

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The introductory part of this thesis study consists of background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, and significance and delimitations of the study.

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

It is generally believed that the natural order for the first and /or second language learning is listening, speaking, reading and writing. A child starts to learn his first language from her/his early childhood. Child listens to the language used by her/his family, friends and relatives and comprehends it. Then s/he starts to speak. A child who is hearing impaired never speaks because s/he cannot listen. And no listening results no comprehension of language (Harmer, 2010). Vandergrift (1999) defines listening as “A complex, active process in which the listener must discriminate between sounds, understand vocabulary and grammatical structures, interpret stress and intonation, retain what was gathered in all of above as the largest socio-cultural context of the utterance” (p. 168).

Listening is a skill, which involves receiving message in spoken form and therefore often referred as receptive skill (Harmer, 1991, p.16). Even though it is assumed as a receptive skill, it needs a process to decode the message from the speaker. The listener must be active to process the information listened from the speaker. Listening is the Cinderella skill in second language learning (Nunan, 1997, p. 47).

Listening has an important role not only in daily life but also in classroom settings. For most second and foreign language learners, being able to communicate in social contexts is one of the most important reasons why they learn a language (Vandergrift, 1997). Through listening, the learners receive input that is essential for language learning to take place (Rost, 1994). Similarly, Rost (1994, pp. 141-142) pointed out that the listening is vital in the language classroom because it provides input for the learning. Without understanding input at the right level, any learning simply cannot begin. Therefore, teaching listening comprehension is important. Listening lessons are vehicles for teaching elements of grammatical structure and allow new vocabulary

items to be contextualized within a body of communicative discourse (Morley, 2001, p. 70).

Listening is one of the receptive skills and as such it involves students in capturing and understanding the input of English. Reading, the other receptive skill, involves students in understanding and interpreting the written words. Listening is probably more difficult than reading because students often recognize the written words more easily than they recognize the spoken words. Furthermore, while reading, students can go back and reread a phrase whereas with listening they only get one chance. With reading, it's the reader who sets the pace whereas with listening it's the speaker or recording that sets the pace (Pollard, 2008, p. 1). Many students find listening difficult. It is therefore important to give our students plenty of opportunities to practise the skill of listening in a supportive environment that helps them to learn. We need to design tasks that help them learn rather than merely testing their abilities (Nurpahmi, 2015).

Different forms of listening materials can be incorporated along with the prescribed texts to enhance language skills of learners. Allwright (1990) argues that "Materials should teach students to learn that they should be resource books for ideas and activities for instruction/ learning and they should give teachers rationales for what they do". Recorded materials are very important aids for the English language learners because they provide practice and information for areas and use of materials also contributes to improve interest and enthusiasm for learning. "Helping students locate materials of interest and at desired levels of difficulty is a key aspect for improving their level of immersion in available printed materials". (Clark & Rumbold, 2006, p.19). And it is the responsibility of the teachers to prepare necessary methods and materials with utmost care to incorporate various recorded materials along with the materials prescribed by governing education bodies.

Listening materials are the sources of information which provide knowledge beyond the textbooks to the learners. They expand the area of knowledge. They can make the English learning better and more effective and also enhance the students' ability to understand experiment with the language. Listening materials, if used effectively, will complement the English language learning (Thakur, 2015). Students trying to learn English as a foreign language need further language support. They need to practice in

listening, speaking, reading and writing and vocabulary aspects of language in order to develop their experience and skills. For doing such tasks, they are in need of using various tools which can help them learn the language easily and effectively. The use of several recorded materials has a significant effect on the learning process of each area of the language. According to Tomlinson (2012) “Materials can be informative (informing the learner about the target language), instructional (guiding the learner in practising the language), experimental (providing the learner with experience of the language in use), eliciting (encouraging the learner to use the language) and exploratory (helping the learner to make discoveries about the language)”.

Emag and Ajayi (2006) pointed out that we live in a fast changing world that is becoming more scientific and more technical and as this transformation occurs, education in all forms and in all subjects is not left out. Teaching equipments and materials have changed over the years, not only to facilitate teaching and learning situation but also to address the instructional needs of individuals and groups. This entails that teachers should offer English language learners a language rich environment where students should be engaged in language activities.

Pre- recorded audio materials have been found to be beneficial in the second language classrooms. They improve the speech by helping students to listen to the records of their voice and make them much more critical of their speech. There is nothing like hearing how one sounds to others to realize the possibility of improvement in articulation, diction, enthusiasm and organization of matter. Through the use of audio cassettes or CDs in literature or English classroom, students can use their own learning styles as a catalyst for in-depth study of master works (Kochar, 1995).

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

During more than eight years of teaching, I have found it very difficult for my students to understand English through listening. In language learning, when we talk about four basic skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing, we always put listening at the beginning of them. That is because listening is the most important skill of the four and the basic way of receiving language input. As we know, we can speak sensibly only if we understand what is said. In fact, people cannot talk if they cannot hear other people’s talk. This simply means if there is not enough language input, there is no language output. So listening skill is one of the basic skills and acquiring

this skill is very important in language learning. Therefore, it is crucial to improve listening skill of my students.

Usually, in the language classroom, the students feel at a loss when listening to some new text. Over fifty percent of my students could not understand the meaning of the material after I play the tape for the first time. Expecting them to understand the material, I often give them some instructions and play the audio again, at least three times. Still, at least twenty percent of students might not understand it. I sometimes have to stop the tape to explain the difficult or unfamiliar words and occasionally explain the sentences in audio. So this is a serious problem because some students cannot understand the whole text after listening to it more than three times in class. Furthermore, the students might gradually lose their self- confidence. When they are face to face with English speaking people, they have little confidence in their listening comprehension abilities. Therefore, this has become a problem in my classroom. Similarly, English-speaking people usually read the materials on the tape. They have different accents, difficult idioms and unfamiliar language chunks in their speaking. This is another difficulty. For our students, their English teachers are local people. Therefore, the students may not be used to the accents of the foreign people. It is hard for them to understand the native speakers if it goes like this. If they do not get extra exposure, there will not be any change on their listening ability.

Likewise, when English-speaking people speak English, they usually speak at a normal speed. It is too fast for our students to follow. When listening, the students cannot choose a comfortable listening speed; they have to keep pace with the speaker's thinking process. So sometimes, they not even have the meaning of the first sentence, before the second sentence has already passed.

Therefore, I am researching the problems of our students' comprehension and intend to find out what can be done to help them improve their listening skills. With the results of this research, the school administration will be able to implement a plan to develop the students' listening skill. Therefore, I would like to do some interventions to see whether I can improve our students' listening ability.

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

The objectives of this study were as follows.

- i. To explore the role of recorded audio materials in improving listening skill in secondary level students
- ii. to see the effectiveness of recorded audio materials to improve listening skill of secondary level students.
- iii. To suggest some pedagogical implications.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

This study had the following research questions.

- i. To what extend do the recorded materials help to improve listening skill of the students in secondary level students?
- ii. Can recorded audio materials be incorporated with text books to develop listening skill?
- iii. How can the listening skills in English of secondary level students be enhanced?
- iv. Do recorded materials help to improve/ develop the listening skill of secondary level students?

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The scope of the English language is being expanded from day to day. Diversity of audio materials are now used as fundamental learning aids, not only in the rudiments of English language with the national curriculum but also as essential requirement to meet the challenges of the global language which provides the basis for survival these days. Only textbooks can not quench the thirst of knowledge of the students' of this twenty- first era. Therefore, audio materials are very important to compliment course books. The research study aims to find if recorded materials can be helpful in the process of improving listening skill of the students of secondary level.

Furthermore, this study will be beneficial for those who want to improve the listening skill of their students in the classroom. This study will be helpful to make classroom interesting and students' centered instead of monotonous and boring. Likewise, this

research will be important for the curriculum developers as well as textbook designers by being knowledgeable about the use of recorded materials to be included in the curriculum. Similarly, this research study will serve as reference materials in the field of the given topic as there are no sufficient action research in this area in the context of Nepal.

## **1.6 Delimitations of the Study**

This study had the following delimitations.

- a. The research was conducted in class 9 at Aakhanda Vidya Sadan.
- b. Primary data was collected from the tests. Pre- test, progress test and post-test were taken periodically to determine the proficiency level of the students.
- c. Test items were close ended questions.
- d. Sample of the study were selected purposively.
- e. The term recorded materials was limited to cassette player and all the materials that are found recorded.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **2.1 Review of Theoretical Literature**

To complete this study, I have gone through different theoretical ideas. Review of different theoretical literature helped me to develop the insights regarding the topic. The theoretical ideas in relation to the topic are presented in the following sub-sections.

##### **2.1.1 Introduction to Listening**

No one can deny the importance of listening skills in foreign language learning because the key to acquire a language is to receive language input. Krashen, Terrel, Ehrman and Herzog (1984) claim that acquisition takes place only when students absorb enough comprehensible input. The same claim was supported by Rost (1994), who confirmed that listening is vital in language classrooms because it provides input for learners. As an input skill, listening plays a crucial role in students' language development. Krashen (1985) argues that people acquire language by understanding the linguistic information they hear. Thus, language acquisition is achieved mainly through receiving understandable input and listening ability is the critical component in achieving understandable language input. Without understanding inputs at the right level, any kind of learning simply cannot occur. Thus, listening is a fundamental language skill, and as such its merits a critical priority among the four skill areas for language students. As Hasan (2000) pointed out, "Listening comprehension provides the right conditions for language acquisition and development of other language skills" (p.138). Listening therefore is essential not only as a receptive skill but also to the development of spoken proficiency.

Listening plays an important role in communication as it is said that, of the total time spent on communication, listening takes up 40- 50%; speaking, 25-30%; reading, 11-16%; and writing about 9% (Gilakjani &Ahmadi, 2011). According to Devine (1982) "Listening is the primary means by which incoming ideas and information are taken in". Gilbert (1988), on the other hand, has noted that students from kindergarten

through high school were expected to listen 65-90 percent of the time. Wolvin and Coakley (1991) concluded that, both in and out of the classroom, listening consumes more of daily communication time than other forms of verbal communication. Listening is central to the lives of students throughout all levels of educational development.

In spite of the importance of listening in foreign language learning, the teaching of listening is neglected and poorly taught aspect of English in many EFL programs ( Mendelsohn, 1995, p.9).

EFL learners have serious problems in English listening comprehension because schools' curriculum pays more attention to English grammar, reading and vocabulary. Listening skill is not important part of many course books or curriculum and teachers do not seem to pay attention to these skills while designing their lessons. Most teachers take it for granted and believe that it will develop naturally within the process of language learning. Persulesly (1988) states that one of the reasons for the opinion that listening is a skill that tends to be neglected is the feeling among language teachers that the learners automatically acquire this skill as s/he learns to speak the language (p. 50).

Osada (2004) reported that listening has not drawn much attention of both teachers and learners, they are generally less aware of its importance. In classrooms, teachers seem to test, not to teach listening. Meanwhile, students seem to learn listening, not listening comprehension. As a result, it remains the most neglected and the least understood aspect of language teaching (Glison, 1985). In fact, listening is a complex mental process that involves perception, attention, cognition and memory.

Comprehending speech in a foreign language is a quite difficult task for language learners. When listening to a foreign language, many language learners face difficulties. In order to help students improve their listening ability, language teachers have to understand students' listening difficulties in comprehending spoken texts and instruct with effective teaching materials and strategies to help students' solve their listening difficulties.



### **2.1.2 Teaching Listening**

Listening is a prerequisite for learning other skills. Listening refers to the activity of paying attention and trying to get meaning from something we hear. Listening is not just a single skill but it is the integration of several skills. Rost (1994) writes that listening is the integration of the micro skills such as discriminating words, identifying functions in a conversation, discriminating stress pattern within words, connecting linguistic cues to construct meaning, use background knowledge to predict and confirm meaning, recalling important words and ideas, giving appropriate feedback to the speaker, interpret attitudinal meaning

Thus, teaching listening refers to the teaching of all these skills at once in integration.

### **2.1.3 Importance of Listening Skill in Language Learning**

Listening plays an important role in communication in people's daily lives. As Guo and Wills (2006) state "It is the medium through which people gain a large preposition of their education, their information, their understanding of the world and human affairs, their ideals, sense of values"( p. 3). Emphasizing the importance of listening in language learning, Peterson (2001) states that "No other type of language input is easy to process as spoken language, received through listening learners can build an awareness of the interworking of language systems at various levels and thus establish a base for more fluent productive skills" (p. 87). Listening plays an important role in language learning. According to Rost (1991, p. 141), there are several reasons that make listening very important in language learning, they are set-out as follows:

- Listening is vital in the language classroom because it provides input for the learner. Without understandability at the right level, any learning simply cannot begin.
- Spoken language provides a means of interaction for the learner. Since learners must interact to achieve understanding, access to spoken language is essential. Moreover, the inability of learners to understand what they hear needs to be an impetus, not an obstacle, for interaction and learning.

- Authentic spoken language presents a challenge for the learner to attempt to understand language as it is actually used by native speakers.
- Listening exercises provide teachers with a means for drawing the attention of learners to new vocabulary, collocations, grammar and patterns of interaction in the language.

## **2.1.4 Types of Listening**

There are different types of listening but according to Harmer (2008) there are two types of listening as Extensive listening and Intensive listening, through which learners can experience real- life listening

### **2.1.4.1 Extensive Listening**

Extensive listening is more general and freer sort of listening that usually takes place outside classroom for pleasure or for many other reasons. Listening extensively can be done through using set of audio/ video materials like: CDs, podcasts, etc, as a way to enhance what students have studied in class. Concerning this later, O' Brydh and Hagelheimer (2007) assert that one of the benefits of using this technological tools is that it allows students to spend additional time working on the concepts taught in class and outside of the classroom. Weinberg, Knoerr and Vandergrift (2011) reported an increase in the use of lecture comprehension strategies that were presented in the podcasts.

Overall, to be involved in such a type of listening, teachers are urged to encourage language learners to listen to different kinds of English texts (songs, movies, news, poems, radio talks...); especially the authentic ones because of their richness and naturalness.

### **2.1.4.2 Intensive Listening**

In contrast to extensive listening, listening intensively is said to occur inside classes (or language laboratories) under the instructor's guidance to overcome any difficulties students encounter during a listening activity (Harmer, 2007). This means that, it is especially done to develop the listening skill and to discover how English is spoken.

Listening intensively involves a set of techniques that focus on language components; including the bottom-up process, which is essential at all proficiency levels (Brown, 1994). Intensive listening thus, implies paying specific attention to the lexical grammatical and pragmatic units of a language; focusing on stress, intonation, elision and assimilation that occur in natural speed. Rost (1991) indicates that it is essential for teachers to expose students to a range of authentic types of spoken language, which can be best done through selective listening tasks. Since through the frequent access to the various kinds of listening situations, learners listening ability can be developed. A selective listening activity is believed to make students focus on key parts of a discourse.

### **2.1.5 Audio Materials in Teaching Listening Skills**

Audio materials are portable and can be easily available in the market. When a teacher uses audio materials in the classroom, they bring a variety of pronunciation and develop students' vocabulary power. Therefore, they have many advantages in language teaching. Audio materials allow students to hear the variety of different voices apart from just of their own teachers. They give them an opportunity to meet a range of different characters, especially where real people are talking. Audio materials help the English teachers to make their classes live and interactive.

Discussing the impact of audio materials to effective learning, Kochhar (1995) noted that radio, films and television are excellent modes of education because of their vast potentialities. They are being used in a big way in education in the developed as well as developing countries. Tape recorder, according to him is providing a great educational benefit in the schools that can afford it. It improves the speech by helping students to hear the records of their voice and makes them much more critical of their speech. There is nothing like hearing how one sounds to others to realize the possibility of improvements in articulation, diction, enthusiasm and organization of matter. Records are equally valuable in enabling one to judge the evidence of his progress.

According to Reissman (2013), teachers have begun to understand how using audio cassettes or CDs in the classroom can increase the circle of readers by engaging learners with auditory and spatial intelligence learning styles. With audiocassette or

CDs in literature or English classroom, students can use their own learning styles as catalyst for in- depth study of master works.

Gower, Philips and Walters (2005) state that audio is a good source of spoken language and a very useful tool that teachers use in the classroom to make learners develop their listening skill. Moreover, Harmer (2001) mentions that audio materials are ideal for learners and help them acquire extensive and intensive listening skills. According to him, extensive and intensive listening allows students to be exposed to a great deal of spoken English in order to improve their pronunciation and to learn good speaking habits. Thus, audio materials make learners benefit from acquiring a considerable and significant language input.

Similarly, instructional media like audio cassettes, CDs, radio or television help retention by making abstract concepts concrete and stimulating interest among students. It also supports learning by bringing the world into the classroom when it is not possible to take students into the world (Winarno, 2001).

### **2.1.6 Types of Audio-Materials in Teaching Listening**

Listening is the first of the four language skills. To develop listening skills of the students, materials play vital roles in the classroom whether they are text materials or supplementary materials. Among them recorded materials play vital role in teaching learning activities. These materials provide a way to make teaching effective and interesting, which enable students more active and help to work better in team- based environment. Daff (1995, p. 204) describes two types of audio materials.

#### **2.1.6.1 Live Materials**

The teacher can teach listening either by using cassettes or by using his/her voice, it is known as live material. Live material may be the speech by teachers or outside speaker or reader. In live materials, the speaker can be seen. So it is easy for the listeners to decipher the message from facial expression and gesture of the speaker. It is obvious that a speaker presents in a room is nearly always easier to hear than a recorded voice. Live materials are also beneficial in the sense that there is no need to organize equipment in advance.

### **2.1.6.2 Recorded Materials**

In teaching learning activities when a teacher uses cassette player, it is called recorded material. Recorded materials are permanent and for later use or reference. These materials allow presenting a variety of voices and accents to the students. While using recorded materials, the teacher or the students can stop whether they do not understand the text clearly. When recorded materials are used, students get opportunities to hear language of the native speakers and they concentrate on what they hear whether the speaker is not seen.

### **2.1.7 Types of Recorded Materials**

There are various materials used in teaching which are known as instructional materials. Among them, the materials that are recorded in the device are known as recorded materials.

Those materials that are recorded once and used for classroom purposes are said to be the recorded materials. We can record authentic native sounds from different media and sometimes also from native people in English Language teaching. Recorded materials are classified based on their contents. Cross (1992, p. 250) says,

The content of the recorded material you use will depend on the age of the learners, the nature of the course followed, and the availability of the speakers to make recordings and the clarity with which Anglophone broadcasts can be picked up. Where professional recordings of the textbook materials are not available, you can contrive home-made ones to support the course. The investment of time is not great, and the tapes can be used year after year.

Cross (1992) classifies the recorded materials into three main categories: authentic, scripted and semi-scripted texts.

#### **2.1.7.1 Authentic Texts**

Authentic Texts are the recordings made from the radio, live recordings of the language in the street or market place recording to unedited and unscripted talks or discussion, and so on. According to Dictionary of Applied Linguistics (1987, P. 27), “The degree to which language-teaching materials have the qualities of natural speech

of writing, texts that are taken from newspapers, magazines, etc. and tapes of natural speech taken from ordinary or, television programs are called authentic materials”. For Ellis and Johnson (1996, p. 57) authentic materials represent “Any texts written by native English speakers for native English speakers”.

According to Gebhard (1996), authentic materials are classified into three categories:

- a. Authentic printed materials, such as newspapers, magazines, minutes, advertisements, novels, poems, train tickets etc.
- b. Authentic visual materials, like photographs, stamps, street- signs, paintings, post-card etc.
- c. Authentic listening (or viewing) materials, like; TV commercials, radio- news, cartoons, movies, songs etc.

The last type is the main concerned subject of this research study.

In an attempt to define authentic aural materials, the UCLA International Institute (2007) explains that authentic listening texts refer to materials that are created for native speakers, including for instance: audio, video, CD or other digital medium. In addition, it is concerned as recordings of people speaking naturally and without the purpose of language learning in mind.

Haines (1995) considers the following to be the advantages of authentic materials:

- i. Authentic texts have a communicative purpose unrelated to the language teaching itself,
- ii. Most texts are aimed at particular target listeners, who may be expected to react to the text in some way,
- iii. Authenticity itself is attractive to learners,
- iv. Authentic texts help students to develop listening strategies,
- v. Heard English language is real, and not the one devised by the course book authors or artistically performed by professional actors. This fact builds up the interest in students to tackle apparently ‘impossible’ real life situations.
- vi. As the speech is the perfect example of real spoken language there are many forms and ways of working on it: paying attention to the accent, working out

the pitch of the voice activities based on commonly used and useful phrases or expressions.

### **2.1.7.2 Scripted Texts**

These are recordings of fluent speakers reading exactly what is on a page, but trying to sound spontaneous. Published textbook support materials are of this sort. They are representative of the ways in which people really speak to each other but they can be very useful though. They are certainly better than no listening at all.

### **2.1.7.3 Semi- Scripted Texts**

These are the useful compromise for learners who want to exercise some control in listening and some of them want a class to hear more or less authentic forms of listening recorded materials. So, the speakers are given guidelines or a list of points in abbreviated form and they are to express these ideas on their own ways. These types of texts are more practical than other type of recorded listening texts.

## **2.1.8 Advantages and Disadvantages of Recorded Materials**

Students can benefit from audio recordings but there are both advantages and disadvantages of recorded materials. According to Kadagidze (2006), the advantages and disadvantages of recorded materials are listed below:

### **Advantages of Recorded Materials**

- i. Recorded materials enable a non- native English teacher to provide the audience with the variety of English sounds, voice and accents. The used material is authentic by means of language and situational context.
- ii. Distribution of recorded materials let the teacher or a student to work with them according to their desire in the way to stop, restart or repeat for several times (in terms of analyzing or imitating unfamiliar speech patterns)
- iii. A student can use them automatically anytime.
- iv. While listening to the recorded materials, students listen to several speakers, their discussions and conversations.

- v. Video-based listening practice suggests videotape advantages and additionally provides the variety of visual support (gestures, mimics) typical for real life and necessary for students to decipher speakers' message and interrelation.
- vi. The contents, spheres, themes and phonetic input of recorded materials more colorful compared to 'real-life' listening comprehension.
- vii. It is easier to choose and prepare listening activities beforehand with the help of recorded materials.

#### Disadvantages of Recorded materials

- i. There is no straight communication between the listener and the speaker. Thus, there is no way to regulate the speed, rhythm and other peculiarities of speech, to work out the compensating strategies (i.e. stating the message contents with the help of the partner) within students.
- ii. Audio and video materials are not always of a very good technical quality. This fact can make students rather confused and distract from productive and successful studying.

### **2.1.9 Criteria for the Selection of Listening Materials**

While selecting the listening materials (i.e. recorded materials), certain criteria are to be followed. Not all the types of materials available in the market may be suitable and appropriate for the students. Even within the same class, different types of materials may be used in accordance with the level of the students. Therefore, the teacher has to adopt certain criteria while selecting those materials. If possible and feasible, the teachers can prepare the materials themselves. In this context, Underwood (1989, pp.102-107) talks about following criteria:

- a. Language:** While selecting the materials, the language should be considered. The materials should have the purpose of teaching language. Similarly, the language of the material itself should be appropriate.
- b. Length:** The materials of appropriate length should be selected. Generally, too short and too long materials are not considered as good ones.



- c. **Content:** Not all the students can comprehend all sorts of texts. Generally, the students want to listen such types of texts, which are useful to them. Thus, the content of the materials is to be deemed while selecting them.
- d. **The use of Visual Support Materials:** If visual materials are used while teaching listening, teaching listening becomes effective. The visual materials like picture, chart, map, model, etc. are useful. Thus, whether the listening material has such support materials or not should be taken into account.
- e. **The Style of Delivery:** The style of the speech of the speakers in the listening text influences the listener's comprehension. Thus, the tone, stress, accent, etc. used in the materials should be appropriate in accordance with the learner's level.
- f. **The speed of Delivery:** Different people have different speed of speaking. The tempo of speech varies person to person. The speed of the materials is to be appropriate.
- g. **Spontaneity:** The speech of the materials should be spontaneous. Spontaneous speech is the real one and it is used in real- life situations, spontaneity should be considered while selecting listening materials.

Similarly, Reiser and Dick (1996) listed three major criteria for selecting recorded materials:

- I. Practicality:**  
Is the intended material practical, in that the material is available, cost efficient, time efficient and understood by the instructor?
- II. Student appropriateness:**  
Is the intended material appropriate for the developmental and experimental level of the students?
- III. Instructional appropriateness:**  
Is the intended material appropriate for the planned instructional strategy?

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

### **2.1.10 Listening Skill in Secondary Level English Curriculum**

In Nepal, listening to text in English was first introduced after NEP-2049. Before the implementation of NEP- 2049, language skills were not taught separately; they were taught integrated but new curriculum pointed out the objectives of each skills. The text books were prepared according to the objectives of the curriculum. The secondary level curriculum pointed out the following objectives of teaching listening:

- ) Show understanding of variety of authentic listening text,
- ) Listen to spoken text, understand the gist and retrieve specific information from it,
- ) Record in note or summary from the main points of spoken message,
- ) Respond appropriately to spoken directions or instructions.

(Source: Secondary Education Curriculum, 2057)

The textbooks of grade nine and ten are prepared by a team of English experts and experienced subject teachers based on the secondary level curriculum. Each unit of those books has a lot of exercises involving listening, speaking, reading and writing activities,. Those exercises are designed with an aim to provide the opportunity to the students to use the language in their day to day activities and improve their communicative competency in English. Listening in class Nine carries 15 marks in exam. Each unit of English consists of a listening exercise. Exercises are given in the book that students need to do by listening material. Listening materials are developed from Curriculum Development Centre. Recorded materials are developed in the form of dialogue, travelogue, discussion, description, conversation, news and so on. Listening materials are recorded in the voice of native speakers.

## **2.2 Review of Empirical Literature**

There are many researches carried out on “Recording Materials in Teaching English’ and related areas in international level but I didn’t find any research carried out on the topic of “Improving listening skill of secondary level students through the Recorded Audio Materials” in our context. So, I tried to study about the role of recorded audio materials for improving listening skill I in the context of Nepal. I have reviewed some

of the researches that are related to the title of my study. The reviewed studies are presented below.

Acharya (2001) carried out a research on “The Effectiveness of Recorded Materials and Live Materials in Testing Listening”. Its objective was to find out the effectiveness of recorded materials in testing listening. It was comparative study carried out in Kaski district on the students of grade four. It was an experimental research where controlled group was taught by using live materials, whereas experimental group was taught by using recorded materials. He found that there was no significant difference between the scores of both control and experimental group. There was almost the same result.

Similarly, Lamichhane (2004) in her study “Listening Comprehension of Grade IX students in Recorded Materials” aimed to find out the essentiality of recorded materials. She found that recorded materials are essential for building up listening skill and those students who are exposed to the authentic recorded materials can achieve better in developing listening skill. She concluded that the students of grade nine were found to be good in listening comprehension under recorded materials.

Likewise, Sapkota (2006) carried out study on “Effectiveness of live presentations and recorded materials in teaching listening comprehension”. The objective of the study was to find out effectiveness of live presentations and recorded materials in teaching listening comprehension. He conducted an experimental research at Janata Secondary School Surkhet with 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. He found out that live materials are effective for teaching listening comprehension than recorded materials.

Furthermore, Melese (2008) on her research entitled “An investigation of the Practice of teaching listening at Primary level: the case of two government schools in Addis Ababa” was conducted with the objective of investigating the practice of teaching listening. The methodology to carry out this study was survey research design. Three English language teachers and eighty students were the sample of this study. Data were collected using questionnaires, observation and content analysis. The findings revealed that teachers failed to implement fully the teaching of listening according to the procedures and techniques favored by the teachers’ book and scholars of ELT.

In the same way, Ukamaka (2014) conducted research on “Effect of Pre- recorded audio material on academic performance of secondary school students in English language listening skill”. It aimed to find out the effect of pre- recorded audio material on academic performance of secondary school students in English language listening skill in Sabon Local Government area of Kaduna State and to determine the difference in the academic performance of male and female students who received the listening skill training with the use of pre- recorded audio material. The methodology used to carry out this study was quasi- experimental design with post- test only. One hundred twenty students from thirteen government senior secondary schools of Kaduna State were the sample of this study. The instrument used for collecting the data was achievement test. The findings showed that the experimental group performed significantly better than the control group and this implied that pre- recorded audio material was found to be effective in improving the academic performance of the students.

Similarly, Bastola (2018) in his experimental research on “The Effectiveness of Recorded Materials in EFL Class” aimed to find out effectiveness of recorded materials in EFL classes to improve the listening skills as well as speaking skills of the students of secondary level and to explore the consequences of recorded materials in EFL classes. The methodology used to carry out this study was experimental research design. Four schools’ students of secondary level located in Biratnagar Municipality from government- aided and public- aided schools were selected by using simple random sampling and two classes (Grade nine and ten) of each school were observed. Open- ended and close- ended both questionnaires were the tools for data collection. The findings of this study were that it is very necessary to use the recorded materials in language class for the successful teaching and recorded materials are supportive in second language acquisition.

### **2.3 Implications of the Review for the Study**

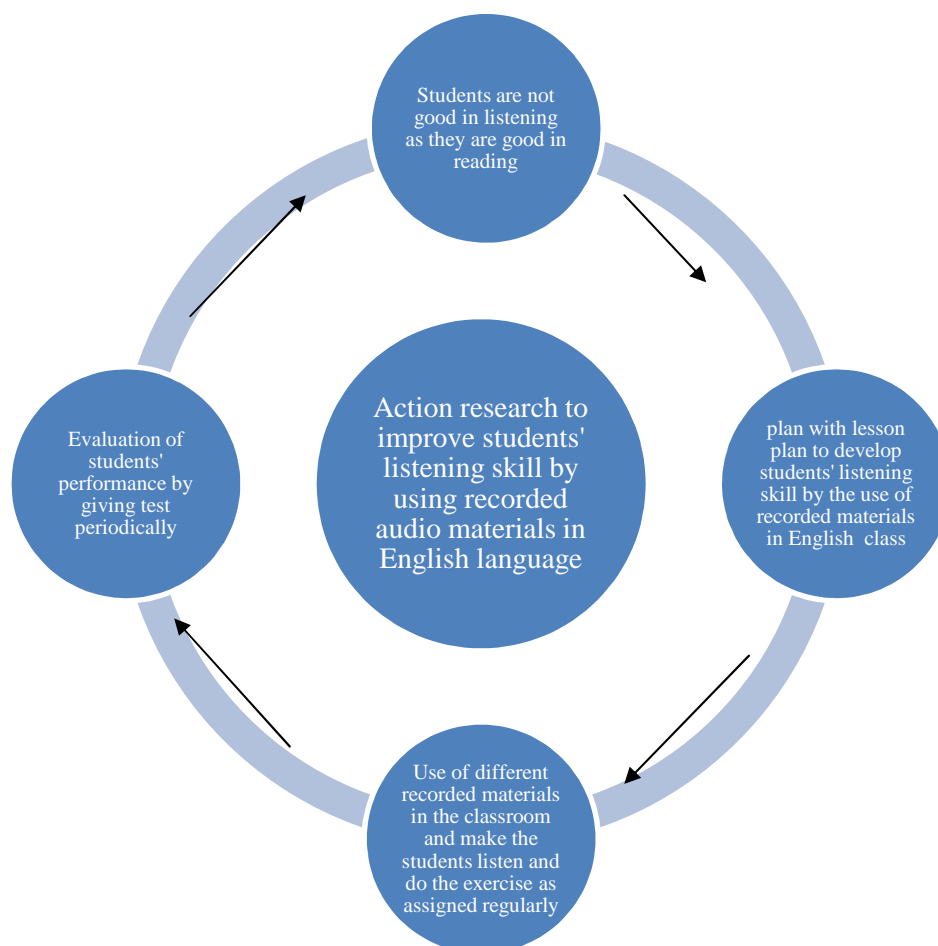
To accomplish the research proposal, I have reviewed both theoretical and empirical literature. The purpose behind the literature review was to get new ideas to conduct a research study. According to Kumar (2009, p.30) reviewing the literature is ‘rewarding’ in carrying out research. He further highlights on the importance of reviewing literature as:

- a. Bring clarity and focus to your research problem.
- b. Improve your methodology
- c. Broaden your knowledge base in your research and
- d. Contextualize your findings.

For this study, I reviewed six of the research works related to the topic. The reviewed empirical literatures directly and indirectly supported this study. The study of Acharya (2001), Lamichhane (2004) and Sapkota (2006) helped me to broaden my theoretical knowledge regarding recorded materials. Similarly, Melese (2008) helped me to know the challenges to be faced in the language classroom while using recorded materials. In the same way, Ukamaka (2014) assisted me by providing knowledge to use recorded materials in my language classroom. And finally, Bastola (2018) helped me to develop lesson plans for teaching in the classroom with the help of recorded materials. Likewise, other theoretical literatures were helpful to broaden my area of knowledge in the field of listening and recorded materials. Rost (1991) helped me to know the importance of listening in language learning. Similarly, Harmer (2001), broaden my theoretical knowledge regarding audio materials and their use in language classrooms. Likewise, Haines (1995) helped me to know the benefits of authentic materials. Last, but not the least, Underwood (1989) assisted me to select the audio materials based on some criteria.

## 2.4 Conceptual Framework

Conceptual Framework in my study explains the stages of my research. It is an action followed by some basic stages. This research is carried out on different phases as given below.



This action research is based on the problem that was faced during the classroom teaching, that the students' performance was not satisfactory in listening skill. I as a teacher came with the idea of improving listening skill with the help of recorded-materials. Recorded materials along with lesson plans were used in the classroom for certain duration. The performance of the students was evaluated with the help of test. In this way, this action research was carried out.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODS AND PROCEDURES OF THE STUDY**

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

Action research is one of those terms that we hear quite often in today's educational circles. The design of this research is Action Research that involved repeated cycles, each consisting of planning, acting, observing and reflecting. "Action research is centered on real problems, puzzles, or challenges teachers face in their daily work. It can therefore carry immediate benefits and tangible improvements to practice" (Nunan & Bailey, 2009, p. 249). Typically, action research is undertaken in a school setting. Often, action research is collaborative activity among colleagues searching for solutions to everyday real problems experienced in schools, or looking for ways to improve instruction and increase student achievement.

Action research, according to Richards, Platt and Platt (1992) is, "Teacher- initiated classroom research which seeks to increase the teachers' understanding of classroom teaching and learning and to bring about improvements in classroom practices". It typically involves small-scale investigate projects in the teachers' own classroom. Its goal is to solve a specific classroom or school problem, improve practice, or help make a decision at a single local site. According to Watts (1985, p. 118), action research is a process in which participants examine their own educational practice systematically and carefully, using the techniques of research. It is based on the following assumptions:

- ) Teachers and principals work best on problems they have identified for themselves
- ) Teachers and principals become more effective and are encouraged to examine and assess their own work and consider ways of working differently
- ) Teachers and principals help each other by working collaboratively in their professional development.

There are two types of action research, Practical action research and Participatory action research. I have chosen practical action research for my study. Its purpose is to find out the role of recorded materials to develop listening skill of secondary level

students. I chose Grade Nine students for my research. According to Susman, (1983), the action research consists of five phases as shown in the figure below, in which a problem is identified and a potential solution is planned and implemented to address the problem. Then the data on the result of the intervention is studied and evaluated to see how successful the plan has been. The problem is later reassessed and the cycle starts again and evolves until an adequate solution is found.

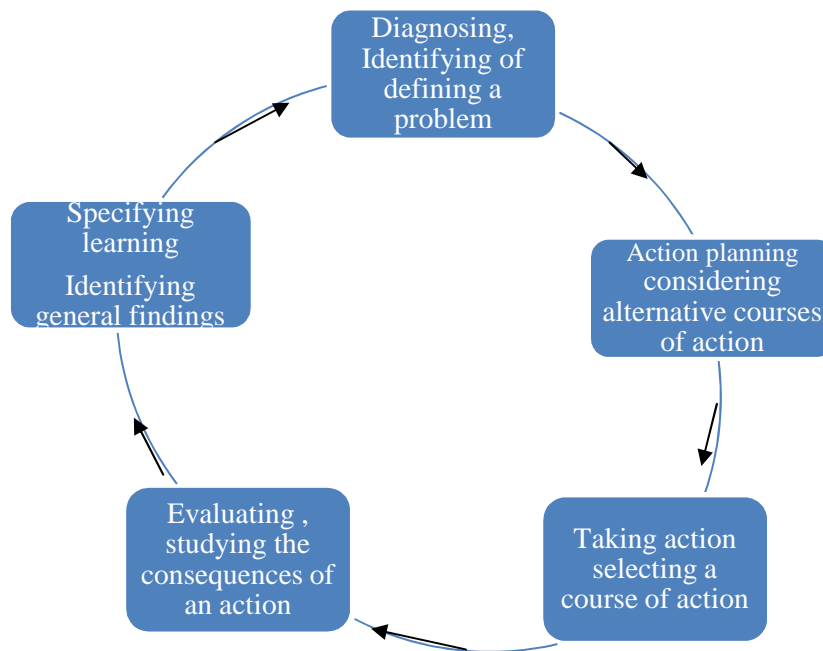


Figure:1 Susman's Action Research Model (1983)

### 3.2 Population, Sample and Sampling Strategy of the Study

All English language learners of Akhanda Vidya Sadan were the population of the study. Among them twenty students of Grade nine were the samples of the study. Purposive sampling method was used for choosing participating students for the action research.

### 3.3 Sources of Data

Both the primary and secondary sources of data were used to meet the objectives of the study.



### **3.3.1 Primary Sources**

Primary data was collected from the field using different tools and techniques of data collection. Primary source of data was concerned with the students only. Primary data was collected from different sorts of tests such as pre- test, progress- tests and post- test.

### **3.3.2 Secondary Sources**

Books written by various writers such as Rost (2000), Harmer (2003), Tomlinson (2012), Underwood (1989), Mills (2011) so forth. Articles and websites related to the research title, Journals and thesis approved from the Department of English Education were used as secondary sources of data.

### **3.4 Data Collection Tools**

I used test items as the tool of data collection to conduct this research. Objective questions were given to the students for pre-test, progress-test and post-test. Students were provided 15 questions and each question obtained 1 mark for evaluation. Questions were designed on the basis of Listening Test related subject of Class Nine. The test items included fill in the blanks, true false, very short questions, matching the right answers based on the listening exercise on their course book. Based on these criteria, I administered different pre-test, progress-test and post-test. Along with test items, I used lesson plan to teach in the classroom using recorded materials.

### **3.5 Data Collection Procedures**

I followed the stepwise methodological procedure of data collection in order to collect data. At first, I asked the authority for permission to carry out the research. Then, test items and lesson plans were prepared in advance. After getting the permission, I informed the students about the purpose of my study. After that, I administered pre-test to find out students' existing level of proficiency in listening skill before teaching/ facilitating them with recorded audio materials. The test was administered during the regular class of English. I provided time as per the length of recorded materials. I also administered progress-test in between the intervention period and post-test was administered at the end of my research.

I conducted action research based on Richards' and Lokhard (2010) four phases of action research in which I followed the different step- wise activities, which were as follows.

**a. Planning**

In this first step, students were motivated and prepared to take an action for pre-test. Simply, in the planning phase I informed the students about the nature of my study. In this phase, the students were motivated to take part in classroom teaching using recorded audio materials. Actually, it was the step of planning for an action. Action was based on teaching listening with recorded materials. All the required materials and instructions were collected and prepared in this first step.

**b. Action**

In this actual step of action, students were involved in listening activities. Students were made to listen to the recorded audio and do the given exercises. The recorded audio was in the form of dialogue, news reading, weather forecast, biography, face-to-face description, phone conversation. The students involved in problem solving activities based on the listening section of their textbook.

**c. Observing**

In this third phase of my action research, I observed and analyzed students' written performance of listening in order to find out how they performed, based on their listening skill. Moreover, I observed their listening through systematic process. I observed grammatical and spelling errors, pronunciation comprehension on their writing (based on their listening).

**d. Reflecting**

In this final phase, post-test results were analyzed and proper feedback was provided. Finally, students' performance was properly evaluated and their listening was analyzed and evaluated.

### **3.6 Data Analysis and Interpretation Procedure**

In this study, the data were analyzed and interpreted descriptively and statically. Mainly, I used holistic and categorical discussion to analyze and interpret the data. Furthermore, data were analyzed and interpreted in accordance to students' written performance in different tests results.

### **3.7 Ethical Considerations**

The researcher paid attention on different ethical considerations, while conducting the research. I took consent with respondents' guardians and I maintained confidentiality regarding the information of respondents' guardians during my study. In the same way, I did not use the data except for my study without permission of respondents' guardians. And I did not make manipulation in collected data. Likewise, I did not do any harm to informants while collecting data and analyse data objectively. Finally, I paid attention on accuracy, honesty, truthfulness of data in my research study.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS OF DATA**

#### **4.1 Analysis of Data and Interpretation of Results**

This chapter deals with the discussion of different tests, results and discussions of the collected data. Moreover, the main concern of the present research work was to examine how the listening skill can be improved through recorded audio materials. Furthermore, discussion and interpretation of the result based on the data is also content of this chapter.

During language teaching, I noticed my students not enjoying listening activities. They showed as if they were interested but in reality, they did not enjoy listening activities and tests. I was shocked to know they love listening songs and podcasts, watching movies of English language but they had problem on listening comprehension. The interest of my students to improve listening skill energized me to carry out this research.

After facing the problems of listening comprehension in secondary level students, I decided to find out the solution of my problem. the students of mine had problem in listening comprehension. It can be said as their listening skill was not satisfactory as other skills of language learning.

I planned the action as given below.

##### **4.1.1 Plan for Action**

When the problem is diagnosed, I realized that it is neither my teaching strategy nor the weakness of students but the poor teaching aids that have created problem in listening to the students. So, I decided to improve the listening skill of my students. Then, I started to search ideas to develop listening of my students on internet. I remembered how I improved my own listening skill. Then, I planned to help the learners to develop their listening skill by using recorded audio materials.

I selected Grade Nine among different classes to carry out an action research. I planned to administer pre-test to find out the actual level of listening comprehension

of my students. It was administered among the 20 students of Grade Nine. It was 1 minute 17 seconds (1:17) audio recording, which was developed by CDC for Grade Nine.

Before playing the audio, I distributed the hand- outs to the students. The students were asked to listen to the tape and answer the questions on the distributed handouts. Most scholars, in fact, recommend giving the questions before listening (Brindley,1998: Berne,1995). The test taking lasted for 20 minutes on average and it comprised two questions. The full mark of the pre-test was 15. Altogether, there were 15 problems to solve and each problem carried 1 mark. In the first, there were five sentences to find out true or false. In the second, there were 10 statements to fill in the gaps. (Appendix- IV). The listeners were exposed directly to the authentic recorded material to answer the questions. I prepared the learners psychologically for the listening activity, telling them that they will not be able to understand everything they hear. After finishing the test, I collected the students' written answers (handouts) for later analysis. In addition, they were asked about the difficulties they faced during listening.

The scores of the students' obtained in pre-test are as follows:

Table: 1 Students' Score in the Pre- test

S.N.	No. of the students	F. M.	O.M	Percent	Average Marks
1	2	15	4	26.66	6.15
2	5	15	5	33.33	
3	4	15	6	40	
4	6	15	7	46.66	
5	3	15	8	53.33	
Total	20	300	123	41%	

Table 1 shows the marks obtained by the students in the pre- test. S.N. in the table refers to the serial number. The total number of students was 20. Among 20, 2 students scored 4 (26.66%) marks out of 15. Similarly, 5 students obtained 5 (33.33%) marks. 4 students obtained 6 marks which is 40%. 7 marks (46.66%) was obtained by 6 students and remaining 3 students achieved 8 marks which 53.33 percent. The highest score was 8 (53.33%). The average score of the pre-test was 6.15. Only 9 students among 20, have scored above average score and other 11 students have scored below average score. The mark obtained by each student was unsatisfactory. Students' comprehension of target language was found to be poor.

#### **4.1.2 Action for Change**

Pre-test results showed that the performance of the students in listening was not satisfactory. After the pre-test, the students participated in the session of listening instruction conducted by the researcher for forty-five days. To find out the answer of research question 'How can the listening skills in English of secondary level students be enhanced?' regular treatment sessions with recorded materials were conducted following a specific plan. Each lesson plan constituted specific objectives, teaching aids and the phases of the listening (Appendix- IV for more details).

The intervention was followed by a listening comprehension summative test, which was conducted, on the same respondents, in order to find and compare their progress regarding listening to audio materials, before and after the training instruction. Hence, to find out the effectiveness of audio materials, i.e. whether they had a significant effect on learners' proficiency.

Regarding the lessons and materials, a variety of listening texts and topics were covered, audio recordings took different forms: a phone conversation, weather forecast, biography, map description, notice, face to face conversation, which were taken from the audio developed by CDC for Grade 9. During the intervention phase, I tried to use interesting and appropriate listening materials in terms of language and context. The length of the recording materials ranged from one to four minutes, depending on the length of the material and type of questions or activities done.

In intervention period, listening activities were divided into three main stages: pre listening, while listening and post listening stage.

First, the 'Pre listening stage', which acts as a warm up whereby the teacher aimed at activating the students: students, sometimes were asked questions related to the content of the recorded materials (Appendix- V) and sometimes they were made ready for the next phase (Appendix- IV). Each warming up phase lasted 5 to 10 minutes.

Second the 'While listening stage', in which the teacher supplied the participants with various assignments about the content of the listening passage. This phase took from 15 to 25 minutes. In this stage, the students were made to listen the recorded materials and solve the questions given on hand- outs while listening.

As far as the third stage 'Post listening Stage' is concerned, it allowed students and teacher to discuss the task done in While listening stage. The teacher and students corrected the answers together in this stage.

During the action phase, the students were given two progressive tests. The analysis of two progressive tests is presented below.

#### **4.1.2.1 Analysis of Progress –Tests**

During the intervention phase, two achievement tests were conducted. After the pre-test, I intervened and administered the first progress-test in the interval of fifteen classes and the second progress- test was conducted in the interval of fifteen classes after pre- test. I made my students practice listening by using various recorded audio materials. These tests were designed to measure learners' progress in relation to the method that had been followed to improve their listening skill. These two progress-tests were conducted to:

- Mainly, to measure or assess the learners' progress and improvement in the area of listening comprehension after exposure to recorded materials,
- Explore the problems faced by the students during such exposure to these type of materials,
- Check the effectiveness of implementation of recorded audio for developing listening skill.

#### 4.1.2.1.1 Analysis of First Progress- Test

After the Pre- test, I intervened and administered the first progress- test in the interval of fifteen classes. I taught listening by using various recorded audio materials. The listening text employed in this test was of one minute and fifteen seconds (1:15) audio material that belongs to class 9, unit 3 listening section. It is in the form of description about nutrition. The test procedure overall lasted for approximately 20 to 30 minutes. It consisted of 10 test items among which the first five were short questions and remaining five were making sensible sentences by choosing the correct options given (See Appendix- V for details). The following table shows the scores of the students of first progress test.

Table: 2 Students' Score in the First Progress- Test

S.N	No. of Students	Full Marks	Obtained Marks	Percentage	Average
1	1	15	4	26.66	8.2
2	1	15	6	40	
3	2	15	7	46.66	
4	7	15	8	53.33	
5	6	15	9	60	
6	3	15	10	66.66	
Total	20	300	164	54.66	

Table 2 clearly shows that the students obtained 164 (54.66%) out of 300 full marks. The average score was 8.2. It was found that the average score increased by 2.05 marks than that of pre- test. In this test, single student obtained 4 and 5 marks. Similarly, out of 20, 2 students got seven marks, 7 students achieved 8 marks, 6 students obtained 9 marks and remaining 3 students achieved 10 marks. The highest score was 10 (66.66%) which was obtained by 3 students and the lowest score was 4 which was obtained by a student. Two students scored below average marks and 18



students scored above average marks. In this test, most of the students improved their listening skill.

Outcome of Table 2 showed that the performance of the students in listening was improved after the use of audio-recorded materials for listening. In the pre-test, the average score of the students was 6.15 whereas in the first- progress test the average score was 8.2. In this test, most of the students improved their listening skill. So that it can be said that, the recorded audio materials help to enhance listening skill of the students.

#### **4.1.2.1.2 Analysis of the Second Progress- Test**

After the first progress- test, I intervened the students for 15 classes and after fifteen classes of intervention, the students were given second test to measure learners' progress in relation to the method used to develop their listening skill. Its main objective was to find out the effectiveness of recorded materials, that I used for developing students' listening skill. Listening text employed in this test was of 2 minutes (2:00) audio material, which belongs to unit 6 of class nine. It was in the form of conversation between two friends about reading books. The test in overall approximately took 25 to 30 minutes. The question paper consisted of two sorts of questions. The first five were to find out true or false statement and in the second, there were ten sentences to fill in the gaps in the form of dialogue (Appendix- VI for details). The following table shows the scores of the students of Second progress test.

Table: 3 Students' Score in the Second Progress- Test

S.N.	No. of Students	Full Marks	Obtain Marks	Percentage	Average
1	7	15	8	53.33	9.7
2	1	15	9	60	
3	4	15	10	66.66	
4	7	15	11	73.33	
5	1	15	12	80	
Total	20	300	194	64.66	

Table 3 depicts that the students obtained 194 (64.66%) out of 300 full marks. The average score was 9.7, which increased by 1.5 marks than that of first progressive test. In this test, 7 students obtained 8 (53.33%) marks, a student got 9 (60%) marks, 4 students achieved 10 (66.66%) marks, 7 students scored 11(73.33%) marks and remaining one student achieved 12(80%) marks. The highest score was 12 (80%) obtained by only one student and lowest score was 8 (53.33%), obtained by 7 students. 8 students scored marks below average and remaining 12 others students scored above average marks. Most of the students improved their listening in second progress test in comparison to pre- test and first progress test.

### **4.1.3 After the Action: Observation**

I found change in my students' listening comprehension after implementing the action for change. My students who were very reluctant to involve in listening activities and tests started enjoying them. Listening skill of my students is not perfectly developed as native speakers of English language. But they understand the texts and are able to solve the exercises of listening skill of their textbooks by listening the material once.

After the intervention for twenty- five lessons with recorded audio materials, the post-test was administered and the record was kept. The test items of the post- test were similar to the pre- test (Appendix –IV and VII for details). The marking scheme of the

post- test was also similar to pre- test. While marking the test items, grammatical correctness, spelling correctness were not put into consideration. The result of post- test is presented in the following table shows the level of their improvement.

Table: 4 Students' Score in the Post- test

S.N	No. of students	Full marks	Obtain marks	Percent	Average
1	7	15	10	66.66	11.7
2	1	15	11	73.33	
3	4	15	12	80	
4	7	15	13	86.66	
5	1	15	14	93.33	
Total	20	300	234	78%	

Table 4 clearly shows that the students scored 78% marks in this test. The students scored 234 marks out of 300 full marks. The average score was 11.7 marks. The average score increased by 2 marks than in second progress- test and 3.5 marks than in first progress- test. In this final test, out of 20 students 7 students obtained 10 marks (66.66%), a student scored 11 marks (73.33%), 4 students obtained 12 marks (80%). Similarly, 13 marks (86.66%) was obtained by 7 students and only a student achieved 14 marks. In this test the highest obtained mark was 14 (93.33%) which was secured by a student. The lowest score of this test was 10 (66.66%) which was obtained by 7 students. All the students scored above average score and no student scored below average score.

After analyzing the answer sheets of the students, it was found that due to the lack of practice of listening recorded audio materials in target language, the students obtained

low scores in pre- test. The aim of the pre- test was to know the students' existing proficiency in listening, whereas after intervention to the students they scored good marks in the progress -test and post -test.

Based on the above data, it can be said that, score in the post-test has increased when comparing it with those obtained in the pre-test. This simply indicates that exposure to audio materials helped students in enhancing their listening comprehension abilities. The role of recorded audio materials was found to be fruitful in developing listening skill of secondary level students. The overall progress of the post- test proved that the role recorded audio materials was worthy for developing listening skill of the students'. In post- test, all the students got better marks in comparison to pre- test scores.

#### **4.1.4 Holistic Analysis**

This sub- chapter deals with the results i. e, the marks obtained by the students in different test items (pre- test, progress- test and post-test). I administered pre- test and intervened students for four weeks. After involving students in listening activities, I also administered two progress- tests to check the students' progress in listening skill. At last, I administered the post- test, in which, I administered a test including objective question with 15 full marks. There were 15 questions, in which a question carried 1 mark.

The results of the students in the pre- test, progress- test and post- test have been discussed, analyzed and presented under different topics in the following way.

Table : 5 Holistic Analysis of test scores

Test	Pre- test	1 <sup>st</sup> Progress- Test	2 <sup>nd</sup> Progress Test	Post- test
Full marks	300	300	300	300
Obtained marks	123	164	194	234
Average marks	6.15	8.2	9.7	11.7
Average percent	41	54.66	64.66	78

Table 5 shows that the average score in the pre- test is 6.15 (41%). Similarly, in the first- progress test the average score is 8.2 (54.66%) and in the second – progress test the average score is 9.7 (64.66) and finally in the post- test the average score is 11.7 (78%). Comparatively the results show the progress of the students in different tests.

Based on the above results, we can say that recorded audio materials can be effective means to improve listening skill. It was also found that the students’ listening skill was enhanced when they involved in various listening activities. Thus, this research concludes that if students are taught by using recorded audio materials; their listening skill can be improved.

Comparing the answer sheets of the students in four different test items, following results have been derived.

- a. The average score in pre- test was 6.15 (41%), in the first progress test, the average score was 8.2 (54.66%) and similarly, in the second progress test, the average score was 9.7 (64.66%) and lastly in the post- test the average score was 11.7 (78%).
- b. Based on the pre- test results, the students’ performance on listening was found poor. The students scored 123 marks out of 300 full marks in pre- test. Three students got the highest score in pre- test (8, 55.33%). Two students (obtained the lowest mark (4, 26.66%).

- c. Out of 20 students, 9 students scored above average score and 11 students scored below average score in the pre- test.
- d. In the first progress- test, the students scored 164 (54.66%) out of 300 full marks. Similarly, in this test, the students average score was 8.2 which increased by 13.66% than that of pre- test. In the pre- test, the students were found poor in comprehension of target language.
- e. Likewise in the second progress test, the students scored 194 (64.66%) out of 300 full marks. The highest mark was 12 (80%) and the lowest score was 8 (53.33%) where only a student scored the highest mark and seven students got the lowest score. The average score was 9.7 (64.66%) in the second progress- test.
- f. Finally, the post- test was conducted and record was kept. The test items were similar to the pre- test. The total secured mark was 234 out of 300. The highest mark was 14 (93.33%) which was obtained by only a student. The lowest score was 10 (66.66%), which was obtained by 7 students. The average score of post- test was 11.7(78%) which increased by 37% in comparison to the pre- test.
- g. The post- test results showed the improvement of students in listening skill and they gained optimum level of proficiency in comparison to pre- test.

From the above-mentioned result, we can say that students' listening skill can be improved when recorded- audio materials are used in the classroom in collaboration with textbooks. Thus, this research study concludes that if recorded audio materials are used in the classroom in teaching listening, the listening skill of the students can be improved. So that. Recorded audio- materials play positive role in developing listening skill of the secondary level students.

#### **4.1.5 Reflection: Lesson Learnt**

A teacher starts thinking that there can be something wrong either with his/her strategies of teaching or with students' interest when the students cannot perform well. However, the poor listening skill of the students might create problems in language learning. Developing listening skill before involving students in listening activities is quite important and useful for both teachers and students. To develop listening skill of the secondary level students, recorded audio materials are quite

fruitful. With the use of recorded audio materials, students get access to the wide range of listening materials with correct pronunciation and accent of the target language. If the students are made to practice listening by using recorded materials, their listening skill can be developed.

## **4.2 Improvement of the Students' Error**

Teaching and testing go side by side. After teaching the students using audio materials the students were given tests to find out the effectiveness of audio materials.

The students faced problems in listening and committed errors. In particular, the speed of speech, difficult grammatical structures were the problems for the students. Similarly, it was not always possible for learners to have words repeated. This was the major problem in learning situation. Likewise, students' limited vocabulary impeded listening comprehension. When the learners encountered new words, they stopped to figure out the meaning of that word and they therefore, missed the next part of speech.

Increased loudness, or a clear change of pitch, tone were very ambiguous for the learners. In the same way, it was very challenging for listeners to concentrate in a foreign language. However, students sometimes, felt that listening was very challenging even when they were interested in the topic because that requires a lot of effort to figure out the meaning intended by the speaker. Comprehension problems also arose when students lacked contextual meaning.

Due to the problems mentioned above, the students frequently committed mistakes and errors, which are shown in the table below.

Table: 6 Examples of Errors found in students' written performance

S.N	Errors related to	Examples
1	Incomplete	Cine hall and
2	Spelling	inressed instead of increased
3	Tense	Occupy instead of occupied
4	Pronunciation	a) get any instead of get enough b) Cinema hall instead of Cine Hall c) Otherwise instead of other ways

As the above-mentioned results and discussions are concerned, the level of students' learning achievement was not so high and satisfactory. By this, it seemed the need of adequate improvement in the students' level of learning achievement.

Firstly, as a researcher I provided them sufficient amount of the exposure of both time and target language. They were made to listen audio materials in the classroom and I encouraged them to listen to the news, songs, programs, podcasts of target language in their leisure time.

Secondly, I helped them in grammar and encourage them to develop vocabulary. Sometimes, I provided them listening script while listening, which helped them to find out how the words are pronounced. Similarly, I made them listen to the stories, travelogue, and the audio of commentaries in the classroom so that they could concentrate on audio with interest.

Finally, after the enough practice and exposure to the listening materials the performance of the students found to be improved. However, due to the students variation in learning style, enthusiasm the errors were not completely improved.

Therefore, from the above discussion, it was proved that the listening skill can be developed with the use of recorded audio materials. When students are involved in listening activities along with recorded audio materials, their performance can be improved.



## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter of the research study incorporates the findings, conclusion and recommendations of the study. The findings are drawn based on the detailed analysis and interpretation of the collected data. The study has recommended the necessary suggestions based on the findings drawn. For the convenience of the presentations the findings, conclusions and recommendations have been presented in three different sub- headings below.

#### **5.1 Findings**

After analyzing and interpreting the collected data from my classroom, the following findings are derived.

- ) The average score (11.7) and percent (78%) of post-test were higher than that of the pre-test (6.15 and 41%). Based on this analysis, it can be said that the recorded materials play significant role in developing listening skill.
- ) From the analysis of the first and second progressive-test results, it was found that the average score and percent of these two tests were higher than that of pre-test where average score and percent of first and second progressive test were 8.2, 54.66% and 9.7, 64.66 % respectively and average score and percentage of pre-test were 7.05,56.33%. It shows that recording materials are effective in developing listening skill.
- ) From the second progressive test and post- test, it was found that students' average score and percent on the post- test were higher than that of the second progressive test. In which average score and percentage of the second progressive test and post-test were 9.7, 64.66% and 11.7, 78% respectively. It also proves the positive role of recorded materials in developing listening skill of secondary level students.
- ) The students tried to solve the problems in listening test through the facilitation of the recorded materials.
- ) The progress of the students continued in listening skill encouraged the teacher to use the recorded materials to develop the listening skill of the students.

In conclusion, all the test results thus made it obvious that the recorded materials were fruitful and effective in developing listening skill of the secondary level students.

## **5.2 Conclusions**

The main purpose of this research study was to explore the role of recorded materials in developing listening skill. To carry out the research, I selected 20 students from class nine and after that; I administered pre- test, progress- test and post- test for data collection and findings of the study to derive the result.

Based on discussions and findings in the previous sub- heading, it can be concluded that the recorded audio had played positive role for developing listening skill of the secondary level students.

It is no doubt that teachings listening with the recorded audio materials arouse the interest on the learners. I must say that recorded materials were supportive in foreign language learning. The role of recorded materials was found positive in the research. From this what can be said is that it is very necessary to use the recorded materials in language class for the successful teaching. The listening ability of the sample students was found to be improved due to the use of recorded materials. The numerical and descriptive analysis of the collected data helped me to conclude that the use of recorded materials improves the students' listening skill.

From the above results we can say that, recorded materials have better impact for developing listening skill. It was found that the students' listening was enhanced when the students practiced listening with recorded materials. Thus, this research concludes that if teacher uses various recorded materials to teach listening to the students, it can play positive role and can bring change in listening skill.

## **5.3 Recommendations**

Based on the revelations of my study, I would like to suggest the following in the policy level, practice level and further research level.

### **5.3.1 Policy Related**

This study has some implication at the policy level. Some of the implications are mentioned below.

- a. Audio materials should be taken as an important part of overall language learning. So that school administration should motivate English language teachers to use recorded materials in teaching learning activities.
- b. English language teachers should encourage the students learning by using audio materials. It is useful to develop the pronunciation, confidence and listening comprehension of the students.
- c. The practical assessment of English listening skill should vertically expand up to Grade 12 so that the testing system can effectively and efficiently be assessed the real performance of the students.
- d. It is recommended to the school administration, CDC and MoE to develop and make available the cassette and other supplementary materials to the every school.

### **5.3.2 Practice Related**

Practice level is the implementation level of policy. Teachers, school administration and other educational practitioners should be serious towards the use of teaching materials in English language classroom. Some recommendations for this level are stated as below.

- a. Teacher should give equal importance to listening as other aspects of learning. It is because all the four skills are equally important in language learning.
- b. Listening skill training using pre- recorded materials should be encouraged in teaching and learning of English language in secondary schools.
- c. It is recommended that audio packages should be provided in schools for teaching and learning of English language in secondary schools.
- d. Language laboratory should be built and equipped adequately to facilitate the learning of language skills especially listening skill.
- e. There is a need to organize workshop for English language teachers to update them on how to teach and train the students on topics like listening skill.
- f. Parents should encourage their children to listen to the audios, podcasts and radio programmes recorded in English language.

- g. To solve the problems of students related to the learning of the English listening, it is recommended to the teachers to use the recorded version (cassettes and players) instead of teachers' voice to make students habituated with not only the segmental aspect but also the supra-segmental features of the language. For this, it is recommended to the school administration, CDC and the MOE to make available the cassette and other supplementary materials to the schools.

### **5.3.3 Further Research Related**

My research study is limited to the role of recorded materials. It has many constraints. It has limited sample and is a short study. therefore, I would like to recommend the following further research studies in this area;

- ) A longitudinal study can be conducted to find out the practice of recorded materials in different levels.
- ) A large-scale action research can be carried out to find out how recorded materials help in developing listening skill.
- ) The same study can be carried out to find out the role of recorded materials for developing other language skills such as reading, writing and speaking.
- ) The same study can be carried out in public schools or compare the performance of students in private and public schools.

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## **Improving Listening Skill of Secondary Level Students through the Recorded Audio Materials**

### **PARTICIPANTS INFORMATION STATEMENT**

#### **1. What is the study about?**

This research entitled “Improving Listening Skill of Secondary Level Students through the Recorded Audio Materials” aims to explore the role and effectiveness of recorded materials to develop listening skill in secondary level students. In addition, there is no any action research to find out the relationship between recorded materials and development of listening skill. So that this study is an attempt to find out the role of recorded materials for developing listening skill of the learners of grade nine. You are invited to participate in this study because I am interested to explore the role of Recorded Materials in developing listening skill. Your responses will be beneficial to achieve my objective.

This Participant Information Statement tells about the research study. Knowing what is involved will help you to decide if you meant to take part in the research. I request you to read this sheet carefully and ask questions about anything that you do not understand or want to know more about the study. Participant in this research study is voluntary. It is your choice to take part in this research study or not.

You will be given a copy of this Participant Information Statement to keep.

#### **2. Who is carrying out the study?**

The study is being carried out by SaritaSapkota, as the basis for the Master Degree Of English Education at the University Central Department of English Education, T.U.,Kirtipur. This study will take place under the Supervision of Dr. Gopal Prasad Pandey, Reader and Head of Department of English Education.

**3. What will the study involve for me?**

This study involves regular class along with pre-test, progress test and post-test for the students of class nine for at least 45 days. It will be based on the textbook of class nine. The aim of the test will be to examine the listening skill enhanced by the use of recorded materials.

**4. How much of my time will study take?**

It will take the period of 7 weeks (minimum). The test will be taken periodically.

**5. Are there any risks on costs associated with being in the study?**

Aside from investing your time, there will not be any risks or cost associated with taking part in this study.

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

This study will be beneficial to you to know the role of Recorded Materials to develop listening skill in English language. The findings of the study will help you to suggest in the use of recorded materials.

**7. What if you 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 SaritaSapkota, the researcher (sapkotasaru13@ gmail.com).

**Appendix- I**  
**Model Lesson Plan-1**

Class: Nine

Date:

Subject: English

Time:

Unit: 9

Teaching Item: Listening

1. Specific Objectives: At the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- listen and scan information to write true or false.
- listen and scan information to complete the sentences.

2. Teaching learning materials: Audio- players, handouts

3. Teaching learning activities:

*A. Pre- listening activities:*

Before playing the audio, the teacher will teach how to find out direction and also make the students describe the direction in the map at page number 103 of the textbook. After the discussion the teacher will distribute work-sheets to the students.

*B. While listening activities:*

Students will be asked to listen to the recorded material and answer the questions below.

1. Listen to the audio material and write True for true statements and False for false ones. (5)

- a. Hasina wants to buy some souvenirs.
- b. Hasina prefers a gift store.
- c. The supermarket is opposite the park.
- d. There is the Cine Hall on the King's Way.
- e. The police officer talks about Hospital Road.

2. Listen to the audio and complete the dialogue.

A: Excuse me. Where can I buy some.....?

B: In a ..... or in the..... .

A: I prefer the ..... Where is it?

B: Well, go straight along the University Road. After you reach ....., turn right. Go straight until you get to ..... Then, turn left.

A: Is the market there?

B: No, it is not. Go straight; pass the ..... on your right.

A: Is it the place?

B: It is near. Go straight for a while. The market is ..... the park on your .....  
Did you understand?

A: Yes, I think. Thanks.

B: You are welcome.

*C. Post- listening activity: Discussion*

The teacher will play audio, discuss the answers of the questions done by the students, and tell the students to check their work by playing the audio as per need.

4. Evaluation

Teacher will request students to describe the direction at page no 110 of the textbook.

**Appendix- II**  
**Model Lesson Plan-2**

Class: Nine

Date:

Subject: English

Time:

Unit: 3

Teaching Item: Listening

1. Specific Objectives: At the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- listen and scan information to answer the given questions.
- listen and scan information to match the correct alternates.

2. Teaching learning materials: Audio- players, handouts

3. Teaching learning activities:

*A. Pre- listening activities:*

Before playing the audio, the teacher will ask the students if they have heard about WHO. After the discussion the teacher will distribute work- sheets to the students.

*B. While listening activities:*

Students will be engaged in listening the audio and solve the following questions.

1. Listen to the audio and answer the following questions. (5)

- a. What is called the cornerstone of good health?
- b. How is the energy we get from food measured?
- c. Why does our body need calories?
- d. How many calories does an average person require every day?
- e. Name any three factors that our caloric intake should be based on?

2. Listen and match the information in the table below. (5)

i. Poor nutrition ii. Good nutrition iii. Good nutrition and regular physical activity iv. Men generally v. Fresh fruits and vegetables	lead to leads to works as need	a cornerstone of health. reduced immunity. balanced nutrition. increased productivity. more calories than women.
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*C. Post- listening activity: Discussion*

The teacher will play audio, discuss the answers of the questions done by the students, and tell the students to check their work by playing the audio as per need.

5. Evaluation

Teacher will request students to develop the points into a paragraph under the topic “Good Nutrition for Good Health”.

**Appendix- III**  
**Model Lesson Plan-3**

Class: Nine

Date:

Subject: English

Time:

Unit:

Teaching Item: Listening

1. Specific Objectives: At the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- listen and scan information to find out true and false statements.
- listen and scan information to fill in the blanks.

2. Teaching learning materials: Audio- players, handouts

3. Teaching learning activities:

*A. Pre- listening activities:*

Before playing the audio, the teacher will ask the students about their hobbies. A.

*While listening activities:*

Students will be engaged in listening the audio and solve the following questions.

1. Listen to the audio and state whether the following statements are true or false. (5)
  - a. Binod likes reading books.
  - b. Pema hates reading books.
  - c. Binod is healthy.
  - d. Binod will try to play games.
  - e. Pema finds Binod always reading books.

2. Listen to the audio and fill in the missing words in the dialogue below. (10)

Pema: Binod, I always find you reading books.

Binod: I like .....books, .....

Pema: Don't you like playing games?

Binod: If I play games, I don't .....time to read.

Pema: You should play for sometimes. If you are always .....with books, your mind becomes.....Games refresh your mind.

Binod: We can .....our minds in other ways too.

Pema: Yes, it can be done in .....too, but games improve your health.

Binod: My health is good. I don't have to play games.



Pema: Your health may be good now, but games are necessary to .....it.

Binod: Then I'll try to play some.....

Pema: Please, .....it.

*C. Post- listening activity: Discussion*

The teacher will play audio, discuss the answers of the questions done by the students, and tell the students to check their work by playing the audio as per need.

6. Evaluation

Teacher will make students write an essay about "My hobbies".