. And all four skills are equally important for language acquisition and learning. It is valuable to know that to get mastery over language, equal emphasis should be given to all the four skills. On the lack of one skill, other

skills are handicapped. In traditional sense, listening and speaking are the primary skills and reading and writing are the secondary skills. In other classification, language skills are divided into two groups: receptive and productive skills where listening and reading are grouped under receptive skills whereas speaking and writing as productive skills.

As pointed out by Peregoy and Boyle (2013, as cited in Brito, 2015),

Besides being academically strong, students are expected to possess sufficient skills that enable them to cope with any learning situation, which include the four language cognitive tasks of writing, speaking, listening, and reading. In natural day to- day experiences oral and written language uses are not kept separate and isolated from one another. The relationship between listening, speaking, reading and writing during development are basically over mutual support, meaning that, any practice will contribute to the overall development of the other (p.1).

However, research in the field of teaching has been mainly based on reading, writing and speaking as the skills necessary for language acquisition. This is because, before the 1970`s, listening was taken only as a receptive skill in language learning (Hanna, 2012). Since its role in language learning was taken for granted, listening comprehension has received little research and pedagogical attention. But the early 70's, increased research in the field brought attention to the role of listening as a tool for understanding and a key factor in facilitating language learning as well as the development of different listening strategies (Vandergrift, 2002, as cited in Brito, 2015).

As a comprehension skill, listening provides people with the greatest amount of input during the process of language acquisition and development. Listening is

the ability to identify and understand what others are saying. Language acquisition or learning process begins with listening and other skills develop later on. Listening and speaking skills don't need (not necessarily) any formal training in course of language learning whereas the other two skills reading and writing need conscious learning.

It is traditionally accepted that children develop their listening in their mother tongue without having any special effort. Children from the very beginning can understand more or less to what they have been said to. The children are exposed to different types of learning situations in which they are unconsciously involved with. But, so is not the fact with the second or foreign language(s). Listening seeks to demand a considerable effort and deliberate learning at all. It is simply impossible for the children to acquire listening capacity until and unless they are involved with enough chance to listen effectively, they will not be able to participate in real communication and hence, they fail to communicate.

Teaching and learning listening is one of the most difficult tasks for any EFL teacher and learner. This is because successful listening skills are acquired overtime and with lots of practice. It is frustrating for students because there are no definite rules for listening effectively as in grammar teaching. Speaking and writing also have very specific exercises that can lead to improve skills. But there are not such ways of improving listening skills so they are difficult to be improved.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Tribhuvan University (TU) is the oldest and one of the reputed universities in Nepal which offers variety of courses with standard higher education. Under Department of English Education, TU produces trained educational manpower as teachers, teacher trainers, educational planners and managers, educational researchers, curriculum designers and all sorts of human resources needed for the English as well as educational sector of the country. Thus, students who are

doing Master in English in TU are preparing themselves as English teachers and other sorts of scholars. In near future they are going to teach English as a foreign language (FL). For that they have to be sound in all skills of English including listening.

For FL learners, listening is more demanding than other language skills. Listening helps to develop other language skills and provides the foundation for overall language development. Without listening comprehension, other language skills become handicapped. In spite of this, listening has not received wider attention though it is the language skill most often used in everyday life. So, to know the level of listening comprehension, it is necessary to test listening. But the fact is, present sets of textbooks as well as instructional methods have included the test of reading, writing and speaking skill through examination and presentations. But we cannot see any type of focus on listening skill. There is no any way to test listening skill. Since 2008 AD, The Ministry of Education (MoE) and Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) Sanothimi, Bhaktapur laid emphasis on all the language skills and provides some materials for listening skill in secondary level but this is not the case for higher level. Because of this there is the need to test listening comprehension of the students who are studying in higher level and preparing themselves as FL teacher. Similarly, there is the need of certain criteria to determine the comprehension level which helps to know whether students are good in listening or not. And it would be better to use the criteria which is globally recognized and accepted. In this situation, International English Language Testing System (IELTS) listening test helps to test the listening comprehension ability of students. Along with the band score and the description of those scores, IELTS test determines the listening comprehension level of students in international context. Therefore, this study entitled "IELTS based listening comprehension of M.Ed students of TU" makes an attempt to analyze the situation comparing with IELTS to the listening skill of graduating students in international level.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The study had the following objectives:

1. To find out the proficiency of Master level students in IELTS based listening comprehension and
2. To suggest some pedagogical implications.

1.4 Research Questions

This study is oriented to find out the answers of the following research questions:

1. What is the level of listening comprehension of M.Ed students on the basis of IELTS?
2. Is their listening comprehension ability satisfactory?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study will be important to the students to know their comprehension ability and realize the need for further improvement. It will also help to the English teachers who are teaching the English language specifically at Master level in Nepal as they got chance to know the listening comprehension ability of students and instruct accordingly. The study provides information about the listening comprehension ability of English language. So, it will encourage syllabus designers to design English language syllabus focusing on the listening skill. It will also be helpful for the researchers who want to carryout for the research on this area. It will be equally important for the researchers who wish to undertake researches on different faces of listening comprehension in future. The finding of the study will also be significant to all those who are directly or indirectly involved in teaching and learning English as a second/foreign language specifically in the context of Nepal.

1.6 Delimitations of the Study

It is difficult to include a large area in this small research due to the limited time and resources. This study was limited to Department English Education of Tribhuvan University. Only Master level students who were studying English as a major subject under Education stream were the population of this study and forty students of Department of English Education were selected as sample population where 25 students were male and 15 students were female. Only the listening comprehension ability based on IELTS test was tested. The primary data were collected through the previous IELTS exam paper of Cambridge book-11 (2016, Pp. 57-61) following the survey research design.

1.7 Operational Definition of Key Terms

- Band score:** IELTS Band Score of Listening. The number of correct answers in listening, which is called raw score is converted in to the scale from 1 – 9, this scale is called band score.
- Proficiency:** Person's skill/ ability in using a language such as the ability to understand the language. It is the ability of students to understand the spoken language.
- Listening comprehension:** The ability to understand or grasp the meaning of the spoken language. It is the comprehensive ability of M.Ed students in IELTS based test items.
- IELTS:** It stands for International English Language Testing system. It is an English Language Proficiency Text.

CHAPTER – TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Under this chapter, related theoretical literature, empirical literature, implications of the reviewed literature and conceptual framework of the study are included.

2.1 Review of Related Theoretical Literature

This sub-section deals with different theoretical perspectives related to the English language, listening skill and IELTS.

2.1.1 Listening Skill

Listening is the first skill among the four language skills. It is a basic language skill and one of the most significant skills compared to speaking, reading and writing. A child cannot produce language if he does not hear it in a meaningful context. Listening is the ability to identify and understand what others are saying. To quote Howatt and Dakin (1974, p.17 as cited in Itani, 2012), “listening involves understanding a speakers’ accent or pronunciation, his grammar and his vocabulary and grasping his meaning.” Without receiving anything production is not possible. It, along with reading, is the pre-requisite for the productive skills.

Listening skill is the more active and less passive skill because listeners receive the incoming data, an acoustic signal, and interprets it on the basis of linguistic and non- linguistic knowledge. To quote Underwood (1989), “listening is the activity of paying attention to and trying to get the meaning from something” (p.1). This definition also helps us to believe listening to accept as an active skill itself.

Along with active skill, it is also a complex process as the listener has to receive and interpret the spoken language. In the discussion of listening skill, Khaniya (2005, p.124) says:

Listening 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. The linguistic knowledge includes knowledge of phonology, lexis, syntax, semantics, discourse structure, pragmatics and sociolinguistics. The non-linguistic knowledge includes knowledge of the topic, the context and general knowledge about the world and how they work.

To explain listening, Mohammed (2005) has used the analogy that listening is to hearing what looking is to seeing. For him, both listening and looking require a zoom, whether auditory or visual which enables a person to take in relevant information while also tuning out irrelevant information.

Some people say that listening is a passive skill whereas others say that it is as an active one. This issue has been in the mind of a few for long. However, studies make it clear that listening is far from being a passive skill. Listening involves an active cognitive processing. It involves the construction of message on the basis of what has been spoken and what the listener already knows about the topic at hand. Therefore, it is a creative and active process.

2.1.1.1. Importance of Listening

Listening and reading are the two main channels of language input, which play a vital role in language learning. “The more learners read and listen, the more they are exposed to language. This exposure is what leads to language acquisition” (Krashen, 1985; Peterson, 2001, as cited in Kassem, 2015, p.1). Knowledge can be gained either by listening or by reading any materials. It is,

therefore, safe to say that language learning is contingent on how much learners read and listen to the language.

Listening is even of more importance to language development than reading because it is the most frequently used language skill. “As a comprehension skill listening provides people with the greatest amount of input during the process of language acquisition and development”(Hunasaker as cited in Brito, 2015, p.2). Through listening, language learners internalize linguistic information without which they cannot produce language. Listening is also crucial to the development of other language skills, especially speaking.

Osada (2004, as cited in Brito, 2015) explains, “listening is in fact vital for the language learning but at the same time a complex process”(p.2). It is due to the amount of effort to acquire to the learners to listen. The learners must comprehend what it been said, retain the information in memory, integrated with what is being said and continually adjust its understanding of what its heard in the light of prior knowledge and incoming information.

While learning a new language, learners spend a lot of time to listening. Exposure to a language is needed for language learner who needs to hear language spoken in meaningful contexts in order to acquire it. Hence, listening is an important skill in language learning. It provides the foundation for all aspects of language development. A study by Feyten (1991, as cited in Nufai, 2012) found that “the time people spent on communication was 45% on listening, 30% on speaking, 16% on reading, and 9% on writing”(p.15). Thus, among the four skills, listening is used more in communication and most frequently in real life situation which shows how important listening is.

2.1.2 Listening Comprehension

Listening comprehension generally refers to the understanding and making sense of spoken language. It concerns the ability to understand and interpret message from any sorts of spoken language. Listening becomes meaningful

only if the listener gets through the meaning behind the acoustic sound. It is meaningless to race through the sound without understanding it. It is a complex process that both constructs and modifies information from the acoustic sound and supportive gestures to make it contextually relevant and meaningful.

Listening comprehension involves multiple processes. These include recognizing speech sounds, understanding the meaning of individual words, and/or understanding the syntax of sentences in which they are presented. Here the listener needs to use his or her ill-acquired knowledge to comprehend the data for the particular communicative purpose.

Vandergrift (1999, as cited in Nufai, 2012) mentions that listening comprehension is “a complex and active process in which the listener must discriminate between sounds, understand vocabulary and grammatical structures, interpret it within the immediate as well as larger socio cultural context of the utterance” (p.168).

Similarly, Byrnes (1984, as cited in Nufai, 2012) characterizes listening comprehension as a “highly complex problem solving activity,” that can be broken down into a set of distinct sub skills (p. 318).

Nevertheless, listening comprehension can often become personal, especially when the speaker’s texts are complex and ambiguous with more than one possible interpretation. Therefore, for common understanding of the text, the spoken materials in listening comprehension must remain to one particular social context and avoid any ambiguous expression. Harmer (2008, p.79) presents the following as the necessary skills of listening proficiency:

-) Identifying the topic
-) Predicting and guessing
-) Getting general pictures or understanding
-) Extracting specific information
-) Extending detailed information
-) Reorganizing functions and discourse patterns
-) Deducing meaning from the text

Even though listening comprehension has been defined in various ways, basically it is the processing of sounds and understanding the meaning of utterances of the language spoken.

2.1.3 Proficiency Tests

A proficiency test measures a learner's level of language. It can be compared with an achievement test, which evaluates a learner's understanding of specific material, a diagnostic test, which identifies areas to work on, and a prognostic test, which tries to predict a learner's ability to complete a course or take an exam. But unlike achievement tests or other kinds of tests, proficiency tests are not dependent on particular class content, course materials, or language software programs. Instead, a proficiency test is intended to measure the command of a language regardless of the background in that language. Such test encompasses four language domains: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Collins online dictionary define proficiency test as “an exam which test how proficient or skilled someone is in a particular activity, field of study, language”. For Heaton (1975), proficiency test is concerned simply with measuring a student control of language in the light of what he /she will be expected to do with it in the future performance of a particular task. He further points out that the proficiency test is connected, with measuring not general attainment but specific skills in light of the language demands made later in the students by a future course of study of job.

2.1.4 Techniques of Testing Listening

Testing listening refers to measure the ability of the students how far they are able to understand and interpret the spoken message. Testing listening comprehension ability is very difficult in our situation; however, the simplest way through which we can test the listening comprehension ability of testees is by playing a cassette or reading a text aloud and asking them to do certain activities.

The following test items can be adopted to test listening comprehension ability as given by Heaton (1975 pp 65-81)).

a. Phoneme discrimination test: Listening test can be conducted in various ways. One of them is phoneme discrimination test. In such test, the students are asked to distinguish similar vowel and consonant phonemes. The teacher pronounces 3 or 4 identical vowel or consonant sounds and a different one. The students should choose the different ones.

b. Test of stress and intonation: The teacher pronounces a particular word with a stress on a particular syllable and the students are asked to recognize where the stress falls. Similarly, the students are asked to find out whether a particular sentence is uttered with rising or falling tone.

3. Statements and dialogue: In this test a cassette containing a conversation or dialogue between two or more people is played. The students should listen to the text and find out which are true and false statements.

4. Testing comprehension through visual materials: In this test, the students are given some visual materials as pictures, maps and so on and the questions related to the programme are asked.

5. Understanding talks and lectures: Above mentioned testing techniques are useful especially for elementary level. But here test items are used to test the ability to understand both informal talks and formal lectures which is suitable for advanced level students. A speech is delivered and the questions related to the speech are asked. This testing technique will be useful for me as I am going to test the listening comprehension of advanced level students.

There are different test items of testing listening for advanced level. Some of the common tests are multiple choice, sentence completion, short answer, note taking and partial dictation, following instructions, and so on. Some of them are described below.

a. Multiple Choices

In multiple choice items, generally, testees are provided with different alternatives and one or more than one of the alternatives is more nearly right than the other. In the test, I am going to use multiple choice questions in items 1-5, 11-20, where the candidate has to choose only one alternative. (See Appendix I).

b. Completion

Generally, completion tests provide respondents with beginnings of sentences or phrases and respondents have to complete them using correct word or words. In the test, I am going to use sentence completion test through question no 7-10 and 21-40 where the candidate has to complete the sentence using the word from what they hear or from the given options. (See Appendix I).

2.1.5 International English Language Testing System (IELTS)

IELTS, the International English Language Testing System, is designed to assess the language ability of candidates who need to study or work where English is the language of communication. IELTS is jointly managed by the University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations (Cambridge ESOL), British Council and IDP: IELTS Australia. IELTS conforms to the highest international standards of language assessment. It is recognized by universities and employers in many countries, including Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the UK and the USA. It is also recognized by professional bodies, immigration authorities and other government agencies.

In IELTS, an easy-to-use 9-band scale clearly identifies proficiency level, from non-user (band score 1) through to expert (band score 9). IELTS is available in two test formats – Academic or General Training – and provides a valid and accurate assessment of the four language skills: listening, reading, writing and speaking. (ielts.org)

Listening test lasts for about 30 minutes. It consists of four sections, played on cassette tape, in order of increasing difficulty. Each section might be a dialogue or a monologue. The test is played once only, and the questions for each section must be answered while listening, although time is given for students to check their answers. (See appendix IV).

Reading test lasts for 60 minutes. Students are given an Academic Reading test, or a General Training Reading test. Both tests consist of three sections, and in both tests the sections are in order of increasing difficulty. Here is the sample of reading test:

THE STORY OF SILK

The history of the world's most luxurious fabric, from ancient china to the present day

Silk is fine, smooth material produced from the cocoons-soft protective shells- that are made by mulberry silkworms (insect larvae).legend has it that it was Lei Tzu, wife of the Yellow Emperor, ruler of china in about 3000BC, who discovered silkworms. One account of the story goes that she was taking a walk in her husband's garden, she discovered that silkworms were responsible for the destruction of several mulberry trees. She collected a number of cocoons and sat down to have a rest. It just so happened that while she was sipping some tea, one of the cocoons that she had collected landed in the hot tea and started to unravel into a fine thread.

Complete the notes below.

*Choose **ONE WORD ONLY** from the passage for each answer.*

Early silk production in China

) Around 3000BC, according to legend:

- silkworm cocoon fell into emperor's wife's 1.....

IELTS, 11 (2016).

Writing test also lasts for 60 minutes. Again, students take either an Academic Module, or a General Training Module. Students must perform two writing tasks, which require different styles of writing. There is no choice of question topics. Here is the sample of writing test from task 2:

You should spend about forty minutes on this task.

Write about the following topic:

Some people say that the only reason for learning a foreign language is in order to travel to or work in a foreign country. Others say these are not the only reasons why someone should learn a foreign language. Discuss both these views and give your own opinion.

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant example from your own knowledge and experience.

Write at least 250 words.

IELTS, 11 (2016).

Speaking test consists of a one-to-one interview with a specially trained examiner. The interview is recorded and has three separate parts: An introduction and interview; an individual long turn where the candidate speaks for one or two minutes on a particular topic; and a two-way discussion thematically linked to the individual long turn. This interview will last for approximately 11-14 minutes. Here is the sample of speaking test:

PART 2

Describe a TV documentary you watched that was particularly interesting.

You should say:

What the documentary was about

Why you decided to watch it

What you learnt during the documentary

And explain why the TV documentary was particularly interesting.

IELTS, 11 (2016).

2.1.5.1 Band Score Conversion Table for IELTS

The listening test always has 40 questions and the score is based on how many of these 40 questions are correct. Those correct answers are called raw scores. IELTS band scores are calculated from those raw scores.

The following figure shows IELTS band scores with corresponding raw scores.

Band Score Conversion Table of IELTS

| Band Score | Listening raw score (Academic and General Training) |
|-------------------|--|
| 9.0 | 39-40 |
| 8.5 | 37-38 |
| 8.0 | 35-36 |
| 7.5 | 33-34 |
| 7.0 | 30-32 |
| 6.5 | 27-29 |
| 6.0 | 23-26 |
| 5.5 | 20-22 |
| 5.0 | 16-19 |
| 4.5 | 13-15 |
| 4.0 | 10-12 |
| 3.5 | 7-9 |
| 3.0 | 4-6 |
| 2.5 | 3 |

(ielts. org)

2.1.5.2 Band Score Description

In the IELTS test there is no pass or fail mark as a result. All candidates are graded on their performance, using scores on a scale from 1 to 9 from non user to expert user for each of the four modules - Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking. The four individual scores are averaged and rounded to produce an Overall Band Score. Each band score corresponds to a descriptive statement giving a summary of the English language skill of a candidate classified at that level. Those nine bands are described as follows:

9 Expert User - Has full operational command of the language: appropriate, accurate and fluent with complete understanding.

8 Very Good User - Has fully operational command of the language with only occasional unsystematic inaccuracies and inappropriacies.

Misunderstandings may occur in unfamiliar situations. Handles complex detailed argumentation well.

7 Good User - Has operational command of the language, though with occasional inaccuracies, inappropriateness and misunderstandings in some situations. Generally handles complex language well and understands detailed reasoning

6 Competent User - Has generally effective command of the language despite some inaccuracies, inappropriacies and misunderstandings. Can use and understand fairly complex language, particularly in familiar situations.

5 Modest User - Has partial command of the language, coping with overall meaning in most situations, though is likely to make many mistakes. Should be able to handle basic communication in own field.

4 Limited User - Basic competence is limited to familiar situations. Has frequent problems in understanding and expression. Is not able to use complex language

3 Extremely Limited User - Conveys and understands only general meaning in very familiar situations. Frequent breakdowns in communication occur.

2 Intermittent User - No real communication is possible except for the most basic information using isolated words or short formulae in familiar situations and to meet immediate needs. Has great difficulty understanding spoken and written English.

1 Non User - Essentially has no ability to use the language beyond possibly a few isolated words.

0 Did not attempt the test - No assessable information provided at all (IELTS 11, 2016, p. 7).

2.1.5.3 IELTS Listening

The IELTS listening test takes about 30 minutes during which students listen and at the same time write tick or matching the answers in the questionnaire. In all IELTS listening test, there are 40 questions. There are four sections, generally 10 questions in each section. The test is recorded on a CD and is played once only. During the test, time is given to candidates to read the questions and write down and check their answers except in section four. After all the four sections are over, they will be given ten minutes time to transfer the answers on to the listening Answer sheet with clean handwriting and correct punctuations and spellings. Test takers will lose marks for incorrect spelling and grammar. In forty full raw score, their correct numbers of answers are later converted to the total listening Band score.

As already mentioned, IELTS listening test has 40 questions in four sections. Sections 1 and 2 are about everyday, social events, where, section 1 has a conversation between two speakers (for example, a conversation about travel arrangements) and section 2 has one person speaking (for example, a speech about local facilities). Similarly, sections 3 and 4 are about educational and training situations, where, section 3 is a conversation between two main

speakers (for example, a discussion between two university students, perhaps guided by a tutor) and section 4 has one person speaking about an academic subject (for example, university lecture), (see Appendix IV).

Each section begins with a short introduction telling the test taker about the situation and the speakers. Then they have some time to look through the questions. The questions are in the same order as the information in the recording, so the answer to the first question will be before the answer to the second question, and so on. The first three sections have a break in the middle allowing test takers to look at the remaining questions.

2.2 Review of Empirical Literature

Each and every research work requires the knowledge of previous background to obtain the targeted objectives and to validate the study. Here, this subsection is an attempt to review the related studies. Some of the old theses, journals, articles, and textbooks have been reviewed considering them as related literature and also as evidence to the present study.

Singh (2000) carried out a research on “A Study on Listening Comprehension of Grade Eight Students in Listening Tests and their Problems and Difficulties.” The main objective of his study was to find out the listening comprehension ability of grade eight students. He tested the population including eighty students from four different schools, two of them being private and two of them public. He used questionnaire as a tool of data collection. He found out that the listening comprehension of the students of private school was found better than the students of public schools.

Chapagain (2001) carried out a research entitled “Proficiency in Listening Comprehension of Grade Nine Students.” The objective was to find out the listening proficiency of nine graders of public and private schools in the Kathmandu valley. The population for the study consisted the students of the nine grade from ten schools. Twenty students from each school were selected

by applying stratified random sampling strategy. All the six different listening texts and types of test were taken from IELTS test preparation books. He found that the average proficiency in listening comprehension of ninth graders has been found to be 56.93% i. e. 5 band level according to IELTS band score table.

Prasain (2007) carried out a research work entitled “Listening Proficiency of Grade IX Students: A Comparative Study”. The main objective of his study was to find out listening proficiency of grade IX students of government and private schools of Kathmandu valley. He selected a hundred students (ten students from each school) as sample population from five public and five private schools randomly. Questionnaire and oral test were selected as tool for the data collection. The findings of his study showed that the overall listening proficiency of ninth graders is 72.76% where students of public and private listening proficiency are 58.76% and 86.76% respectively.

Adhikari (2009) conducted a research on “Reading Comprehension Based on IELTS”. The main objective of his study was to find out the reading comprehension ability based on IELTS of Grade Twelve (XII) students of Kaski District. The population of his study was the students of grade XI of Kaski district. He randomly selected eighty students from four faculties (Science, Management, Humanities and Social Science and Education). He used one of the model tests from IELTS preparation course as a tool of data collection. From his study he found that the +2 students of grade 12 of Higher Education Board have good reading comprehension ability in terms of higher secondary Education Board's standard but their reading comprehension ability is not adequate in terms of IELTS standard. Additionally, the students of private schools have obtained better marks in reading comprehension ability compared to the students of public schools except commerce stream.

Khanal (2011) conducted a research on “Listening Comprehension Ability of Primary English Teachers”. The main objective of his study was to find out

listening comprehension ability of the primary English teachers of Bardiya district. He purposively selected twenty five public and twenty five private English teachers as sample population for this study from Bardiya district. Two sets of test items were used on the basis of listening test from SLC and intermediate level. The findings show that the male teachers were found better than females both in public and private schools. Similarly the trained teachers were found better than untrained teachers.

Itani (2012) conducted a research on “Listening Proficiency of Bachelor Level Students”. The main objective of his study was to find out the listening proficiency of Bachelor’s Level of Students on the basis of IELTS. The population of the study was Bachelor’s Level Students of Tribhuvan University who were in their first year of academic study in Kathmandu valley. He selected 120 students purposively from three faculties (Management, Humanities and Social Science, and Education) by applying stratified random sampling strategy. He used IELTS-based complete listening test from the past IELTS exam paper of Cambridge book-4 (2005). In this study he found that the average listening proficiency of the bachelors level of students was 20.14, i.e.49.09 per cent, and 5.20 according to the IELTS Band Score which was below the proficiency requirement for academic programme on the basis of their IELTS band. Similarly, regarding the faculty-wise analysis, the students of the Humanities and Social Sciences have obtained more score than those of Faculty of Education and of Management

Upadhya (2012) conducted a research on “Listening comprehension ability of secondary level students”. The main objective of his research was to find out the listening comprehension ability of the students of secondary level. He selected ten community based secondary schools purposively for the study. Ten students from each school were selected and 100 students altogether were chosen as sample for listening test. He made use of test items which consists of five multiple choice and five true/false questions in order to elicit the required data. In his study he found that 34% testees were found to be highly advanced

in listening because they secured distinction listening test. Almost all of them came to community based schools from English medium. Similarly 44% testees were advanced, 18% were average and 4% belonged to the poor level.

Dhami (2015) conducted a research entitled “Listening comprehension ability of students of grade ten”. The main objective of this research was to find out the answer of the following question: Is the students’ listening comprehension ability satisfactory in the ELT classes? The population for this study was Darchula’s grade ten students. Out of them, fifty students were the sample for the study. She used purposive non-random sampling strategy to select the fifty students from five community-based schools. She has used listening test items as data collection tool where students were given five different listening test items. From this study she found that less priority was given to listening skill and it was considered as the secondary aspect of teaching and learning activity. Because of this, listening comprehension was very poor i.e. only 30% of the total surveyed students secured 60% marks other 70% of them, secured below 30% marks.

The present study is different from those of the reviews because it is centered on the Master level students’ listening proficiency on the basis of IELTS. Unlike other researches it is centered on the Department of English Education at Tribhuvan University. However, the reviewed section facilitated the researcher to set his frame.

2.3 Implications of the Review for the Study

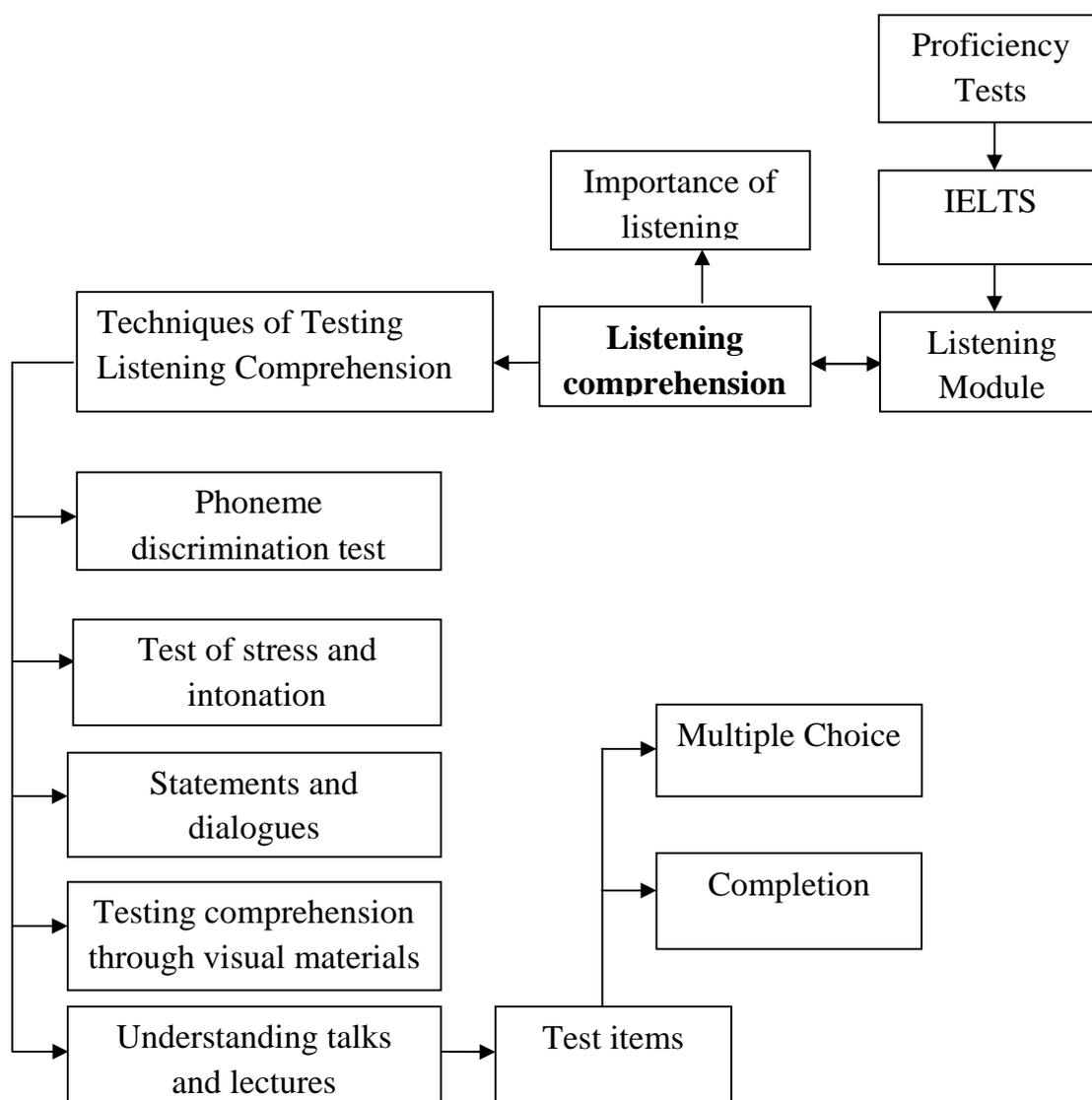
The literature review is an integral part of the entire process and makes a valuable contribution to almost every operational step. The most important function of the literature review is to ensure researcher to read widely around the subject area in which s/he is interested.

Thus, I have reviewed different previous research works, articles and books which are related to my research work to some extent. In other words, while

reviewing the literature, I have gone through different existing literature, different articles, ELT journals and books. All the reviewed studies are related to the periphery of listening comprehension and IELTS. After reviewing these works, I got information on the English language and background information of listening comprehension, IELTS and its listening module. As to analyze listening comprehension ability based on IELTS, Chapagain (2001), Adhikari (2009) and Itani (2012) have used the previous exam paper of IELTS as a tool of data collection, this work has direct implication to my research study because I used previous exam paper of IELTS for the data collection. The thesis of Prasain (2007) gave me the idea of setting objectives in a survey research. Khanal's (2011) and Upadhyas (2012) research works have given me the ideas of methodology. Those research works have been carried out with different objectives, methodology and research questions and in different situation. So, after reviewing all those research works, I updated myself with research process and methodological tools which are very beneficial to my present research work. Similarly, Dhama (2015) gave me ideas about the preparation of conceptual framework. Thus, the review of literature becomes milestone to make my task more informative and reliable.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

On the basis of the ideas gathered from review of theoretical and empirical literature, I developed following conceptual framework in order to carry out this research.



The above conceptual framework clearly presents that how the researcher has conceptualized this research. Listening comprehension of Master level students is basically based on the above mentioned issues, based on the theoretical study. Similarly, there are different techniques to test listening comprehension. The researcher has used previous IELTS test, which has only two types of test items.

CHAPTER – THREE

METHODS AND PROCEDURES OF THE STUDY

The following methodology was adopted to fulfill the objectives of the study.

3.1 Design of the Study

The research topic itself reveals the nature of the research to be undertaken. To be precise, I have adopted the survey research design. The survey is a research design that is widely used in social and educational researches. Primarily, it is carried out in the large numbers of population to find out an attitude, belief or behavior of particular group of people or an individual as well. It is mostly used to generalize the findings in the large number of populations. It is cross-sectional in nature. In survey research, data are gathered from relatively large number of population using certain sampling procedure where the whole population for the data collection is not feasible.

Survey research is different from other types of researches as experimental and quasi-experimental research in terms of population of the study, and nature of collecting data.

I used the survey research design as I wanted to test the condition or situation of students listening comprehension ability at a single point in time. This study is survey because of the following reasons:

-) The study was conducted to explore Master level student's listening comprehension ability on the basis of IELTS test.
-) This study has represented the whole Tribhuvan University's Master level students.
-) Population sample has been carried out from the large number.
-) The findings have been generalized to the whole population.

As research is a systematic process of investigating ideas, we cannot conduct it haphazardly. In order to conduct research activity, researchers have to follow the systematic process. Otherwise these will be fake data. Nunan (2010, p. 14) suggests the following eight-step procedures of survey research design:

- i. Defining objectives
- ii. Identifying target population
- iii. Literature review
- iv. Determine sample
- v. Identify survey instruments
- vi. Design survey procedures
- vii. Identify analytical procedures
- viii. Determine reporting procedure

3.2 Population, Sample and Sampling Strategy

The population of this study consisted of all the Master level students who were studying in Department of English Education at Central Department of Education, Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur. Since it is not a small scale study, it is difficult to collect data from each and every member of the respondents. So the required sample consisted of forty Master level students where twenty five students were male and fifteen students were female. The students were selected using purposive non random sampling procedure.

3.3 Research Tools

The main tool of data collection was IELTS test paper from previous examination (See Appendix I). This tool was effective, appropriate and feasible for the respondents of this study and useful for the researcher to meet the objectives of this study.

3.4 Sources of Data

I have used both primary and secondary sources of data. The primary sources have been used for collecting data and the secondary sources have been used to facilitate the study.

3.4.1 Primary Sources of Data

The primary data was taken from the students who were studying in Master level in English Education from Tribhuvan University.

3.4.2 Secondary Sources of Data

I have consulted books, theses, journals, articles, websites, magazines and materials available in the internet related to the present research.

3.5 Data Collection Procedures

For the authentic data after the completion of prerequisites, I visited the Tribhuvan University and established rapport with the Head of the Department of English Education and related teachers. After clarification of the purpose and getting approval, I checked the audio materials, whether it worked properly or not, whether the sound is clear and audible or not. Then, I visited the students, told them the purpose of visiting and selected the students purposefully. After that, I gathered all forty students in one classroom, provided them some information about IELTS listening test as they might not be familiar with the ways of giving IELTS listening test. Then, I handed them the test paper, played the audio material and requested them to complete it within 40 minutes as per the constrained time, then, the test items were collected from the respondents for further steps.

3.6 Data Analysis Procedures

Most of the survey researches are quantitative in nature. Being a survey research, it has the characteristics of quantitative analysis. After collecting the

raw data, I analyzed it statistically. Only statistical analysis was not sufficient and clear enough to understand. So, I analyzed the data descriptively also.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

While carrying out research, the researcher should pay attention on different ethical considerations. During my study I took informed consent from respondents and I maintained confidentiality regarding the information of respondents. Similarly, I did not use the data elsewhere except for my study without permission of respondents and I did not make any manipulation in collected data. In the same way, I did not do any harm to informants while collecting data and I did not analyze data subjectively. Finally, I paid attention to accurate, accuracy, honesty, truthfulness of data in my study.

CHAPTER–FOUR

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

This chapter deals with the results and discussion of the collected data. The results are derived through the intensive analysis of the data. The collected data were analysed and interpreted through both statistical and descriptive methods. The statistical data is analysed and interpreted using simple statistical tools. The researcher has presented the data using tables, diagram, chart as per to the need for the analysis and discussion of collected data.

4.1 Analysis and Interpretation of Data

This section includes the analysis, presentation, description, illustration and discussion of the collected data. The discussion of the elicited data is mentioned in the following sub-headings.

4.1.1 Holistic Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Under this sub-topic holistic presentation and interpretation of data is presented. To test the listening comprehension, the students were asked forty questions of 40 full marks (one mark for each question). Here, their obtained score is presented in average.

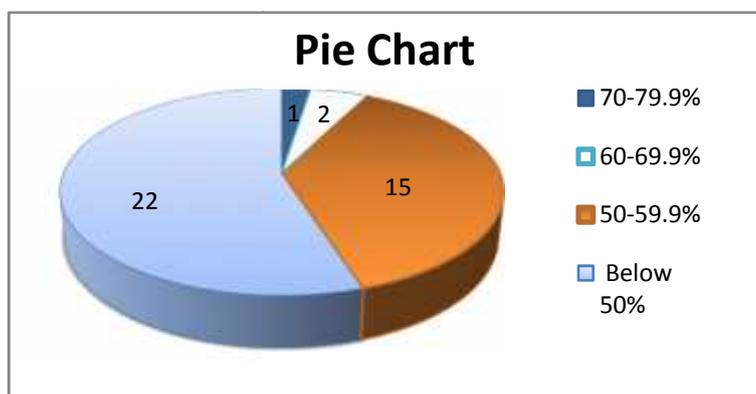
Table 1 Listening Comprehension Ability of Master Level Students in Average

| S.N. | Faculty | F.M. | Obtained Raw Score | Band score / Full mark | Converted Score | Percent |
|------|-----------|------|--------------------|------------------------|-----------------|---------|
| 1 | Education | 40 | 18.25 | 9 | 5.06 | 45.62 |

Table 2 shows that the listening proficiency of the students as a whole. The average listening proficiency has been found to be 18.25 out of 40 i.e. 45.62 per cent only. And if their raw score is converted into IELTS, their average IELTS Band Score is 5.06 (5band) out of 9 which describes them as Modest User which means they have partial command of the language, coping with overall meaning in most situations, though is likely to make many mistakes. They are able to handle basic communication in own field.

The data is analyzed by dividing their performance into different category of assessment system of TU. This data can be shown in the following pie chart.

Fig. 1 Students Performance in Different Score Divisions as a Whole



Here, again, the table below presents the data in different levels.

Table 2 Students' Performance in Different Score Divisions as a Whole

| S.N. | Score (%) | Letter Grade | No. of students (Total 40) | Percentage |
|------|--------------|--------------|-------------------------------|------------|
| 1 | 90 and above | A | 0 | - |
| 2 | 80 -89.9 | A- | 0 | - |
| 3 | 70-79.9 | B+ | 1 | 2.5 |
| 4 | 60-69.9 | B | 2 | 5 |
| 5 | 50-59.9 | B- | 15 | 37.5 |
| 6 | 50 below | F | 22 | 55 |

The above table shows none of the students has scored above 80% marks. Only one student i.e.2.5% of total students has secured between 70-79% marks, two (5%) students have secured between 60-69.9% marks. Similarly, 15 (37.5%) students have secured between 50-59.9% marks in their answer sheets. Overall, only 18 (45%) students out of 40 students secured the marks above 50%, i.e. pass level of the TU assessment system whereas twenty two (55%) students have secured below 50% marks. From this analysis, it can be synthesized that, the students of Master level in TU are poor in listening comprehension which should be taken care by the concerned authorities and related personals.

Thus, the overall listening proficiency of the Master level students in the English language is not good because they need to obtain 6+ Band Score to get entry in the academic programs of English speaking countries such as the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, etc. Similar is the case if we analyze this score from the point of view of the assessment system of T.U. The average percentage of student is 44.75 and if we convert it in SGPA it is only B- which is below the pass level and also the data shows that 55% students are still below the pass level. But in general their listening proficiency seems to be parallel to second division mark which is good.

4.1.2 Analysis and Interpretation of Data in Terms of Sex

The student participants were both male and female. This section analyses the data obtained in average in terms of their sex.

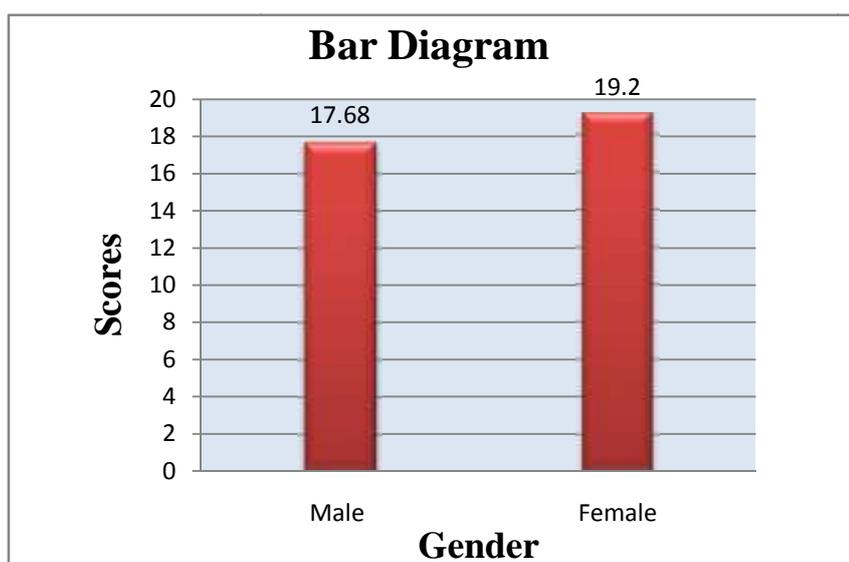
Table 3 Analysis and Interpretation of Scores in Terms of Sex

The following table shows the obtained data in average.

| S.N. | Sex | No. of students | Obtained Raw Score | Band score /Full mark | Converted Score | Percent (%) |
|------|--------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| 1 | Male | 25 | 17.68 | 9 | 4.94 | 44.20 |
| 2 | Female | 15 | 19.2 | 9 | 5.26 | 48 |

The above table presents the comparison between the listening comprehension ability of Master level students in terms of sex. Male students have average 44.20 % and 4.94 (5) band score whereas female students have average 48% and 5.26 (5.5) band score in average. It indicates that average male and female students' listening comprehension ability is not good. Similarly, female students have higher listening comprehension ability than their male counterparts. This can be shown in following diagram;

Fig. 2 Students Listening Comprehension Ability in Average in Terms of Sex



Above mentioned table and diagram show the obtained raw score of male and female students. In average, male students have secured 17.68 marks whereas female students have secured 19.2 marks out of 40.

Here, again, the data is analyzed by dividing their performance into different category of assessment system of TU. This table presents the data in different levels.

Table 4 Male Students Performance in Different Score Divisions

| S.N. | Score (%) | Letter Grade | Male (Total 25) | |
|------|--------------|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| | | | No. of students | Percentage |
| 1 | 90 and above | A | 0 | - |
| 2 | 80-89.9 | A- | 0 | - |
| 3 | 70-79.9 | B+ | 0 | - |
| 4 | 60-69.9 | B | 2 | 8 |
| 5 | 50-59.9 | B- | 6 | 24 |
| 6 | 50 below | F | 17 | 68 |

The above table shows the number of male students who have secured marks in different levels. As a whole 17, i.e.68% male students have secured the marks below 50% and only 8, i.e. 32% male students have secured the marks above 50% marks which is pass level. Similarly, none of the students has secured marks above 70%. Only 2, i.e. 8% students have secured the marks between the criteria 60-69.9% and 6, i.e. 24% students have secured the marks between 50-59.9%. This data shows that male students are poor in listening comprehension as no one has achieved B+ and above in the test.

Table 5 Female Students Performance in Different Score Divisions

| S.N. | Score (%) | Letter Grade | Female (Total 15) | |
|------|--------------|--------------|-------------------|------------|
| | | | No. of students | Percentage |
| 1 | 90 and above | A | 0 | - |
| 2 | 80-89.9 | A- | 0 | - |
| 3 | 70-79.9 | B+ | 1 | 6.66 |
| 4 | 60-69.9 | B | 0 | - |
| 5 | 50-59.9 | B- | 9 | 60 |
| 6 | 50 below | F | 5 | 33.33 |

The above table shows the number of female students who have secured marks in different levels. Here, 5, i.e. 33.33% female students have secured the marks below 50% and the number of students who scored above 50% is 10, i.e. 66.66%. Similarly, none of the students has secured marks above 80%. Only 1, i.e. 6.66% student has secured the marks between the criteria 70-79.9% and 9, i.e. 60% students have secured the marks between 50-59.9%. But none of the students has secured the marks between 60-69.9%. This data shows that female students are also poor in listening comprehension as none of the students has achieved A- and above. But in comparison to female, male students are poor in listening comprehension ability.

CHAPTER-FIVE

FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section includes findings, conclusion and recommendations of the study. The recommendations are mentioned in separate headings so that the concerned persons can understand easily.

5.1 Findings

The major concern of this study was to identify the listening proficiency of the Master level students of Tribhuvan University. The students were taken from the Department of English Education at Central Department of Education. The data were collected by administering an IELTS-based listening proficiency test to 40 students of the Master level students.

The data were tabulated on the basis of various variables according to the objectives. The data were also analyzed by using simple statistical tools. The findings of the study based on the analysis and interpretations of the data are presented below:

- I. The average listening proficiency of the Master level students has been found to be 18.25, i.e.45.62 per cent, and 5.06 according to the IELTS Band Score. Relating it to the IELTS, they are found below the proficiency (individual cases reviewed) requirement for academic programme on the basis of their IELTS band.
- II. The Master level students of TU secured just below the pass level in terms of the evaluation system of semester system of TU. To pass according to semester system of TU, they have to achieve more than 50%. i.e. B- of SGPA.
- III. In average, 55% students are below pass level where 45% students are above pass level but none of the students secured the marks above 80% (A-).

- IV. Therefore, their listening comprehension ability is not adequate in terms of TU education system and standard IELTS test, since their score is modest only. This shows that they are at the sixth level (Modest User) from the admission policies in TU of English Speaking countries such as UK, Australia, Canada, etc.
- V. In term of sex, the female students were found better than males. The female students got 19.20, i.e. 48% whereas the male students got 44.20%, i.e. 17.68. 66.66% female students secured the marks above pass level whereas in the case of male students it is only 32%. Thus, Female students have been found slightly more in listening comprehension than their counterparts.

5.2 Conclusion

Listening is the one of the important skills of language learning without which successful language learning cannot occur. To analyze the listening comprehension I conducted a research. Through the presentation, discussion and interpretation of the collected data, it was found that the listening comprehension ability of the Master level students of TU was taken as the secondary aspect of teaching and learning process and even neglected by the most of the students in that area. From the test items collected from the students, it was found out that, majority of the students were very poor in listening comprehension. Only 45% of them performed well in the listening comprehension test. But no one secured the marks above 80%. And if we relate their score in IELTS, they only get 5 Band Score in average which is not enough for them as they are graduate students. It was also found out that they thought that listening is guessing. So they solved the test items randomly in guessing not by comprehending. Furthermore, the researcher found out that listening comprehension played the vital role in teaching and learning process for the teachers as well as students.

Those students who were good in listening tests were also better language learners. Since, the result showed the impact of listening comprehension in the

English language learning process the concerned authorities should be careful about listening comprehension not only about reading, writing, speaking. Then only the improvement can be seen in the English language learning process.

5.3 Recommendations

The study found out the listening comprehension ability of the Master level students of Department of English Education at Tribhuvan University. On the basis of the findings, the researcher has made the following recommendations:

5.3.1 Policy Related

- I. Listening comprehension ability of the students was found below the pass level in Department of English Education at Tribhuvan University. This should be improved from the side of teachers and management bodies of the respected University.
- II. The concerned personnel and officials need to pay attention towards English language proficiency of the learners. The syllabus designers, test experts, teachers and students themselves should be conscious of the academic standard of English at international level.
- III. Government should apply the policy of compulsory listening classes in all the colleges and universities of Nepal which helps the students to reach the international standard in listening comprehension in English. .

5.3.2 Practice Related

- I. As English language is a complex enterprise, students should be provided with the sufficient amount of exposure by including all four skills. But here the students are only practicing to read, write, speak but less priority is given to listening activity. So, students should be involved in listening tasks to get mastery over the language.
- II. Curriculum implementers (i.e. teachers) shouldn't run according to their own interest and easiness to perform their job but they should also try to make their students best listeners in the English language.

- III. The university should organize different workshops, seminars and discussion on the listening comprehension activities. So that the students can improve their listening and comprehension power. The boys should improve their listening ability more through intensive as well as extensive practices.
- IV. The students themselves should try to comprehend the sounds as far as possible.

5.3.3 Further Research Related

- I. This research will be valuable secondary source for the researcher.
- II. This research will provide new research areas which are left to be investigated.
- III. This study is limited to Master level learners. Similarly other levels and areas can be investigated in the field of listening comprehension and English language teaching and learning.

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APPENDIX I

Personal details about students

Name: -----

Level: -----

Gender: -----

Semester: -----

LISTENING

You will hear a number of different recordings and you will have to answer on what you hear. There will time to read the instructions and questions and you will have the chance to check your work. All the recordings will be played once only. The test is in four sections. At the end of the test you will be given 10 minutes to transfer your answer to an answer sheet.

SECTION 1 Questions 1-10

Choose the correct letter, **A**, **B** or **C**.

Free activities in Burnham area

Example

The caller wants to find out about events on

A 27 June

B 28 June

C 29 June

1 The 'Family Welcome' event in the art gallery begins at

A 10 am

B 10.30. am

C 2 pm

2 The film that is now shown in the 'Family Welcome' event is about

A sculpture.

B painting.

C ceramics.

3 When do most of the free concerts take place?

A in the morning

B at lunch time

C in the evening

4 Where will the 4 pm concert of Latin American music take place?

A. in a museum

B. in a theater

C. in a library

- 5 The boat race begins at
- A Summer Pool
 - B Charlesworth Bridge
 - C Offord Marina

- 6 One of the boat race team
- A. won a regional competition earlier this year.
 - B. has represented the region in a national competition.
 - C. has won several regional competition

Questions 7-10

Complete the sentences below

*Write **ONE WORD ONLY** for each answer.*

Paxton nature reserve

- 7 Paxton is a good place for seeing rare -----all year around.
- 8 This is particularly good time for seeing certain unusual -----.
- 9 Visitors will be able to learn about----- and then collect some.
- 10 Part of the ----- has been made suitable for swimming.

SECTION 2**Questions 11- 20**

Questions 11 -15

Choose the correct letter A, B, or C.

Changes in Barford over the last 50 years

- 11** In shona's opinion, why do fewer people use buses in barford these days?
- A** The buses are old and uncomfortable.
 - B** Fares have gone up too much.
 - C** There are not so many bus routes.
- 12** What change in the road network is known to benefited the town most?
- A** the construction of a bypass
 - B** the development of cycle paths
 - C** the banning of cars from certain streets
- 13** What is the problem affecting shopping in the town centre?
- A** lack of parking spaces
 - B** lack of major retailers
 - C** lack of restaurants and cafes
- 14** What does shone say about medical facilities in barford?
- A** There is no hospital.
 - B** New medical practices are planned.
 - C** the number of dentists is too low.
- 15** The largest number of people are employed in
- A** manufacturing.
 - B** services.
 - C** education.

Questions 16-20

What is planned for each of the following facilities?

Choose **FIVE** answers from the box and write the correct letter, **A-G**, next to Questions 16-20.

- | Plans | |
|--------------|--|
| A | It will move to a new location. |
| B | It will have its opening hours extended. |
| C | It will be refurbished. |
| D | It will be used for a different purpose. |
| E | It will have its opening hours reduced. |
| F | It will have new management. |
| G | It will be expanded. |

Facilities

- 16** railway station car park
- 17** cinema
- 18** indoor market
- 19** library
- 20** nature reserve

SECTION 3

Questions 21-30

Questions 21-26

Complete the table below.

Write **ONE WORD ONLY** for each answer.

| Subject of drawing | Change to be made |
|--|---|
| A 21surrounded by trees. | Add Malcolm and a 22noticing him |
| People who are 23outside the forest | Add Malcolm sitting on a tree trunk and 24 |
| Ice-skaters on 25covered with ice | Add a 26for each person |

Questions 27-30

Who is going to write each of the following parts of the report?

Write the correct letter, **A-D**, next to Questions 27-30.

- A** Helen only
- B** Jeremy only
- C** both Helen and Jeremy
- D** neither Helen nor Jeremy

Parts of the report

- 27** how they planned the project
- 28** how they had ideas for their stories
- 29** an interpretation of their stories
- 30** comments on the illustrations

SECTION 4 Questions 31-40

Complete the notes below.

*Write **ONE WORD ONLY** for each answer.*

ETHNOGRAPHY IN BUSINESS

Ethnography: Research which explores human cultures

It can be used in business:

-) To investigate customer needs and **31**
-) To help companies develop new designs

Examples of ethnographic research in business

Kitchen equipment

-) Researchers found that cook could not easily see the **32**in measuring cups.

Cell phones

-) In Uganda, customers paid to use the cell phones of entrepreneurs.
-) These customers wanted to check the **33** used.

Computer companies

-) There was a need to develop **34**to improve communication between system administrators and colleagues.

Hospitals

-) Nurses need to access information about **35** in different part of hospital.

Airlines

-) Respondents recorded information about their **36** while travelling.

Principles of ethnographic research in business

-) The researcher does not start off with a hypothesis.
-) Participants may be selected by criteria such as age, **37** or product used.
-) The participants must feel **38** about taking part in the research.
-) There is usually direct **39** of the participants.
-) The interview is guided by the participant.
-) A lot of time is needed for the **40** of the data.
-) Researchers look a meaningful pattern in the data

APPENDIX III

This questionnaire is a research tool for gathering information for my study work entitled “IELTS Based Listening Proficiency of M.Ed Students of T.U.” under the supervision of Dr. Ram Ekwel Singh, Reader and Head, Department of English Education, T. U., Kirtipur. Your cooperation in completion of this test will be of a great value to me. I am interested in your personal answers. Please feel free to put your responses required by the test. I assure you that the responses made by you will be exclusively used only for the research study.

Researcher

Kamala Sharma

APPENDIX - IV

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Thesis Supervisor

Faculty of Education

Dr. Ram Ekwāl Singh

Department of English Education

Reader and Head

T.U., Kirtipur, Kathmandu, Nepal

IELTS BASED LISTENING COMPREHENSION OF M.ED STUDENTS OF T.U.

I, [Name] agree to take part in this research study.

In giving my consent I state that:

I understand the purpose of the study, what I will be asked to do, and any risks/benefits involved.

1. I have read the Participant Information Statement and have been able to discuss my involvement in the study with the researchers if I wished.
2. I have got answers to any questions that I had about the study and I am happy with the answers.
3. I understand that being in this study is completely voluntary and I do not have to take part.
4. I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time before I submit my responses.
5. I understand that personal information about me that is collected over the course of this study will be stored securely and will only be used for purposes that I have agreed to. I understand that information about me will only be told to others with my permission.
6. I understand that the results of this study may be published, and that publications will not contain my name or any identifiable information about me.

I consent to:

) Fill the questionnaire: Yes [] No []

Signature -----

Name -----

APPENDIX V

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Thesis supervisor

Dr. Ram Ekwāl Singh

Reader and Head

Faculty of Education

Department of English Education

T.U., Kirtipur, Kathmandu, Nepal

IELTS BASED LISTENING PROFICIENCY OF M.ED STUDENTS OF T.U

1. What is this study about?

You are requested to take part in a research entitled “IELTS Based Listening Proficiency of M.Ed Students of T.U” which aims to find out listening comprehension ability of Master level students who are studying in Central Department of Tribhuvan University. Up to now there has not been sufficient research related to this topic in this area. Therefore, it is helpful to understand the students listening comprehension based on IELTS.

You have been requested to participate in this study because I am interested in finding out the proficiency of the Master level students’ listening comprehension. Your responses will be helpful in making effective implementation of evaluation. This participant’s information statement tells you about the research study. Knowing what is involved will help you decide if you want to take part in the research. Please read this sheet carefully and ask questions about anything you do not understand or want to know more about the study. Participation in this research is voluntary. So it is up to you whether you wish to take part or not. By giving your consent to take part in this study you are telling us that you:

-) Understand what you have read.
-) Agree to take part in the research study as outlined below.
-) Agree to the use of your personal information as described.

You will be given a copy of this participant’s information statement to keep.

2. Who is carrying out this study?

The study is being carried out by Ms. Kamala Sharma, as the basis for the Master of Education in English at the Tribhuvan University of Kathmandu. The study will take place under the supervision of Dr. Ram Ekwel Singh, Head of the Department of English Education.

3. What will the study involve for me?

This study involves completing set of a test. This test contains altogether 40 objective questions from past test of IELTS examination. All the questions are taken from listening part of the test.

4. How much of my time will the Study take?

It will take 40 minutes of time to complete the test.

5. Who can take part in the study?

The students who are studying in Master level of Central Department of English Education at Tribhuvan University can participate in this study.

6. Do I have to be in the study? Can I withdraw from the study once I have started?

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. Your participation in this study will not harm your career and future. It will help to understand about Master level students' listening proficiency. If you decide to withdraw from study you are free. But submitting your completed questionnaire is your consent to participate in the study.

7. Are there any risks or costs associated with being in the study?

Besides from your time investing to response the test paper, there will not be any risks or costs associated with taking part in the study.

8. Are there any benefits associated with being in the study?

This study will help you to understand the Master level students' proficiency in listening comprehension based on IELTS. Furthermore, it will be helpful for you to understand your own proficiency in listening comprehension.

9. What will happen to information about me that is collected during the study?

Your information will only be used for the purposes outlined in this participant information statement. Your information will be stored securely and identity or information will be kept strictly confidential, except as required by law. Findings of the study may be published, but you will not be individually identifiable in this problem.

10. Can I tell other people about the study?

Yes, you are welcome to tell about the study.

11. What if I would like further information about the study?

If you would like to know more at any stage during the study, please feel free to contact Ms. Kamala Sharma, (sharma.kamala88@gmail.com).

12. Will I be told the result of the study?

You will get the summary of the overall findings of the Study and the whole thesis paper through the Department of English Education, T.U., Kirtipur, Kathmandu.

13. What if I have complaint or any concern about the study?

The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by Tribhuvan University, Department of English Education, Kirtipur, Kathmandu. Any person with concern or complaints about the conduct of research study can contact the researcher.

Thank You

APPENDIX VI

Audio Scripts of the Listening Text

SECTION 1

MARTIN: Good morning. This is Burnham tourist office, Martin speaking.

SUE: Oh, hello. I saw a poster about free things to do in the area, and it said people should phone you for information. I'm coming to Burnham with my husband and two children for a few days on June 27th, or possibly the 28th, and I'd like some ideas for things to do on the 29th.

MARTIN: Yes, of course. OK. Then let's start with the couple of events especially for children. The art gallery is holding an event called 'Family Welcome' that day, when there are activities and trails to use throughout the gallery.

SUE: That sounds interesting. What time does it start?

MARTIN: The gallery opens at 10, and the 'Family Welcome' event runs from 10:30 until 2 o'clock. The gallery stays open until 5. And several times during the day, they are going to show a short film that the gallery has produced. It demonstrates how ceramics are made, and there'll be equipment and materials for children to have a go themselves. Last time they ran the event, there was a film about painting, which went down very well with the children, and they are now working on one about sculpture.

SUE: I like the sound of that. And what other events happen in Burnham?

MARTIN: Well, do you all enjoy listening to music?

SUE: Oh, yes.

MARTIN: Well there are several free concerts taking place at different times - one or two in the morning, the majority at lunchtime, and a couple in the evening. And they range from pop music to Latin American.

SUE: The Latin American could be fun. What time is that?

MARTIN: It's being repeated several times, in different places. They are performing in the central library at 1 o'clock, then at 4 it's in the

City Museum, and in the evening, at 7:30, there's a long concert, in the theatre.

SUE: Right. I'll suggest that to the rest of the family.

MARTIN: Something else you might be interested in is the boat race along the river.

SUE: Oh, yes do you tell me about that.

MARTIN: The race starts at Offord Marina, to the north of Burnham, and goes as far as Summer Pool. The best place to watch it from is Charlesworth Bridge, though that does get rather crowded.

SUE: And who's taking part?

MARTIN: Well, local boat clubs, but the standard is very high. One of them came first in the west England regional championship in May this year- it was the first time a team from Burnham has won. It means that next year they'll be representing the region in the national championship.

SUE: Now I've heard something about Paxton Nature Reserve. It's a good place for spotting unusual birds, isn't it?

MARTIN: That's right-throughout the year. There is a lake there, as well as river, and they provide a very attractive habitat. So, it's a good idea to bring binoculars if you have them. And just at the moment you can see various flowers that are pretty unusual- the soil at Paxton isn't very common. They're looking good right now.

SUE: Right. My husband will be particularly interested in that.

MARTIN: And there is going to be a talk and slide show about mushrooms- and you'll be able to go out and pick some afterwards and study the different varieties.

SUE: Uhuh. And is it possible for children to swim in the river?

MARTIN: Yes. Part of it has been fenced off to make it safe for children to swim in. it's very shallow, and there is a lifeguard on duty whenever it's open. The lake is too deep, so swimming is not allowed there.

SUE: OK, we must remember to bring their swimming things, in case we go to Paxton. How long does it take to get there by Burnham?

MARTIN: About 20 minutes, but parking is very limited, so it's usually much easier to go by bus- and it takes about the same time.

SUE: Right. Well, I'll discuss the options with the rest of the family. Thanks very much for all your help.

MARTIN: You're welcome.

SUE: Goodbye.

MARTIN: Bye.

SECTION 2

MAN: First of all let me thank you all for coming to this public meeting, to discuss the future of our town. Our first speaker is Shona Ferguson, from Barford town council. Shona.

SHONA: Thank you. First I'll briefly give you some background information, then I'll be asking you for your comments on developments in the town.

Well, as you don't need me to tell you Barford has changed a great deal in the last fifty years. These are some of the main changes.

Fifty years ago, buses linked virtually every part of the town and the neighboring towns and villages. Most people used them frequently, but not now, because the bus companies concentrate on just the routes that attract most passengers. So parts of the town are no longer served by buses. Even replacing old uncomfortable buses with smart new ones has had little impact on passenger numbers. It's sometimes said that bus fares are too high, but in relation to average incomes, fares are not much higher than they were 50 years ago.

Changes in the road network are affecting the town. The centre was recently closed to traffic on a trial basis, making it much safer

for pedestrians. The impact of this is being measured. The new cycle paths, separating bikes from cars in most main roads, are being used far more than was expected, reducing traffic and improving air quality. And although the council's attempts to have a bypass constructed have failed, we haven't given up hope of persuading the government to change its mind.

Shopping in the town centre has changed over the years. Many of us can remember when the town was crowded with people going shopping. Numbers have been falling for several years, despite efforts to attract shoppers, for instance by opening new car parks. Some people combine shopping with visits to the town's restaurants and cafes. Most shops are small independent stores in nearby large towns, as there so few-known chain stress.

Turning now to medical facilities, the town is served by family doctors in several medical practices- fewer than fifty years ago, but each catering for far more patients. Our hospital closed 15 years ago, which means journeys to other towns are unavoidable. On the other hand, there are more dentists then there used to be. Employment patterns have changed, along with almost everything else. The number of schools and colleges has increased, making that the main employment sector. Services, such as website design and accountancy, have grown in importance, and surprisingly, perhaps, manufacturing hasn't seen the decline that has affected it in other parts of the country.

Now I'll very quickly outline current plans for some of the town's facilities, before asking for your comments.

As you'll know if you regularly use the car park at the railway station, it's usually full. The railway company applied for permission to replace it with a multi-storey car park, but that was

refused. Instead, the company has bought some adjoining land, and this will be used to increase the number of parking spaces.

The Grand, the old cinema in the high street, will close at the end of the year, and reopen on a different site. You've probably seen the building under construction. The plan is to have three screens with fewer seats, rather than just one large auditorium in the old cinema.

I expect many of you shop in the indoor market. It's become more and more shabby- looking, and because of fears about safety, it was threatened with demolition. The good news is that it will close for six weeks to be made safe and redecorated, and the improved building will open in July.

Lots of people use the library, including school and college students who go there to study. The council has managed to secure funding to keep the library later onto the evening, twice a week. We would like to enlarge the building in the not- too- distant future, but this is by no means definite.

There's no limit on access to the nature reserve on the edge of town, and this will continue to be the case. What will change, though, is that the council will no longer be chare of the area. Instead it will become the responsibility of a nation body that administers most nature reserves in the country.

OK, now let me ask you.....

SECTION 3

JEREMY: Hello, Helen. Sorry I'm late.

HELEN: Hi, Jeremy, no problem. Well we'd better work out where we are on our project, I suppose.

JEREMY: Yeah. I've looked at the drawings you've done for my story, 'The Forest', and I think they're brilliant- they really create the atmosphere I had in mind when I was writing it.

HELEN: I'm glad you like them.

JEREMY: There are just a few suggestions I'd like to make.

Go ahead.

JEREMY: Now, I'm not sure about the drawing of the cave- it's got trees all around it, which is great, but the drawing's a bit too static, isn't it? I think it needs some action.

HELEN: Yes, there's nothing happening. Perhaps I should add the boy – Malcolm, isn't? He would be walking up to it.

JEREMY: Yes, let's have Malcolm in the drawing. And what about putting in a tiger- the one that he makes friends with a bit later? May be it could be sitting under the tree washing itself.

HELEN: And the tiger stops in the middle of what it's doing when it sees Malcolm walking past.

JEREMY: That's a good idea.

HELEN: OK, I'll have go at that.

JEREMY: Then there's the drawing of the crowd of man and woman dancing. They are just outside the forest, and there's a lot going on.

HELEN: That's right you wanted them to be watching a carnival procession, but I thought it would be crowded. Do you think it works like this?

JEREMY: Yes, I like what you've done. The only thing is, could you add Malcolm to it, without changing what's already there.

HELEN: What about having him sitting on the tree trunk on the right of the picture?

JEREMY: Yes, that would be fine.

And do you want him watching the other people?

JEREMY: No, he's been left out of all the fun, so I'd like him to be crying – that'll contrast nicely with the next picture, where he's laughing at the clowns in the carnival.

HELEN: Right, I'll do that.

JEREMY: And then the drawing of the people ice skating in the forest.

HELEN: I wasn't too happy with that one. Because they are supposed to be skating on grass, aren't they?

JEREMY: That's right, and it's frozen over. At the moment it doesn't look quite right.

HELEN: Mm, I see what you mean. I'll have another go at that.

JEREMY: And I like the wool hats they're wearing. May be could give each of them a scarf as well.

HELEN: Yeah, that's easy enough. They can be streaming out behind the people to suggest they're skating really fast.

JEREMY: Mm, great. Well that's all on the drawings.

HELEN: Right. So you have finished writing your story and I just need to finish illustrating it, and my story and your drawings are done.

HELEN: So the next thing is to decide what exactly we need to write about in the report that goes with the stories, and how we are going to divide the work.

JEREMY: Right, Helen.

HELEN: What do you think about including a section on how we planned the project as a whole, Jeremy? That's probably quite important.

JEREMY: Yeah, well you've had most of the good ideas so far. How do you feel about drafting something, then we can go through it together and discuss it.

HELEN: OK, that seems reasonable. And I could include something on how we came up with the ideas for our two stories, couldn't I?

JEREMY: Well, I've started writing something about that, so why don't you do the same and we can include the two things.

HELEN: Right. So what about our interpretation of stories? Do we need to write about what we think they show, like the value of helping other people, all that sort of thing?

JEREMY: That's going to come up later, isn't it? I think everyone in the class is going to read each other's stories and come up with their own interpretations, which we are going to discuss.

HELEN: Oh, I missed that. So it isn't going to be part of the report at all.

JEREMY: No. but we need to write about the illustrations, because they are an essential element of children's experience of reading the stories. It's probably easiest for you to write that section, as you know more about drawing than I do.

HELEN: Maybe, but I find it quite hard to write about. I'd be happier if you did it.

JEREMY: OK. So when do you think.....

SECTION 4

So what I'm going to talk about to you is something called Ethnography. This is a type of research aimed at exploring the way human cultures work. It was

first developed for use in anthropology, and it's also been used in sociology and communication studies. So what's it got to do with business, you may ask. Well business are finding that ethnography can offer them deeper insight into the possible needs of customers, either present or future, as well as providing valuable information about their attitudes towards existing products. And ethnography can also help companies to design new products or services that customers really want.

Let's look at some examples of how ethnographic research works in business. One team of researchers did a project for a company manufacturing kitchen equipment. They watched how cooks used measuring cups to measure out things like sugar and flour. They saw that the cooks had to check and re check the contents, because although the measuring cups had numbers inside them, the cooks couldn't see them easily. So a new design of cup was developed to overcome this problem, and it was a top seller.

Another team of ethnographic researchers looked at how cell phones were used in Uganda, in Africa. They found that people who didn't have their own phones could pay to use the phones of local entrepreneurs. Because these customers paid in advance for their calls, they were eager to know how much time they'd spent on the call so far. So the phone company designed phones for use globally with this added feature.

Ethnographic research has also been carried out in computer companies. In one company, IT systems administrators were observed for several weeks. It was found that a large amount of their work involved communicating with colleagues in order to solve problems, but that they didn't have a standard way of exchanging information from spreadsheets and so on. So the team came up with an idea for software that would help them to do this.

In another piece of research, a team observed and talked to nurses working in hospitals. This led to the recognition that the nurses needed to access the computer records of their patients, no matter where they were. This led to the

development of a portable computer tablet that allowed the nurses to check records in locations throughout the hospital.

Occasionally, research can be done even in environments where the researchers can't be present. For example, in one project done for an airline, respondents used their smart phones to record information during airline trips, in a study aiming at tracking the emotions of passengers during a flight.

So what makes studies like these different from ordinary research? Let's look at some of the general principles behind ethnographic research in business.

First of all, the researcher has to be completely open-minded- he or she hasn't thought up a hypothesis to be tested, as is the case in other types of research.

Instead they wait for the participants in the research to inform them. As far as choosing the participants themselves, is concerned, that's not really all that different from ordinary research-The criteria according to which the

participants are chosen may be something as simple as age bracket they fall into, or the researchers may select them according to their income, or they

might try to find a set of people who all use a particular product, for example.

But it's absolutely crucial to recruit the right people as participants. As well as the criteria I've mentioned, they have to be comfortable talking about themselves and being watched as they go about their activities. Actually, most researchers say that people open up pretty easily, may be because they're often in their home or workplace.

So what makes this type of research special is that it's not just a matter of sending a questionnaire to the participation to the participants, instead the research is usually based on first hand observation of what they are doing at the time. But that does not mean that the researcher never talks to the participants.

However, unlike in traditional research, in this case it's the participant rather than the researchers who decides what direction the interview will follow. This means that there's likelihood of the researcher imposing his or her own ideas on the participant.

But after they've said goodbye to their participants and got back to their office, the researcher's work isn't finished. Most of the researchers estimate that 70 to 80 per cent of their recordings and transcribing them, and so on. The researchers may end up with hundreds of pages of notes. And to determine what's significant, they don't focus on the sensational things or the unusual things, instead they try to identify a pattern of some sort of in all this data, and to discern the meaning behind it. This can result in some compelling insights that can in turn feed back to the whole design process.

APPENDIX VII

| S. N | Name | Gender | Raw Score | Percentage | IELTS Score |
|------|----------------------------|--------|-----------|------------|-------------|
| 1 | Santosh Sah | Male | 21 | 52.5 | 5.5 |
| 2 | Binod Paudel | „ | 27 | 67.5 | 6.5 |
| 3 | Kishan Dhami | „ | 16 | 40 | 5 |
| 4 | Surendra Bdr. Bhat | „ | 13 | 32.5 | 4.5 |
| 5 | Kamal Narayan Choudhary | „ | 14 | 35 | 4.5 |
| 6 | Santosh Tamang | „ | 13 | 32.5 | 4.5 |
| 7 | Tej Bdr. Thapa | „ | 18 | 45 | 5 |
| 8 | Jas Gangai | „ | 20 | 50 | 5.5 |
| 9 | Naresh Bdr. Kunwar | „ | 16 | 40 | 5 |
| 10 | Sajan Sharma | „ | 22 | 55 | 5.5 |
| 11 | Ramesh Sunar | „ | 18 | 45 | 5 |
| 12 | Om Bahadur | „ | 21 | 52.5 | 5.5 |
| 13 | Saroj K. Sah | „ | 13 | 32.5 | 4.5 |
| 14 | Shiva Khadka | „ | 16 | 40 | 5 |
| 15 | Jhawlee Bdr. Paudel | „ | 15 | 37.5 | 5 |
| 16 | Rajendra Singh Dhami | „ | 14 | 35 | 5 |
| 17 | Yadav Paudel | „ | 15 | 37.5 | 5 |
| 18 | Ganesh Rokaya | „ | 16 | 40 | 5 |
| 19 | Jagat Khand | „ | 15 | 37.5 | 5 |
| 20 | Armendra K. Mandal | „ | 23 | 57.5 | 6 |
| 21 | Tek Bdr. Chhetri | „ | 26 | 65 | 6 |
| 22 | Janak Thakulla | „ | 16 | 40 | 5 |
| 23 | Kul Bdr. Bogati | „ | 16 | 40 | 5 |
| 24 | Prakash Upadhayaya | „ | 23 | 57.5 | 6 |
| 25 | Dayaram Bhattarai | „ | 15 | 37.5 | 4.5 |
| 26 | Janaki Rana | Female | 20 | 50 | 5.5 |

| | | | | | |
|----|-------------------|---|----|------|-----|
| 27 | Susmita Tiwari | „ | 21 | 52.5 | 5.5 |
| 28 | Manju Acharya | „ | 22 | 55 | 5.5 |
| 29 | Nisha Dhakal | „ | 20 | 50 | 5.5 |
| 30 | Bina Paudel | „ | 14 | 35 | 4.5 |
| 31 | Mangali Moktan | „ | 14 | 35 | 4.5 |
| 32 | Ranjita Pandey | „ | 13 | 32.5 | 4.5 |
| 33 | Samjhana Dhungana | „ | 14 | 35 | 4.5 |
| 34 | Srijana Sapkota | „ | 22 | 55 | 5.5 |
| 35 | Nabina Rokaya | „ | 13 | 32.5 | 4.5 |
| 36 | Sukunda Khatri | „ | 22 | 55 | 5.5 |
| 37 | Manisha Rai | „ | 21 | 52.5 | 5.5 |
| 38 | Nita Dhami | „ | 29 | 72.5 | 6.5 |
| 39 | Pabitra Sapkota | „ | 20 | 50 | 5.5 |
| 40 | Rojina Shrestha | „ | 23 | 57.5 | 6 |

APPENDIX VIII

Semester Grade Point Average (SGPA)

| SGPA | Letter Grade | Percentage Equivalent | Performance Remarks |
|-------------|---------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 4.0 | A | 90 and above | Distinction |
| 3.7 | A- | 80-89.9 | Very good |
| 3.3 | B+ | 70-79.9 | First Division |
| 3.0 | B | 60-69.9 | Second Division |
| 2.7 | B- | 50-59.9 | Pass in individual subject |
| 0 | F | Below 50 | Fail |