

CHAPTER ONE: Introduction

This chapter consists of background of the study, research questions and objectives of the study, significance, delimitations, limitations, and operational definition of terms. Each of the subtopic was presented in its sequential order. Ideas in each paragraph under these subtopics were discussed in their coherency. Related ideas adopted from different sources were acknowledged in their respective position.

1.1. Background of the study

The history of listening skills assessment traced back to the development of two current language teaching and assessing approaches that appeared during the second half of the twentieth century, the audio-lingual and the communicative approaches. Until 1950s and 1960s, language teaching, learning, and assessment were limited to grammar, reading and literacy. But from 1970s, instructional programs expanded their focus on teaching and assessing pragmatic skills to include listening and other skills in English as a foreign language (Osada, 2004).

Based on this, Combe (2007) described three approaches to listening skills assessment. The first was developed during the 1950s as the audio-lingual method that came into existence. Accordingly, in this approach, listening skill was broken down into separated elements (intensive, extensive, responsive, and selective) to be assessed. The rationale for broken down listening skill into separate elements was come from the belief that it was important to easily assess one listening skill at a time and to identify the need for improvement of the students on the gap. The second approach, called the integrative approach, came into existence in the 1970s. Combe(2007), argue that listening assessment tasks in this approach implemented to assess the learner's capacity to use elements of the language at the same time. That is with the assumption of the whole of listening skills was seen as being greater than the sum of its elements. The last approach to listening assessment, as proposed by Buck (2001)and described by Coombe (2007), was found within the communicative approach to language teaching developed during the 1970s when the status of listening comprehension began to change from being incidental and peripheral to a status of central importance. According to this approach, the listener must be able to comprehend the message and then use it in context. However, these changes in listening assessment in the past decades have led to serious dilemmas for teachers and researchers, and

evidences show that not listening skill assessment rather teaching listening skill itself has been neglected in many English programs (Mena, 2015).

Practicing listening skill assessment in the listening classroom helps the EFL teachers to investigate the challenges that hinder its implementation and to maintain self-confidence on their classroom tasks or activities regarding listening skills assessment (Kalantri, 2002). In fact, listening is a complex mental process that involves: perception, attention, cognition, and memory. In addition, researches into listening over the past three decades have emerged that listening process needs to integrate phonetic, phonological, prosodic, lexical, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic information to comprehend a spoken messages (Murcia, 1995). Consequently, the awareness of the congruency of teachers' perception and their practices on listening skills assessment may better help them to put the listening skills assessment training they received at college into classroom practice (Rost, 2002).

However, there is often a difference between what teachers should do in terms of listening skill assessment and what is being practiced in the language classroom (Mena, 2015). Accordingly, these contradictions were found with most EFL teachers, particularly when they design assessment tasks. For instance, in language assessment theory when designing multiple-choice tasks to assess listening skills, it was suggested that the items include two distractors and one correct answer (Brown, 2004), whereas the EFL teachers in the study area (Toba secondary school) adopted multiple-choice tasks with items of three/four distractors and one correct answer that contradicted with the language assessment theory.

Suggestions from different researchers on listening skill (especially, in the twenty first century), indicate that listening skill was considered as important part of many course books or curriculum, but still teachers do not give enough attention to teach and assess this skill while designing their lesson for EFL classroom (Hamouda, 2013). It was usually less motivation to assess listening skills, and mostly neglected in our language classroom (Bress, 2006). Accordingly, the neglect was not because of we do not recognized the importance of assessing listening skill assessment, but due to be perceived it as learners automatically acquire listening skill without getting any training. Hence, for many years, teachers' perception on assessing listening skill occupied the lowest part in the practical language teaching (Nunan, 2002). In addition, the assessment of listening skill was perceived by teachers as a tiring process, especially in EFL classrooms (Nowrouzi, 2015).

In contrast, from all EFL skills assessment, listening skill assessment must be the most implemented one in the EFL classroom. In using EFL for academic media of instruction the more learners listens to understand it, the more they feel confident on the language and able to understand the academic contents thought through the language (Bress, 2006). In addition, assessing listening skills in the EFL classrooms should be considered as one important component of improving the learners' skill on the language. However, most teachers perceived listening skill as can be developed naturally within the process of language learning, without assessing and improving it. According to Persulesy (1998:50), one of the reasons for teachers' perception that listening skill assessment in EFL classroom tends to be neglected was the feeling that this skill was automatically acquired by the learner as he/she learns to speak the language.

Teachers' perceived assessing listening skill as to test listening skill. But testing and assessing of listening skills are very different in their context (Glisan, 1985). Assessing listening skill is the process in which we identify our learners' listening skill gap and fill that gap, document their improvement, know the assessment tools we used measure what we intend them to measure, and determine how we are doing it right (Frank, 2012). On the other hand, testing listening skill is one of the tools that used to checkup weather the expected objectives on specific listening skill topics achieved or not. As a result, the assessment of listening skills was overlooked by listening skill test; and remains the most neglected and the least understood aspect of language assessment. Even, in texts that have more pedagogic purpose, the tendency is to look at achievement of listening test as achievement of listening assessment, and progress tests to inform lesson development. Thus, despite the usefulness of much of the practical guidance in texts for teachers, the difference between the classrooms listening skills test and listening skills assessment is not taken into consideration, rather leading them to considerable confusion (Devidson, 2007: 24).

Studies conducted on listening skills in the field of second and foreign language learning revealed that, assessing listening skill is one of the most difficult task for EFL teachers (Goh, 2000; Guo & Wills, 2006). Because of the overemphasis on grammar, reading and vocabulary, learners who learn English as a foreign language have serious challenges in listening comprehension; students find some features of listening comprehension easier than others (Ur, 2007). In that sense, some of the main difficulties that EFL teachers face while assessing listening were: students' ability to identify listening sounds, to understand intonation, stress, colloquial vocabulary, fatigue, and different accents, using visual and aural environmental clues (Ur, 2007, p. 11-20). Underwood (1989) lists the common challenges that EFL teachers

experience while assessing listening skills; the listeners did not able to repeat words and vocabulary, and failing to follow signals like transitions; they have lack of contextual knowledge, being able to concentrate, and habits like trying to understand every word in what they hear.

1.2. Statement of the problem

Assessment is continuous process of identifying the learners' understanding gap on what they have learned using different tools, and try to improve the gap through applying possible teaching method. Similarly, assessment of listening skill is the process of identifying the listeners' listening skill gap and using different possible techniques to improve their listening skill. Assessing listening skill assessment in EFL classroom enables the EFL teacher to identify the level of listening skills of the students, make students better competent in listening skills, activate their learning in listening comprehension and properly assess their improvement on their listening skills (Chen, 2010). In addition, assessing the assessment of listening skills regarding perception, practice, and challenges is highly necessary to improve the learners' listening skills; the learner may not achieve the required objectives of the other EFL skills without listening comprehension that improved through listening assessment (Hamouda, 2013).

The researcher experienced that EFL listening skills instruction in Gumay secondary schools has not been followed by assessment compared to that of other skills in the language. For example, teaching and assessment practice is always emphasized more to reading and writing skills than learner's listening skills. The students were passive listeners and most of them do not comprehend the EFL listening skills taught in the class rooms. In addition, listening comprehension has been regarded as one of the most difficult skill, time consuming process for most of the teachers to teach and for the students to learn in the secondary schools. This study, therefore, was attempted to fill this gap by focusing on teachers' perceptions, their practice, and challenges they face in implementing listening skills assessment in EFL classrooms at focused secondary schools under the study.

Although some researchers has provided important new insights into assessing listening skills assessment, few studies investigate on perception and practice of EFL teachers on listening skills assessment, and the possible challenges they face to conduct it in the listening classrooms (Graham, 2017). A number of studies have been conducted on assessing listening skills assessment. For instance, from recent studies, Hamouda (2013); *An investigation on listening skills difficulties*, Sulaiman(2017); *students' perception on using listening skill assessment*

methods, Walters(2014); *Teachers' perspective on listening skill assessment*, Selamawit (2019); *teachers' beliefs and practices of teaching listening*, and so on. But what makes this study differs from these studies was that the variables: teachers' perception, their practice, and challenges they may to conduct listening skills assessment were studied in an integrated form where as these previous studies tried to investigate listening assessment regarding these variables separately. Hence, the researcher hopes that there still remains necessity of investigating assessment of listening skills regarding the variables perception, practice, and challenges.

1.3. Research Questions

1. How do EFL teachers actually perceive listening skills assessment in English as a foreign language classes?
2. To what extent do EFL teachers practice or use listening skills assessment in English as foreign language classes?
3. What are the challenges EFL teachers may face to implement listening skills assessment in English classroom?

1.4. Objectives of the study

1.4.1. General objective:

The overall objective of this study is to investigate teachers' perception and practice of assessing listening skill assessment, and challenges they face in EFL classrooms at secondary schools in west Jimma zone.

1.4.2. The Specific Objectives of the Study were to:

- examine EFL teachers' perception of listening skills assessment in English language classrooms.
- find out the extent to which EFL teachers practice listening skills assessment in English language classrooms.
- identify the challenges teachers may face in implementing the listening skills assessment.

1.5. Significance of the study

This study enables the EFL teacher to give more attention to listening skills assessment in teaching EFL classrooms in several ways. Particularly; first, it helps EFL teachers to improve their perception towards listening skills assessment in line with assessing the other skills of EFL. Second, it enables the teachers to remind and ask themselves to what extent they have

implementing listening skills assessment in EFL classrooms. Third, it motivate EFL teachers to examine to what extent they have practicing listening skills assessment in English as foreign language classrooms. Fourthly, it helps the EFL teachers to evaluate the tasks and listening activities they used to assess the listening skills of their students, and the effectiveness of the approach they follow to teach listening skills. Fifth, it indicates the EFL teachers to identify what challenges they may face in implementing listening skills assessment while they teach listening skills in EFL classrooms, and it enables them to prepare possible solution for the challenges before they encounter. In addition, it can serve as an input or a source for the next research will be conducted on the title.

1.6. Delimitation of the study

This study is focused on investigating EFL teachers' perception, practice, and challenges they may face in assessing listening skills. The main issue of the study is assessing the assessment of listening skills at secondary schools. The variables of the study are teachers' perception and practice, and the challenges they encounter when implementing the listening skills assessment. Geographically, the study was conducted in four woredas in west Jima zone. Specifically, ten secondary schools (namely; Toba, Chando, Yachi, Adusigimo, Setema, Agaro, Jida, Beshasha, Gembe, and Limushay) were focused. The teachers who have been teaching EFL from grade nine to twelve have participated in responding to the instruments for the research. The study was conducted in 2020/21 academic year.

1.7. Limitations on the study

This research was constrained by different factors that hinder it to be more achievable than expected. First, the research was bounded to only one direction, secondary schools in west Jimma zone. Total (122) of the EFL teachers were involved to insure the representativeness of the target population. COVID-19 was the other constraint to get the participants at their school during the time of collecting questionnaire and conducting interview. Hence, using phone and home to home contact was the only way to get them. Secondly, the source of data was limited to EFL teachers; students does not involved to more investigate about the dependent variable (listening skills assessment) and the independent variables (perception, practice, and challenges) due to limited scope of the study. Thirdly, the data collected may have its own limitation due to the awareness of the participants on the items developed in the questionnaires and the less attention/carelessness/ given to them while rating the scales. So, practical classroom observation and interview were conducted to triangulate the result and generalize the findings of the study.

There may be limitations from the researcher side on analyzing and giving interpretations to the collected data due to have no enough experience on conducting such a detail thesis previously; and this can be managed more by researchers in the future study on the issue.

1.8. Operational definitions of terms

Perception: an act of being aware of one's environment or event through physical sensation, which denotes an individual's ability to understand.

Practice: regular implementation of activities or tasks in action rather than in idea to achieve predetermined objectives

Challenges: A new or difficult task or situation that hinder the implementation of designed activities

Listening skills assessment: the process of assessing and improving the ability of the listener to recognize and understand what others are telling.

West Jimma: the geographical location which covers the west direction of Jimma zone; it includes Goma, Gumay, Setema, and Sigimo woredas.

1.9. Organization of the study

This research paper is organized by five chapters. The first chapter incorporates the introductory part of the study which consists of background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, significance, delimitation, limitation, and operational definition of terms. The second chapter deals with review of related literatures and consists of subtopics that are more focused with ideas and possible suggestions related with, supports the topic/problem under the study as a source or evidence, and showing the track of arriving on the targeted objectives of the study. Specifically, it focused on: meaning of listening skills and listening skills assessment, the importance of listening skills assessment, practical implementation of listening skills assessment, the impact of teachers' perception on listening skills assessment, possible challenges on listening assessment, and the integration of teaching, learning, and assessing of listening skills. The third chapter discussed about research design and methodology in details. The fourth chapter is about data presentation, analysis, and interpretation while the last chapter deals about summary, conclusions and recommendations of the research findings. Additionally, references used in the document, and appendix which includes questionnaire, semi structured interview, and observation checklist are attached at the back of the document.

CHAPTER TWO: Review of Related Literatures

2.1. Concept of Listening Skill

Listening involves understanding a speaker's accent or pronunciation, his/her grammar and vocabulary, and grasping the meaning. Listening is a complex processes of interpretation in which listeners match what they hear with what they already know (Rost, 2002). Listening is the ability to identify and understand what is said by others. This ability involves understanding a speaker's accent or pronunciation, the grammar and vocabulary, and comprehension of the meaning or message. Good listener is capable of doing these four things at the same time (Thomlison, 1984). Listening in a classroom is an active process in which students' listening competence can be extended by giving them oral tasks to carry out (Kupper, 1989). Accordingly, what makes listening is an active process is that, listeners focus on selected aspects of the aural input and construct meaning by relating what they hear to their prior knowledge. Therefore, EFL listening skills are the ability and improved experience of the listener that cover the process of receiving what the speaker says, making and showing meanings or message, negotiate on the meaning and message with the speaker and answering, and creating meaning by participation through creating ideas of interactions.

Based on the aural input, listening skill can be categorized in to two types: general and academic listening skill (Coombe, 2007). Accordingly, the general listening includes the ability of: clustering the aural input, recognizing redundancy, comprehending reduced forms, avoiding hesitations, identifying false starts and corrections, understanding colloquial language, processing prosodic features, and understanding and using rules of conversational interaction. Academic listening, on the other hand, includes identifying the purpose and scope of a listening lesson, the topic, and its logical development, understanding the relationship among discourse units (main versus supporting details), recognizing lexical terms related to the topic, recognizing markers of cohesion (eg. first, next, in conclusion, etc.) and intonation in a lecture, detecting the speaker's attitude towards the subject, and recognizing digressions (turning aside from the main subject) and non-verbal cues of emphasis.

2.2. Listening skills assessment

Listening skill assessment has been defined by several researchers. Hilfert(1985), demonstrated that listening skills assessment is to identify the oral language; whether the students hear oral speech, divide sounds, classify them into lexical and syntactic units, and comprehend the

message. According to Goss (1982), listening skill assessment is a process of assessing the understanding of the listener what he/she heard and organizing it into lexical elements to which meaning can be allocated; whereas, listening is the process of receiving aural inputs from the speaker, making meaning from it, and answering to the spoken and/or nonverbal messages. Rost (2009), told that listening skills assessment is an active and important mental ability. It aids us to understand the world around us and is one of the necessary elements in creating successful communication. In addition, Hamouda (2013) defined listening skill assessment as the process of identifying the listening skill gap of the listener and improving his/her ability to recognize and understand what the speaker said. Accordingly, this process includes understanding a speaker's pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary, and identifying meaning of the message to give appropriate responses either in oral or written form. Morley (1972) said that listening skill assessment involves assessing the ability of the listener to identify aural grammar, select necessary information, remembering it, and connecting it to the process between sound and form of meaning.

Therefore, listening skills assessment in classroom is the process of identifying the improvement of the students' ability to understand the speaker's pronunciation, aural grammar and vocabulary, and to negotiate on the meaning and message through verbal or nonverbal communication. Listening is a process of receiving what the speaker says, making and showing meaning, negotiate on the meaning with the speaker and answering, and creating meaning by participation through interaction.

2.3. The Importance of Listening Skills Assessment

In this age of globalization in which English skills are paramount for effective multicultural communication, and in which active listening skills have become vital in language learning and academic achievement, research on listening skill assessment proves that it is not only relevant but also crucial as a way of providing insights on how to improve teaching of listening skills in the context of English as a Foreign Language (Coombe, 2007).

Assessing listening skill in EFL classroom is important process of identifying the listening skill gap of the learner and one key technique to improve his/her communication skill and progress of the language as a whole (Brown, 2012). Listening skill assessment in EFL is vital both in the improvement of the other skills in the language and daily communication ability of the students (Hamouda, 2013). Backer (1971), more clarifies that the following reasons why assessing

listening skills was important: 1) Listening is used more frequently than any other form of verbal communication. 2) Listening is important for the development of the other skills (Reading, Writing, and Speaking). 3) Listening is the starting point for developing communicative competence, improve language usage and help vocabularies. 4) Pronunciation of words learned exclusively through listening. 5) Successful listening skill helps to overcome linguistic barriers in lectures as in certain subject matter. Rost (1994, p. 141-142), also explains the importance of listening skills assessment in language classroom as: 1) Listening assessment is vital in the language classroom because it provides input for the learner as a feedback; without understanding input at the right level, any learning simply cannot begin. 2) Listening exercise in the process of listening skills assessment provides teachers with a means for drawing learners' attention to new forms (vocabulary, grammar, new interaction patterns, etc.) in teaching the listening skill.

As listening is a significant language skill to develop EFL learning, listening skills assessment is the most important part of assessing language skills (Kurita, 2012). According to Rost (2001) and Kurita (2012), the effectiveness of listening skills assessment in the listening classroom is related with the ability of the teacher to implement listening assessment tasks as an instrument of learning other EFL skills. In addition, assessing listening skill help teachers to know what they are assessing, why they are doing it, how best to assess the skills, knowledge of interest, how to generate good examples of student performance, what can potentially go wrong with the listening skills assessment, and how to prevent that wrong from happening (Yalew, 1998).

Listening skill assessment is also very important in EFL learning because the key to learn the language is to receive language input/through listening/; and hence, this ability to receive language input is developed through assessing listening skills. According to Hamouda (2013), acquisition happens when learners have sufficient comprehensible input; and also, listening is the most frequently used skill (60-70% of the instructional time) in the language classrooms. Hence, listening skills can be developed faster than the other skills in the language; and it can make easy to learn the other language skills. Rost (2002) stated that listening skills assessment is significant in language learning because it provides input for learners and it plays an important role in the development of learners' listening skills.

Learning will not occur if there isn't any input. Hamouda (2013) also suggested that, listening skills assessment creates the appropriate situations for the acquisition and expansion of other

language skills. Rost (2002) expressed that, the development of listening skills is related to the attainment of proficiency in speaking. He continued that assessment of listening skills is most important in language learning because listening is the most widely used language skill in both academics and normal daily life.

Therefore, it is obvious that EFL listening skills assessment is very important for the students since listening skill is an input for the development of other skills of the language and used as a means of learning at higher instructional phases (especially, in Ethiopian curriculum context). If there is no proper language input or instruction, it may be difficult to start the development of other skills in a language; and hence, the proper language input is takes place through proficient listening skills. These proficient listening skills improved through proper implementation of listening skills assessment.

2.4. Practical Implementation of Listening Skills Assessment

There are three approaches for the implementation of listening skills assessment (Buck, 2001). The first is the discrete-point approach which separate listening skills into component elements (extensive, intensive, selective, and responsive) and assesse them separately. The second approach is the integrative approach. According to Oller (2011), discrete approach attempt to test knowledge of listening in one skill of the lesson at a time whereas integrative approach attempts to assess the listener's capacity to use different skills of listening at the same time. For instance, common question types include dictation and cloze. It was with the assumption that, whole language is better than the sum of its parts. The third approach is the communicative approach. Its rationale comes from the assumption that, the listener must be able to comprehend the message in the listening comprehensions and then use it in context; and its question formats should be authentic in nature.

Rost (1991) further divides listening into the types, which can take place in the during-listening stage. 1. **Attentive listening** - students listen and supply short responses to the speaker. 2. **Intensive listening**-focuses students' attention on language forms. These activities require students to focus on specific contrasts of grammatical, lexical, or phonological forms in contexts. 3. **Selective listening**- helps learners to identify a purpose to learn and attend to specific information provided in the listening text. 4. **Interactive listening** provides learners with activities, which help them to assume active roles in the listening process, even when they are in the listener's role. To be able to prepare students for these activities, teachers should make sure that the input of the activity matches with the proficiency level of the students (Rost, 1991). To

this end, teachers can make use of the ‘cognitive load’ principle (Brown, 1995). Briefly, the cognitive load principle asserts that the more complex the number and distinguishability of referents, spatial, temporal and informational relations, and causal and intentional inferences, the more difficult the listening text becomes the more difficult for learners to comprehend, and hence the more difficult for the teacher to assess their listening skill.

In addition, it is important to prepare listening assessment tasks for listening assessment practice (Buck, 1995), particularly for the during-listening stage. Listening assessment tasks should increase the degree of attention paid to meaning rather than form, thus ensuring that listening is a communicative information-gap filling activity. According to Buck, common examples of the during listening assessment tasks include following instructions to fill in boxes or grids, completing drawings or diagrams, and participating in competitive quizzes while learners listen to listening texts. When engaged in such tasks while listening to texts, learners do something with the information they have; and hence, the listening assessment tasks should be simple, success oriented, and easy to respond in the given time interval so that ongoing response during-listening is created as in real life (Ur, 1984).

Moreover, the during-listening assessment stage is the most suitable stage for providing exposure to real-life listening. It states that there should be a lot of exposures to real listening in a good listening comprehension lesson and a stable classroom environment. Therefore, for the during-listening assessment stage, it is important that students practice a great deal of intensive and extensive listening assessment tasks. Students may listen to texts more than once to compensate for the lack of visual and environmental clues.

The third stage of a listening skills assessment (post-listening assessment stage) may be where teachers highlight important functional language that students have been exposed to in the during-listening assessment stage. Using the post listening assessment tasks as a way of reinforcing grammar might be one assessment technique, but it is not the only one. In the post-listening assessment stage, the teacher can ask students to infer the meanings of new words from the listening lesson context. For example, teachers may have students to infer the meanings of the unknown words by writing the target words on the board, replaying or reading the sentences containing them, and asking the learners to work out their meanings. This stage should also include checking answers to listening comprehension activities (Field, 2002). Accordingly, post-

listening may be a good stage in which to integrate listening with other language skills, but out of these three stages, the tendency among EFL teachers, which has been proven ineffective, is to assess listening skills rather than teach it. What happens in such settings is that teachers only have the students listen to the passage and ask them to answer comprehension questions.

Listening skills assessment implementation in EFL classroom is an ongoing process that includes a number of evaluative tasks on the side of the teacher to identify the gap and improve the ability of the students on their listening skill. To do so, one of the first observations that teachers need to consider while implementing listening assessment tasks is that listening skill is unobservable; we cannot directly see or measure or otherwise observe either the process or the product of listening comprehension (Brown, 2007). According to Brown (2007, p.445), there are about four listening skills assessment tasks that are commonly implemented in listening classrooms:

Intensive listening skill assessment tasks: distinguishing phonemic pairs (Eg. Grass – glass; leave – live), distinguishing morphological pairs (eg. Miss – missed), distinguishing stress patterns (Eg. I can go; I can't go), paraphrase recognition (eg. I come from Ethiopia; I'm Ethiopian), and repetition (repeat a word or phrase).

Responsive listening skill assessment tasks: eg. Oral questions and simple discourse sequences;

Selective listening skill assessment tasks: Listening cloze tests (eg. students fill in the blanks), verbal information transfer, picture cued information transfer (eg. students choose a picture), Chart completion (eg. students fill in a grid).

Extensive listening skill assessment tasks: dictation (eg. students listen /usually 3 times/ a listening text and write a paragraph), dialogue (eg. students listen a dialogue and answer comprehension questions), lecture (eg. students follow a lecture and take notes, summarize, list main points, etc.),

Interpretive listening skill assessment tasks: (eg. students listen a poem and then, interpret its meaning), stories, narratives (eg. students retell a story, re-narrate a narrative).

The difference among the first three listening skills assessment tasks(intensive, responsive, and selective) were; intensive listening skill assessment tasks focused of language forms and grammatical structure, selective listening skill assessment tasks were based on the purpose required to identify the listening skill gap and the activity students required to do in verbal transfer, and responsive listening skill assessment task focused on to identify the listening skill gap of the students on aural response ability for aural questions and simple discourse sequences.

In the process of implementing listening skills assessment, it is better to consider the four main principles that can serve as a guideline for the design of assessment tasks and to evaluate the efficacy of an existing procedure (Douglas & Brown, 2004). Accordingly, these four principles are: first, practicality of the listening assessment tasks-in the case of financial limitation, time constraints, ease of administration, scoring and interpretation of the result. Second, reliability of the listening skill assessment tasks-in the case of the listening text, administration, the students' level, and scoring. Reliability of the assessment tasks refers to how consistent the scores of assessment tasks were over time, or its ability to obtain the same or at least a similar score from the same student if the assessment task is given by a different testers at a different time; its ability to be corrected and scored in relative to time and resource; whether it match with the level of the students or not. We need to distinguish two key variables to test the reliability of listening skills assessment tasks (Brown, 2004): intra-rater reliability and inter-rater reliability.

Accordingly, the nature of assessment suggests the need to minimize rater's subjectivity while scoring the listening assessment tasks; it is important to understand the purpose of intra-rater reliability and inter-rater reliability. Brown also tried to interpret these two variables in reliability of listening assessment tasks. Intra-rater reliability refers to an assessment practice where only one rater is involved in the scoring process; usually, the teacher. Inter-rater reliability, on the other hand, involves more than one rater. Brown believes that, one of the best ways to solve subjectivity is using detailed and well-defined rating criteria and to have several training sessions where the examiners learn to apply the rating criteria as objectively and accurately as possible.

The third principle is validity of the listening skills assessment tasks-the degree to which the designed listening assessment task actually measures what it is intended to measure. But ultimately, validity can be established only by observation and theoretical justification. The validity principle of listening assessment task consists of different components that need to be considered during its implementation. Among them; Content validity is about whether the listening assessment task includes a representative sample of the content in the listening text or lesson that needed to be assessed. The second component of validity in testing the validity of listening assessment task is criterion-related validity, in which the assessment designer compares his/her assessment task with a well-known one (Coombe, 2007).

Concurrent validity is another important component in testing the validity of listening assessment tasks (Alderson and Bachman, 2001). Accordingly, it follows the same principle of criterion-related validity, but the difference is administering both the listening assessment tasks created by the teacher and the listening assessment task used as a reference at the same time. In addition, all of these types of validity must be taken into consideration while interpreting the scores of the listening assessment result on students' listening skill improvement (Coombe, 2007).

The fourth important principle of assessment is authenticity of the listening skills assessment tasks- the language in the listening text or lesson should be natural as possible, and the items should be contextualized rather than isolated (Coombe, 2007).

EFL teachers must take into account different aspects when they design listening assessment tasks. Before beginning to design a listening assessment tasks, teachers should consult the listening lesson objectives, assessment specifications and guidelines (i.e., item type, difficulty, level, value, and expected responses); the tasks should reflect the events occur in the real-life situations; and the language used should be natural in case of accent and pronunciations as possible (Coombe, 2007). In addition, the students should be able to use their background knowledge on the listening lesson. According to Coombe, content specifications on the listening lesson will provide information regarding the assessment tasks designed on the lesson. That is, text types (i.e., narrative, descriptive, etc.); speech types to be used (i.e., phrases, single utterances, two-person dialogues, multi participant dialogue, monologues, etc.); mode of input (audio, video, live reader), varieties of English (scripted or unscripted input); and length of input (in time or number of exchanges).

In the listening skills assessment process, students must know 90-95 percent of the words in the listening to understand the listening text/script (Brown, 2001). According to Brown, when design a listening skills assessment task, teachers should include vocabulary from their own word lists into listening scripts whenever possible, because lexical overlap can affect difficulty of the listening assessment questions. In addition, when used in the answer key, teachers must be aware the words used in the passage as well as in the questions and response options, make the question or answer easier; whereas when used unfamiliar words as distractors, the questions or answers become more difficult. And hence, unfamiliar words should never be used as the correct answer. Moreover, the listening skills assessment tasks should start with easy questions to reduce

assessment tools anxiety (Heinle, 1990). Accordingly, items should be ordered as they are heard, spaced out, and easy as well as challenging items such as paraphrased contents and differencing tasks should be included in the listening assessment questions.

On the other hand, students should never be exposed to new formats in assessing their listening skills improvement (Coombe, 2007). Accordingly, formats such as multiple-choice questions, fill in the blank space, and true or false items may be used because they are relatively reliable and easy to mark and analyze; better to reduce subjectivity in marking and scoring the responses from the students. In addition, items should be spaced so that students have time to respond to one item without missing the next. Each new section should be framed with an advanced organizer to develop the context and activate student's background knowledge. Coombe(2007) also suggested that, timing will be determined by how many times the students listen to the text/aural speech. Students should be given the chance to listen to the listening text twice in achievement tests; but when assessing the main idea, the listening passage should be presented only once; and finally, students given time to pre-read questions to remind their background knowledge (Brown, 2004).

In summary, to implement listening skills assessment we have to consider that to what levels, for what purpose, what type of listening inputs, and what listening assessment tasks are appropriate with the required quality of assessment tasks; to improve our students' listening skills. We, as a language teachers, have to also consider too the micro and macro skills of listening; from processing tiny bits and pieces of listening skills to strategic, interactive, and complex skills of extended listening text/discourse. In addition, while we design the listening assessment tasks, giving more attention to principles (practicality, reliability, validity, and authenticity) of language assessment tasks, and specifying time and length of the listening text is also very crucial.

2.5. The Impact of Teachers' Perception on Listening Skills Assessment

Language skills assessment for several years placed emphasis on productive skills (speaking and writing) assessment. The relationship between the receptive skills (listening and reading) and productive skills (speaking and writing) was poorly perceived by teachers; and hence, this poor perception of the teachers leads them to ignorance of listening skills assessment implementation in listening classrooms (Nunan, 2002, p.278). Nunan, also emphasize that EFL teachers understood as listening skills assessment has been overlooked by its older sister –speaking skill

assessment; that is to claim that, knowledge of EFL means being able to speak and write in the language than improving learners listening skills. Nunan, further argues that learners and teachers of the EFL feel that listening and reading are secondary skills –“means to other ends rather than ends in themselves”.

Poor perception of both the teacher and the students on assessing listening skills affects its implementation relative to other EFL skills and has been neglected in the curriculum at many high schools, even in universities (Morely, 2001). Accordingly, teachers perceived that the ultimate goal of their students in EFL skills is speaking the language; they do not pay enough attention to listening comprehension, which is the easiest way to develop speaking. In addition, historically, the listening skill assessment has been neglected both from a research and a pedagogical perspective and one of the reasons why listening skills assessment is not so commonly perceived by teachers in EFL is that the teachers tend to give too greater importance to the reading and speaking skills assessment (Flowerdew, 1994). Accordingly, lack of good listening skills assessment perception may be due to the fact that the communicative skills assessment focuses on conversation more than other skills. However, the process of conversation in EFL classrooms; and the objectives of other subjects using English as instructional media can be effective if there is good listening skill of the students on the content thought, and this listening skill can be improved through proper implementation of listening skills assessment.

Conaway (1982, p.70), points out that listening skills assessment has to be perceived as the most implemented language skills assessment in the language classroom, and the improvement of students' listening skills through assessment can play an important role in their academic success than reading and writing skills or academic aptitude. Regarding this, Murcia (2000) states that: “Listening skills are vehicle for teaching elements of grammatical structure and allow new vocabulary items to be contextualized within a body of communicative discourse and curriculum”. In fact, listening skill is used far more than any other language skill in normal daily life. In spite of its importance, listening skills development is perceived as it has only slight emphasis in language instructions.

To implement the listening skills assessment properly and achieve the objectives of every listening lesson, the perception of EFL teachers on the strategies of teaching listening skills, assessing the learning of the students on the skills, and how to verify the achievement of the objectives on each lesson is too crucial. In line with this, the perception of these teachers on the

contribution of using listening skills learning strategies to the effectiveness of listening skills assessment, and hence, to the improvement of the result of the learners may have a great impact. Because teaching, learning, and assessing listening skills are inseparable activities in the listening classroom. Malley and Chamot (1990) complain that most listening skills learning strategies are not based on sound language acquisition theories. Accordingly, they ground their definition on Anderson's information processing model of learning listening skills.

In Anderson's model, there are three stages of learning listening skills. The first stage is the cognitive stage, where the learner acquires listening knowledge through objectively accomplished listening skills assessment activities. The second stage is called the associative stage, where the learner connects new declarative knowledge with knowledge that he/she already possesses. Lastly, the listening skill assessment becomes automatic or effective when the learner uses the skill subconsciously. Malley and Chamot (1990) depict listening skills learning strategies as cognitive skills and differentiate them into three categories: 1. *Social affective strategies*-include cooperation with peers, questioning for clarification, self-talk, or use of mental control to assure one that a learning activity will be successful or to reduce task anxiety. 2. *Metacognitive strategies*-involve selective attention; planning the organization of discourse; monitoring attention, comprehension, or production; functioning on incoming information; and manipulating it to enhance learning. 3. *Cognitive strategies*-involve rehearsing or repeating heard input, organizing and mapping words, differencing the meanings of unknown words, summarizing and synthesizing the incoming information, deducting meaning, and using visual images for understanding or remembering new information.

To summarize, based on the ideas suggested from different researchers, it is possible to say EFL teachers perceived listening skill as it have being covered by the ability of the other skills reading and speaking; and hence, they do not give enough attention to the importance of implementing listening skills assessment in their classrooms. They also considered listening skills assessment as it has insignificant role for improvement of other skills; naturally developed skill; and as difficult to apply in EFL classroom and to improve it. Hence, these low perceptions of EFL teachers on listening skills assessment negatively affect the process of implementing listening skills assessment and make it to be ignored and not to develop the skill in line with the other EFL skills. The attention of the learners of the language may be limited to the other skills, but

learning of a language is the integration of learning of all skills of the language; particularly, listening skill in EFL is the input of other skills. If there are no both proper instructional and communication inputs through listening, it may be difficult to do something with other skills. On the other side, if teachers well perceived on the importance of implementing the listening skills assessment, it will has a positive impact on both the students' daily communication in the language and also easy understanding of the content in other subjects during classroom learning.

2.6. Possible Challenges in Listening Skills Assessment

EFL teachers may face different challenges that can affect the result of the listening skills assessment in English as foreign language classrooms, and to identify the improvement of their students' on listening skills. According to Hedge (2005), these challenges can be seen through content related and environmental factors. Content related factors might be: lack of motivation and high level of anxiety of the student to the language, lack of background knowledge of the student on the listening topic under discussion; unfamiliar words, grammatical structures, and length of the listening text to be used, and pronunciations of the speaker on the listening text. On the other hand, environmental factors can be noises around the classroom or the school compound and the classroom situation during implementation of the listening lesson. From the learner aspect, challenges on listening skills assessment in EFL classroom can range from text structure and syntax to personal factors such as insufficient exposure to the target language, and lack of interest and motivation of the student (Hamouda, 2013).

On the other view, poor perceptions and beliefs of the EFL teachers on their listening comprehension problems, ineffective usage of listening skills learning strategies (Social affective, Metacognitive, and Cognitive), length and content of the listening text itself, quality and pronunciation of the speaker, the listening tasks and activities used, the clarity of the message in the listening text, and listeners' attitude towards the language were found to be the sources of their listening assessment challenges (Ur, 2007). From the students view, when students were asked to list their listening problems, poor classroom conditions, not having visual aids, unfamiliar vocabulary, unclear pronunciation, speech rate, boring topics and being exposed to longer texts can challenge the listening assessment process and affect the conclusion made on the students' listening assessment result (Hasan, 2000).

In addition, for EFL learners, it is difficult to make predictions, especially if they are not familiar with the commonly used idioms, proverbs and collocations. Contents of the information in a listening text are not always clearly stated and a listener often has to determine what the speaker

actually means through inferences. Also, various features of spoken language such as stress and intonation have a significant role for certain situations in the listening assessment activities. Moreover, trying to interpret unfamiliar lexis and sounds for a long time is very tiring for EFL learners. The different accents in which they are exposed to could also be problematic, especially in EFL context students are used to hear foreign language from their teachers who speak English as a foreign language (Ur, 2007).

Higgins (1995), challenges that facilitate or hinder the process of implementing listening skills assessment are: speech rate of the audio speaker, vocabulary of unfamiliar words, and pronunciation of the speaker. In addition, a study conducted by Hasan (2000) shows that unfamiliar words, difficult grammatical structures, and the length of the spoken text are important factors that can affect the implementation of listening skills assessment, both from the students and teacher side. In terms of the speaker factor, it was also revealed that clarity of the spoken lesson in all required aspects (eg. the message, audibility, pronunciations, grammar usage, etc.) was the main difficulty for implementing listening skills assessment. Hasan also revealed that, from the students view; lack of interest and the demand for full and complete answers to listening comprehension questions were the two main difficulties encountered by EFL teachers to implement listening skills assessment in classrooms.

In using teaching aids materials (like: tape recorder, speaker, etc.) for assessing students' listening skills, making the voice of a speaker too low/high to be heard, making the message of the listening too complex either by including more detailed information or many or unrelated issues, makes the task of the listener more difficult in the listening skills assessment process (Duzer, 1997). In addition, the colloquial language, the speaker's pronunciation and rate of speaking either too fast or too slow or using many hesitations contribute to the difficulties for the listener; and lead the teacher to confused judgment and wrong feedback about the students' listening skill improvement on the listening lesson.

According to Ur (2007), another problem that needs attention is the students' lack of ability to use the environmental clues to grasp the meaning. It is not because of the students cannot perceive the visual clues, as they can already do it in their first language; but they lack the ability to use these visual clues while listening to the target language, a process in which learners work really hard to understand the native speakers and catch the little details. Ur (2007, p. 21) also

states that “while EFL learners learn for listening skills improvement, their receptive system is overloaded, as a result, it makes them stressed”. That means, since listeners try to catch most of the details in a text while listening in a foreign language, they spend more effort than a native speaker does. That is, since the non-native speakers of the language focus on the actual meaning of the words, they only focus on the literal meaning while having no time to comprehend the conventional aspects of it. Thus, not being able to comprehend the pragmatic meaning of the words/phrases, cause the listening skills assessment process difficult.

Moreover, it is basically essential to establish an appropriate physical and psychological atmosphere in classrooms. The teaching environment must be as suitable as possible for teaching and assessing listening skills (Chaugule, 2009). Large classes are not suitable for teaching and assessing listening skills (Eltaib, 2011). Accordingly, listening is considered as a visual as well as an auditory act, as people communicate much through body language; and hence, these visual and auditory acts facilitate the students’ listening ability on the lesson and support the effectiveness of the listening skills assessment process. Therefore, unavailability of these auditory and visuals acts or inability to use them effectively in classroom can makes difficult the teaching and learning of listening skills, and hence, its assessment process; and also leads to wrong conclusion on the result. In addition, the time devoted to lessons should be sufficient to perform listening skills assessment tasks. Marysleessor (2012) found out that, time and large classes are regarded as challenges that teachers face in teaching and assessing listening.

To summarize, teachers may face different kinds of challenges that make the listening skills assessment process slow and rather weak. The problems also may put teachers into a dilemma in dealing with all the hardships in teaching and assessing students on their listening skill for the sake of their future improvement in both daily communication and academic success. This is because of the fact that listening comprehension could be a linguistic and prime skill among EFL skills. However, teaching listening skills is the beginning process for assessing listening skills in English classrooms; and hence, the perception, attitude, commitment, and beliefs that the EFL teachers have on teaching listening skill can measure the difficulty of the challenges they may face in implementing students’ listening skills assessment.

2.7. Integration of Teaching, Learning, and Assessing of Listening skills

Listening skill is one of the basic language skills that should be paid attention by the learners and teachers; particularly, in carrying out the teaching, learning, and assessing process of

listening skills. Listening is not just to listen; students must comprehend the meaning of what they hear. Students with good listening comprehension skill will be able to participate more effectively in communicative situation and relatively better success in their academic achievement (Siregar, 2017). So, the assessment of students listening skills improvement is a fundamental technique which students need to gain adequate listening proficiency; and hence, this adequate listening proficiency depends on the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process conducted on every listening lesson in the listening classroom.

In order to achieve the learning objectives on listening comprehension activities, the perception of teachers on effective teaching in listening comprehension, and how to assess listening skills are very essential for the students' proper learning and listening skills improvement (Siregar, 2017). For example, the effective teaching of listening skills consists of preparation on the lesson, adequate support and guidance of the learners towards the lesson, predesign of appropriate tasks needed to assess the learning of the students together with positive feedback, error analysis, and remedial action (Debela, 2015:18). Accordingly, in teaching listening, preparation means before applying the plan that has been proposed on listening, the teacher should prepare the syllabus and the lesson plan; and hence, both the syllabus and the lesson plan should consist of sequenced activities to be implemented by the teacher, learners, and the assessment designed to use. He also suggested that, to help the students to predict the specific information needed, the visual supports such as graphs, maps, pictures, diagrams, and transcripts are better to be available. In addition, the positive feedback is given to the students in the listening classroom to motivate them for farther listening skills assessment tasks.

In teaching listening skills, the teacher starts from preparation, planning the lesson, reflect it in the classroom, and ends by assessing the effectiveness of the objectives on the lesson. During the listening period, the three activities (teaching, learning, and assessing) are inseparable; and hence, while the teacher present the listening lesson, the students are expected to understand the objectives of learning the lesson, and consequently; what assessment task/activity needed from them to achieve these learning objectives, give full attention of them, and try to do and improve their listening skill in the lesson (Marysleessor, 2012). In addition, when design activities to teach listening, the teacher should consider the indicators for the achievement of the objectives of the listening lesson.

To help the students, when they have difficulty to understand the listening activities, the teacher should give clues to the students before starting the listening content. The teacher assesses designed listening activities or tasks through test, multiple choices, not summary, fill in the blank, structural essay, etc. If the students are well guided, given enough clues, feedbacks or corrections; they are encouraged to participate on these activities, learn better, and do the assessment tasks accordingly. Most often the teacher uses text book, sometimes with audio tapes and videos as teaching aids, and usually teaches the listening section included in the text book, the learners attend and participate on the lesson (either in group or individually) to do the assessment task or activities given and devote themselves to improve their listening difficulties through corrections given by the teacher. Hence, these activities; teaching, learning, and assessing in listening skills are inseparable.

The process of teaching listening comprehension provides beneficial intuitions to teachers in assessing and improving their students listening skills. Learners may find listening comprehension skill as difficult to learn and this can also provide teachers with opportunities to change their listening skills assessment techniques into more effective ones. Assessing listening skills in the process of teaching listening helps the learners to identify their area of improvement in the skills, to succeed in language learning, and to enhance comprehensible inputs; and hence, the students' self-reliance in listening comprehension will be increased, they will be motivated to have access to spoken English such as conversations with native speakers (Kurita, 2012).

The theoretical basis underlying this study was Audio linguistic method. It advocated a return to speech-based instruction with the primary objective of oral proficiency. Short-range objectives include training in listening comprehension, accurate pronunciation, and recognition of speech symbols as graphic signs on the printed page, and ability to reproduce these symbols in writing (Brooks 1964: 111). The learning theory depends on learners' behavior. The occurrence of these behaviors is dependent upon three crucial elements in learning: a *stimulus*, which serves to elicit behavior; a *response* triggered by a stimulus; and *reinforcement* which serves to mark the response as being appropriate and encourages the repetition of the response in the future. The language skills are taught in the order of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Listening is viewed largely as training in aural discrimination of basic sound patterns. The language may be presented entirely orally at first; written representations are usually withheld from learners in early stages. The learner's activities must at first be confined to the audio lingual and gestural-

visual bands of language behavior. Recognition and discrimination are followed by imitation, repetition and memorization. Only when he is thoroughly familiar with sounds, arrangements, and forms does he center his attention on enlarging his vocabulary.

Learners are viewed as organisms that can be directed by skilled training techniques to produce correct responses. In accordance with behaviorist learning theory, teaching focuses on the external manifestations of learning rather than on the internal processes. Learners play a reactive role by responding to stimuli, and thus have little control over the content, pace, or style of learning. They are not encouraged to mitigate interaction, because this may lead to mistakes (Brooks 1964). The fact that in the early stages learners do not always understand the meaning of what they were repeating is not perceived as a drawback, for by listening to the teacher, imitating accurately, and responding to and performing controlled tasks they are learning a new form of verbal behavior

Instructional materials in the Audio lingual Method assist the teacher to develop language mastery in the learner. They are primarily teacher oriented (Richards, 1999). A student textbook is often not used in the elementary phases of a course where students are primarily listening, repeating, and responding. At this stage in learning, exposure to the printed word may not be considered desirable, because it distracts attention from the aural input. The teacher, however, will have access to a teacher's book that contains the structured sequence of lessons to be followed and the dialogues, drills, and other practice activities. When textbooks and printed materials are introduced to the student; they provide the texts of dialogues and cues needed for drills and exercises. Tape recorders and audiovisual equipment often have central roles in an audio lingual course. If the teacher is not a native speaker of the target language, the tape recorder provides accurate models for dialogues and drills (Richards, 1999)

To summarize, the integration of teaching, learning, and assessing listening skill can be seen from different aspects. The internal motives of the learners to learn the listening skill, to do the assessment tasks actively, and achieve the expected objectives of the lesson depend on the listening inputs, effectiveness of the methods and technique used by the teacher while teaching the listening skills in classroom, and perception and commitment that he/she has to improve the students' listening skill gap through proper implementation of listening skills assessment. The three activates are interconnected in their order to address predetermined objectives on a

listening lesson in a specific period. To integrate the three activities, EFL teachers should help learners to determine objectives of learning the listening skill and purpose of doing the assessment task on the skill before teaching the listening lesson so that learners direct their attention towards the lesson. Logically, both teaching and learning activities are the two faces of a coin; listening skill is the coin, and the assessment that we implement on listening skills improvement is the objective that we have the coin to address some gap in our needs. That is, continuously improved listening skill will increase the success of learning and easy understanding of the contents in other subjects and also facilitate daily communication between the learners and the teacher. The theoretical basis underlying this study was Audio linguistic method.

CHAPTER THREE: Research Methodology

The purpose of this study was to investigate teachers' perception and practice of assessing listening skills, and challenges they face. Hence, this chapter involves: design of the study, study population, sample and sampling techniques, data collecting instruments, data collecting procedures, data analysis techniques, validity and reliability of data collecting instruments, and ethical considerations. Under these sub topics important ideas were presented and discussed.

3.1. The Research Design

Research design is the plan of action that links the philosophical assumptions to specific methods (Creswel & Planoclark, 2007). Descriptive survey research design concerned with describing the characteristics of an individual, or of group. In order to investigate EFL teachers' perception and practice of listening skills assessment, and challenges they may face, the researcher applied descriptive survey research design in the targeted secondary schools. Because descriptive survey research describes what was happened in the study site concerning an issue and it is used to draw valid general conclusions in its natural setting about the problem. Concerning this, Yalaw (1998), stated that descriptive survey research is concerned with: practices prevailed; beliefs, attitudes and perceptions held, processes going on, challenges faced, or trends that are developing. Hence, in this study descriptive survey research design was used to describe EFL teachers' perception and practices of assessing listening skills, and challenges they face in the study site.

Both qualitative and quantitative data were gathered with the assumption that it was helpful to obtain precise information concerning listening skills assessment in detailed. The qualitative data was used to provide greater clarity and understanding of the information obtained from the quantitative response. Mixed method of data analysis was applied to analyze the collected data from participants. As it was suggested by Creswell (2014. p. 41), early thoughts about the importance of using multiple methods of research approach resided in the idea that each form of data had bias and weaknesses, and the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data assumed to decrease both the bias and weaknesses of each form of data. He also emphasize that, mixed method was an approach to inquiry involving collecting both quantitative and qualitative data, integrating the two forms of data, and using appropriate research design that may involve philosophical assumptions and theoretical frameworks. The core assumption of using both qualitative and quantitative research approach is that, the combination of both qualitative and quantitative data provides complete understanding on a research problem than either approach

alone. The end result of qualitative and quantitative data may be more dependable on each other and provide more complete explanation of the research problem than either data alone could provide (Ary, Jacobs, and Sorensen, 2010).

3.2. Study population

The target population of the study was EFL teachers in the study site. This was due to the fact that, those teachers were certified to teach English as foreign language, who practice listening skill assessment in the language classroom, and able to easily identify the challenges they face on listening skill assessment from their knowledge and experience. Moreover, it was with the assumption that they could provide relatively better responses on the questionnaires and conducted interview regarding the variables in the study.

3.3. Sample size and sampling techniques

The study includes 11 secondary schools in the study site: Toba, Chando, and Yachi secondary schools in Gumay woreda; Agaro, Beshasha, Jida, Limushay, and Gembe secondary schools in Goma woreda; Gatira secondary school in Setema woreda; and Adusigimo and Gata secondary school in Sigimo woreda. The four woredas in west Jimma were focused due to the fact that the gap observed and initiated the researcher to conduct this study was in Gumay woreda secondary schools. Having this, the researcher wants to include the secondary schools in Goma, Sigmo, and Setema woredas to increase the number of participants on the study and gate additional information that enables the researcher to draw better conclusion on the study.

Table 3.1: Distribution of the target population in the four woredas

Woredas	Gumay	Goma	Setema	Sigimo	Total
No. of EFL teachers	27	44	22	29	122

Purposive sampling technique was applied to select 100 participants for the questionnaires. The study was purposively focused on EFL teachers. This means, EFL teachers included in the study were selected because of the fact that they were likely to generate useful data required for the study; and they were also the owners of the subject, practice it, and very nearer to the subject matter of the study; and hence, it was assumed that no better alternative than them to generate useful data. 11 more experienced and 4 MA holders in TEFL, totally 15 EFL teachers were selected for the interview through available sampling technique. This was done with the assumption that, these EFL teachers have better accumulated knowledge from their experience

and detailed knowledge on perception of assessing listening skill and challenges face to implement it. In line with this, in order to conduct classroom observation, 7 EFL teachers were randomly selected through simple random sampling technique from four secondary schools included in the study. The four secondary schools were also selected randomly from the eleven secondary schools in the study site. This was also done to give equal chance of involvement for the secondary schools and the EFL teachers to be observed.

3.4. Data collection instruments

Interviews

The interview was focused on two research questions: 1) How do EFL teachers actually perceive listening skills assessment in English as a foreign language classes? 2) What challenges EFL teachers face to implement listening skills assessment in English classroom? The method of collecting information through personal interviews is usually carried out in structured, semi-structured, or unstructured ways. Structured interview involves the use of a set of predetermined questions and highly standardized techniques of recording. The interviewer in a structured interview follows a rigid procedure laid down, asking questions in a form and order prescribed. Against of this, the unstructured interviews are characterized by a flexibility of approach to questioning. Unstructured interviews do not follow a system of pre-determined questions and standardized techniques of recording information. In an unstructured interview, the interviewer is allowed much greater freedom to ask, in case of need, supplementary questions or at times he/she may omit certain questions if the situation so requires. He/she may even change the sequence of questions. He/she has relatively greater freedom while recording the responses to include some aspects and exclude others. But this sort of flexibility results in lack of comparability of one interview with another and the analysis of unstructured responses becomes much more difficult and time-consuming than that of the structured responses obtained in case of structured interviews (Kothari, 2004: 97).

Semi-structured interviews are conducted on the basis of a loose structure (topic guide) made up of open-ended questions defining the area to be explored. This tool has strong quality, because participants are usually encouraged to discuss any other issue related to the study which might be undermined by the researcher. Also it encourages and enables the researcher to capture the respondents' perceptions in their own words. In addition, Silverman (1993:147) suggests that it is important for each interviewee to understand the question in the same way. The reliability of

interviews can be enhanced by: careful piloting of interview schedules; training of interviewers; inter-rater reliability in the coding of responses; and the extended use of closed questions. The importance of open-ended interviews, as it enables respondents to demonstrate their definition of the existing situation; it recognizes that what is a suitable sequence of questions for one respondent might be less suitable for another, and hence, open-ended questions enables the interviewer to reduce this suitability gap.

Hence, to get additional information on the two questions/topics: “How do EFL teachers actually perceived listening skills assessment in English as a foreign language classes?” and “what challenges may face EFL teachers in implementing listening skill assessment?” the researcher employed semi-structured interview schedule as an instrument, and interviewing method to collect qualitative data. The interview questions under these topics were clearly stated, structured, and ordered in a simple flow of idea. The interview was organized in three parts: the first part contains school name and characteristics of the interviewee, the second part includes five sub questions about teachers’ perception on listening skill assessment, and finally the third part consists of three sub questions on challenges may face EFL teachers on implementing listening skill assessment.

The interview procedure started with greeting, then first-to- third part through conversation, recording both in notes and sound, and finally completed with thanks. In order to get full explanation and keep it up until generalization, the interview was conducted both in mother tongue and English language and supported by audio recorder. The recorded data was reorganized in a meaning full sense based on similarities and categories of responses and their details. In doing this process, the main purpose of conducting this semi-structured interview was to gather qualitative data and additional information that enable me to substantiate the quantitative result on these two topics and to narrow the gap may happen between the expected result and analyzed value.

15 teachers who have better experience in TEFL participated on the interview. From these teachers 11 of them were first degree holders and four of them have second degree (MA) in TEFL. The reason behind for selecting more experienced and better educational status EFL teachers is with the assumption that they have important and detailed information about how

EFL teachers perceived listening skills assessment in their listening classroom; and similarly, they have able to identify and clearly explain the challenges face EFL teachers from their long year accumulated experience and practice. Regarding this, the intention of the researcher was to get additional required qualitative information directly (from primary sources) on the independent variables ‘perception’ and ‘challenges’ through pre-specified questions on the guiding topics.

The interview was conducted at secondary schools where the selected interview participants were found. Three interviewees at Toba secondary school, four at Agaro secondary school, three at Adusigimo secondary school, two at Limushay secondary school, two at Gatira secondary school, and one at Shenen-Gibe secondary school. The same questions and similar approaches were followed to start and complete the process of the interview; minimum time taken was 29 minute and maximum 32 minute, on average 30.5 minute..

Questionnaires

The researcher employed closed-ended questionnaires to collect quantitative data through survey method from 100 EFL teachers. This was because of the fact that respondents were far apart over a wide geographical area in four woredas. Although a face to face interview was batter for collecting primary data, conducting it in this relatively wide geographical area with the whole respondents has been time consuming and too tedious process in relative to the available time and other required resources. Moreover, it was with the assumption that questionnaires were batter save of time, easy to analyze and describe through appropriate descriptive statistical tools, and easy to interpret for arriving on conclusions.

As it was described by Kumar(2011), the advantage of using questionnaires for quantitative data collection purpose that, it was inexpensive; save time, human and financial resources; easy to administer and no need of face-to-face interaction between respondents and the interviewer. In addition, this method of data collection provides greater anonymity (without the respondent’s name) in some situations where sensitive questions are asked, it helps to increase the likelihood of obtaining accurate information. Some individuals for a number of reasons may not feel happy to be interviewed and need to give their responses in a questionnaire.

The items used in the questioners were taken from three researchers on listening skill assessment: Hamouda(2013) at Qasim University, Soudy; Hana (2012) at University of Toronto,

Egypt; and Sema (2003) at Bilkent University, Ankara. The first questionnaire developed on the EFL teachers' perception at the study area consists of seven items that used to test how they actually perceived listening skills assessment. The second questionnaire on the question, "to what extent EFL teachers practice listening skill assessment in the listening classroom", contains twelve items/listening activities used to test the extent to which these activities practiced by the EFL teacher in EFL classrooms. The third questionnaire contains nine items on possible challenges face EFL teachers to implement listening skills assessment, and used to test the availability and degree of sensitivity of these challenges in the study area. Before directly using, some amendments were made on each of the items of these questionnaires by the researcher in order to fit them with the objectives of this study.

The maximum and minimum time taken by the respondents to complete 39-items was 47 minutes and 41 minutes respectively and on average 44-minutes. At the end, by giving due consideration for expertise (MA teachers in TEFL) comment and lesson learned from pilot test additional modification was made on the items of the first questionnaire; and then, unnecessary items that result for poor reliability coefficient were changed and retested/piloted. The reliability coefficient of the items in each of the questionnaire was determined using Chronbach alpha (α) value, as presented in table 3.2 (page 32). The average reliability coefficient of the four questionnaires was found to be 0.847, which was indicated high reliability coefficient by Cohen and Manion (2009: 506).

Compared to the previous average reliability coefficient (0.64) of the items, the average reliability coefficient of the amended and retested items was greater. Based on the modification made on the items and retested responses, the questionnaires were found valuable and acceptable to collect the required quantitative data for the study. Then, a five level likert scale technique was applied to identify and analyze the agreement and decision level of the participants on each item of the questionnaires. Finally, as it was summarized and concluded in chapter five of this paper, in combination with the interview and classroom observation result, the result of each questionnaire addressed/answered the intended research questions.

Observation checklist

The researcher conducted classroom observation as the third instrument to collect primary data through using observation checklists on different listening lessons in different listening classrooms. Regarding this, the main purpose of conducting classroom observation for this study

was to get quantitative data from the practical classroom observation conducted to determine at what extent the EFL teachers practice listening skills assessment in English language classrooms. To do so, seven observations were conducted on seven EFL teachers. The observations conducted at four secondary schools in seven different listening classrooms; two observations at Toba secondary school, two at Agaro secondary school, two at Adusigimo secondary school, and one observation at Gatira secondary school. The time taken to complete each observation was 35 minute. These observations were completed within four days in four consecutive weeks of the seventh month of 2013 E.c. The result of the observation was found that EFL teachers practiced listening skill activities in language classroom poorly.

The items in the checklist were adopted from Hana (2012) at University of Toronto, Egypt. Then, some of the items were amended to answer the required question on how EFL teachers practice listening skills assessment in English language classrooms. The checklist format was designed by the researcher in consideration of how to complete the seven observations in four different days and analyze the observation result. The reliability of the amended items in the checklist was reevaluated at pilot test through using it in three listening classrooms by four observers (the researcher, the vice principal, the department head, and the school supervisor) at Yachi secondary school. The decision made on the five likert scale of the four observers on each item was analyzed using the Chronbach Alfa(α) measuring the inter items reliability coefficient. The average rating skale(decision) of the four observers in alpha value was = 0.91. This reliability coefficient value indicates that the items were highly reliable (Cohen and Manion, 2009: 506).

In addition, each of the twelve items/listening activities included in the checklist were sequenced in their respective order of implementation in a listening lesson, and focused on what to measure in one listening period at the students' learning level; and hence, assumed to be valid and relevant.

3.5. Validity and Reliability of the questionnaires

The reliability of each item in the questionnaires was tested through conducting a pilot test on fifteen selected teachers who have BA degree in teaching EFL at Jiren Secondary school in Jimma town, and then analyzed by using SPSS-version 23 software and decision was made through the Cronbach's alpha value. It provides a coefficient of inter-item correlations, that is, the correlation of each item with the sum of all the other items. This is a measure of the internal

consistency among the items developed (not the respondents). It is the average correlation among all the items in the question, and is used for multi-item scales.

The objectives of the pilot test were: a) to assess the level of difficulty of the items to the respondents; b) to determine the reliability coefficient of the questionnaires, c) to decide the acceptance and farther usability of the questioners. Then an internal consistency reliability estimate was calculated using Cronbach's Coefficient of Alpha for the questionnaires. The researcher found that the average coefficient of the four questionnaires of Alpha (α) value to be 0.847 which is regarded as strong correlation coefficient by (Jackson, 2009). Supporting this, George and Mallery (2003) and Cohen, et al. (2007) also suggest that, the Cronbatch's alpha result >0.9 excellent, >0.8 good, >0.7 acceptable, <0.6 questionable, <0.5 poor. The table below indicates the computed reliability coefficient and the reliability level of the questionnaires.

Table 3.2: Reliability coefficient value and the level of its reliability for each questionnaire

No	Questionnaires	No of items	Reliability Coefficient (α -value) of the items	Reliability level of the items
1	How EFL teachers actually perceived listening skills assessment in English as a foreign language classrooms	7	0.83	Highly reliable (Cohen and Manion, 2009: 506).
2	To what extent do teachers practice/use listening skills assessment in English as a foreign language classrooms	12	0.91	Very high reliable (Cohen and Manion, 2009: 506).
3	To what extent are the tasks and the listening activities requiring teachers to work towards listening skills assessment?	11	0.89	Highly reliable (Cohen and Manion, 2009: 506).
4	What are the challenges may face EFL teachers to implement the listening skills assessment in listening classrooms	9	0.72	Reliable (Cohen and Manion, 2009: 506).

	Average Alpha(α) value	39	0.847	Highly reliable
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Sources: Hamouda(2013) at Qasim University, Souidy; Hana (2012) at University of Toronto, Egypt; and Sema (2003) at Bilkent University, Ankara.

3.6. Data Collection Procedures

First, the researcher had a recommendation letter from Jimma University and duplicated the questionnaires to the required number of 100 copies. Secondly, having the letter, he went to woreda education office to get permission, and then to the secondary schools (with program) to inform the school directors on my intention to have been there. Then, after communicating with the director, the researcher informed EFL teachers well on the objective of the study and got their willingness politely. Thirdly, he distributed the copies to the available EFL participants and oriented them on what to do. Finally, after all the questionnaire copies were correctly completed, the researcher has collected it properly and thanks all the participants. Similar condition was made in each secondary school.

In line with the process of completing the questionnaires, the researcher has made interview with 15 batter experienced EFL teachers to gather supporting information on how EFL teachers actually perceived listening skills assessment and what challenges face EFL teachers to practice listening skills assessment. He also conducted classroom observation on randomly selected 7 EFL teachers to observe and get primary information on the practical implementation of listening skills assessment in the listening classrooms.

3.7. Methods of Data Analysis

The researcher used descriptive statistical tools: frequency-to analyze the repetitions of the responses on each item, percentage-to interpret the participants' characteristics, means-to analyze the average response of participants, and standard deviation-to interpret the variation/deviation of the responses from their average response. The result of the analysis under each research question and participants' characteristics was discussed briefly, interpreted, and summarized. The qualitative information gathered through interviewing was coated, properly interpreted, and the idea was used to substantiate the quantitative result accordingly. Then, from both the qualitative and quantitative data analysis result, ideas were summarized, concluded for each research question, and then possible suggestions were recommended.

3.8. Ethical considerations made

Before starting collection of data, participants were well informed. The right and willingness of the participants in the study was respected. Competency and adulthood or experience of the participants on the study was considered for getting better information. Legal procedures and ethical conducts were followed throughout the study. The researcher also tried to avoid wrong data from wrong sources. Great emphasis was given to error and bias as much as possible during data collection and analysis process. Research findings, ideas/suggestions, and conclusions used as evidence from other sources were properly stated and cited at their respective position in the document.

CHAPTER FOUR

Presentation, Analysis and Interpretations of the Data

This chapter deals with presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data gathered from the respondents through questionnaires, interviews, and classroom observation checklist. Both quantitative and qualitative data analysis was incorporated in to this chapter. The qualitative part was supposed to be complementary to the quantitatively analyzed result. Hence, the qualitative data includes the data gathered through interviews. The data was collected from 122 EFL teachers in total. One hundred copies of the questionnaires were distributed to one hundred EFL teachers included in the study and 100% of them were completed and returned. The Semi-structured interview was conducted with fifteen (15) better experienced and MA in TEFL teachers. Respondents' ideas were recorded through note taking and sound recording process; that is, for relisting if there were missed notes and to coordinate the idea in the response in a meaningful sense.

The classroom observation was took place in seven listening classrooms with 7 EFL teachers at 4 secondary schools included in the study,. Through the listening period the items in the observation checklist were followed from the presentation and rated in their decision rating scale, and then the observation result was critically analyzed and used to support the questionnaire result and tried to answer the research question how EFL teachers practice listening skills assessment in listening classrooms. The idea obtained from the interview was organized, presented, coated, and interpreted in relative to the quantitative result.

Data obtained through a questionnaire was analyzed using the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (Version 23.0). Part one of the questionnaire, which solicited background information about participants was analyzed to determine the frequencies and percentages of participation for the respondents. Frequencies, means and standard deviation were calculated for each item to describe the EFL teachers' perception and practice in assessing listening skills, and the challenges they face. The results obtained from the analysis of questionnaire responses were presented in four sections in this chapter. In the first section the characteristics of the participants were analyzed and interpreted. In the second section, an analysis of the items on the teachers' perception on assessing listening skills was made to explore how they perceived it in listening

classrooms. In the third section, the analysis of the items in the questionnaire; how EFL teachers actually practiced assessing of listening skills in listening classrooms was made. The fourth part deals about analysis of the questionnaire on the challenges that face EFL teachers to implement assessing listening skills in a listening classroom.

To this end, this chapter consists of two sections. The first section deals with and presents the characteristics of the respondents and the second section presents the analysis result and interpretation of the main data collected on the study.

I. Characteristics of the Respondents

The items in part one of the questionnaires were aimed to present and discuss background information of the participants on their educational status and experience. This part includes two items and eight categories in total, which were designed in an open-ended question format. The open ended questions were analyzed via categorization, and frequencies and percentages were calculated. The results of the analysis of the questions were presented here (in table 4.1)

Table 4.1:- Characteristics of the Respondents (EFL-Teachers)

N _{o.}	Items	Category	N _{o.} of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Educational status	BA in TEFL	116	95.1
		MA in TEFL	6	4.9
		PhD in TEFL	-	-
		Total	122	100
2	TEFL experience in years	0-2	-	-
		3-5	41	33.6
		6-8	37	30.3
		9-12	25	20.5
		13 years and above	19	15.6
		Total	122	100

Regarding the educational level of the respondents as indicated on item 1, majorities of the EFL teachers 116(95.1%) were first degree(BA) holders whereas 6(4.9%) of them were Masters/second degree(MA) holders in TEFL. Hence, this was an opportunity for the researcher

to get some additional guidance from these masters teacher on the truck of conducting the research; in addition to getting batter information on the issue under study.

The second question of the background information part of the questionnaire was about teaching experience of the participants. From the five options: 0-2 years (0%), 3-5 years 41(33.6%), 6-8 years 37(30.3%), 9-2 years 25(9.8%) and 13 or more years 19(15.5%); the result revealed that, the medium number of participants indicated 3-5 years of teaching experience compared to other experience levels. However, the large number 81(66.4%) of the participants were experienced in six years and above. No fresh EFL teacher involved in the study. Therefore, this creates an opportunity for the researcher to get relatively batter information on the issue under the study; that is, from gradually practiced and developed experience of the participants on assessing listening skills.

II. EFL teachers' perception on assessing listening skills

Table 4.2: Responses of the questionnaires on EFL Teachers' perception on assessing listening skills

No	Items	Total respondents N = 100										Mean	Standard deviation
		I can't decide		I strongly disagree		I disagree		I agree		I strongly agree			
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		
1	Awareness on assessing listening skills in TEFL is important	0	0	20	20	30	30	0	0	50	50	4.3	0.82
2	Listening skills assessment is boring and not interesting task	10	10	20	20	40	40	20	20	10	10	3.0	1.15
3	Any type of listening text can be used for listening skills assessment.	10	10	0	0	30	30	30	30	30	30	3.8	1.08

4	Errors of grammar and spelling should be penalized while assessing listening skills.	0	0	0	0	20	20	40	40	40	40	4.2	0.79
5	A listening cloze test is one way of selective listening skill assessment.	0	0	0	0	30	30	40	40	30	30	4.0	0.82
6	Dictation is a kind of discrete-point testing approach in listening skills assessment.	10	10	20	20	30	30	40	40	0	0	3.0	1.05
7	The type and length of the listening text, the speed and quality of reading the text/audio, and position of the student in the classroom are factors affect the listening skills assessment result					10	10	60	60	30	30	4.2	0.63

Source: SPSS-computed result/output and personal table created

As can be observed from Table 4.2, item #1, EFL teacher respondents were asked how they perceived the awareness on importance of listening skills assessment in the listening classroom. To this end, equivalently, 50(50%) of the total respondents strongly agree that they have awareness on the importance of listening skill assessment in teaching EFL. On the other hand, 50(50%) of the respondents revealed that they were disagree/ strongly disagree on the idea that they have awareness on the importance of listening skills assessment in teaching EFL. This implies that half percentage of the respondents were as have awareness on the importance of assessment of listening skills, the other half percentage of them oppose its importance. However, the average value of the total response (mean=4.3) indicates that the respondents have common

agreement to accept the item in to the decision of agree and strongly agree with medium standard deviation ($Sd. = 0.82 < 1$) of their response among the five scales.

Regarding this importance of implementing listening skills assessment in listening classroom, an interview was conducted on the question “How did you aware the importance of listening skill assessment in language classroom?” with an experienced EFL teacher at Agaro Secondary school. The interviewee says that:

“.....it is obvious that the importance of listening skills assessment is related with the improvement of the other skills of EFL; and hence the improvement of the language as the whole. Because, to be ready for understanding a reading text, to communicate academic issues on their level, to identify the meaning of new words, to develop the writing skills on some aurally given notes, and to learn and understand grammars students first of all must have the skill of proper listening as a medium of input of those other skills. It is why we say this, English is taught as a subject in both primary and secondary schools. Farther, at the secondary level, English is not only a subject but also the medium of instruction to teach and learn other subjects. So, improving this medium of input (I mean, listening skill) through conducting proper assessment technique is; on the other way, facilitating the development of the other skills in EFL. But, practically most of us, as an EFL teacher, took it as easier and jump it ignore, and give more attention to writing, reading, and speaking. This tendency of giving less attention to teach and properly assess the listening skill of our students reflected its influence to score low result on other EFL skills. Because, to be success in the academic issues students must listen properly and understand the idea and order given by the teacher while they learn it in the classroom”.

The result of this interview more realizes the idea suggested by different researchers on the importance of listening skill assessment (as it was cited in Hamuda, 2013); listening skills is the most frequently used language skill in the classroom (Ferris, 1998; Murphy, 1991; Vogely, 1998). Both the EFL teachers and students acknowledge the importance of listening comprehension for success in academic settings (Ferris & Tagg, 1996). Consequently, another study indicated that efficient implementation of listening skills assessment were more important than reading skills assessment as a factor contributing to academic success (Coakley & Wolvin, 1997).

The qualitative idea or the interview result and the empirical review briefly indicate that the improvement of other EFL skills is basically related with the availability of properly developed listening skill. That means, students must have improved listening skill to take in the clear message of the spoken, analyze the message, give possible response, and to negotiate on the idea through either in written or aurally. Moreover, it also reflects that the success of the students in other academic subjects is closely tied with proper listening and understanding of what the teacher speak while she/he thought the lesson on the subject in the classroom. This proper listening can be improved through implementing continuous listening skill assessment.

Therefore, form both the qualitative and quantitative analysis result, and empirical evidence as additional; it is possible to say that listening skills assessment is too important in both academic success and communication purpose. However, some of the EFL teachers in the study area perceived the important of implementing listening skills assessment in a confused understanding and tends to oppose its practice in the listening classrooms.

In item 2 of Table 4.2, EFL teacher respondents were asked to give their opinion in the level at which they perceived listening skills assessment as boring and not interesting lesson in teaching EFL. Accordingly, the minority 30(30%) of the total respondents were agree/strongly agree as it is boring and not interesting lesson in teaching EFL; whereas 40(40%) of the respondents were disagree while 10(10%) of them could not decide on the idea. In sum, the majority 60(60%) of the respondents were disagree/ strongly disagree on the idea that listening skills assessment is boring and not interesting lesson in teaching EFL. The mean value (3.00) of their responses also indicates that the respondents were disagreed on the idea, but highly dispersed decision among the five scales with $Sd. = 1.15 > 1$. This high standard deviation implies that there is high confusion to decide on the idea that whether listening skills assessment is boring and not interesting process in teaching EFL or in contrast to oppose the idea through the given decision rating scale.

According to the interview conducted with a group of three EFL teachers at Toba Secondary school, on the question “How did you perceived listening skills assessment in teaching English in the language classrooms” the three teachers were come to the idea of a common agreement that “..... *Since implementing listening skills assessment is time consuming it is difficult to conduct it in the listening lesson. This is basically, teaching and assessing listening skill was not*

adopted by the teachers, not at high school level but also from the base at elementary level. Even our teachers who taught us have been focused on grammar, vocabulary, writing and reading skills improvement. They jump the listening part even if it was presented in the text book and consider it as it was an additional or extra language skill that can be covered through learning of the other language skills. Beside this, the tests and exams of evaluation (even the standard national exam) were targeted on these grammar, vocabularies, questions from reading passage, and sometimes speaking/dialog. And hence, students want to achieve and score better result in these assessments focused areas of the language skills. Due to these reasons, listening assessment was perceived as additional and time consuming task in EFL learning classrooms”.

One of the EFL-teachers at Agaro Secondary school also said that “..... *EFL assessment feedback of students focused mainly on reading, grammar, and vocabulary. Assessing listening skill was not more practiced in most of our EFL classes as compared to the other skills, because it needs additional audio material aid that reduces the overburden activity from the teacher, motivates the students towards the listening activities. From this, majority of the feedback focused on grammar and questions on a given passage”.*

On the other hand, Harmer (2007) states the importance of listening skills for achieving our communicative goals and affirms that successful spoken communication depends not just on one’s ability to speak but also on the effectiveness of the way in which one listens; in other words, for any conversation, it is necessary to master both skills speaking and listening in order to comprehend the message and reply to it logically, thus, when learners have not properly developed their listening skill, understanding spoken language becomes a daunting challenge and students might feel frustrated during a listening practice.(Mohr, K.J, & Mohr, E.S, 2007).

To summarize, in addition to the quantitative result, the interview result indicates that, although it was important and interesting task, the practice of listening skill assessment in listening classrooms was overshadowed by other EFL skills due to different factors. As it was discussed in the interview, these factors were seen from different perspectives: time constraint, low attention given to the listening skill assessment (even at national exam level), the sensitivity of both the teacher and the students to other skills from their background focus, less commitment of some EFL teachers to implement it in the listening classroom. Due to these and other related issues, there is high variation of perception among the teachers on the importance of listening skill

assessment in the study area. And hence, some of the teachers were perceived listening skills assessment as it is not important and boring task from language skills assessment part.

Under the same Table 4.2 item 3, EFL teacher respondents were also asked their perception about any type of listening text can be used for listening skills assessment. In this regard, the majority 60(60%) of the total respondents were revealed to agree/ strongly agree. On the other hand, 40(40%) of them responded it as they disagree/ strongly disagree. The average value (3.8) of the response given by the respondents were approach to agree in their decision, but there was high standard deviation (Sd.= 1.08) among their response. This indicates that they have confused perception to come up on a similar agreement regarding whether any type of listening text can be used for listening skills assessment or not.

However, an interview conducted concerning this idea reflects that “..... of Corse we should be selective on the listening text to be used if we prepared it. Otherwise, if it has been form the text book or curriculum we can apply it directly. That means the type and content of the listening text, the clarity and quality of the sound of the speaker or audio material, and the items we use for test can determine the achievement of our listening lesson objectives and for the success of our students on the listening lesson. Not all kinds of written manuscript can be used for listening text; we, as EFL teachers, have to be selective on the best lesson of teaching and assessing the skill towards our students in consideration of different circumstances”.

Therefore, from quantitative result 40% strong disagreement and the interview information, one can conclude that the respondents have perceived as not all kinds of manuscripts and audio texts can be suitable for conducting listening skill assessment of students in EFL classroom. Rather they perceived as listening skill assessment should be based on selected and purposively prepared listening lesson in consideration of different perspective such as: understanding level of the students, background of the students on the listening skill, grammatical and vocabulary difficulty of the contents, and the like.

In Table 4.2 of item 4, EFL teacher respondents were asked their perception on listening skills assessment to decide the level of their agreement that errors of grammar and spelling are penalized while assessing listening skills of their students. Regarding this, the majority 80(80%) of the total respondents give their decision to agree/strongly agree whereas 20(20%) of them

decide to disagree/strongly disagree that errors of grammar and spelling while assessing listening skills in teaching EFL classroom should not be penalized. As the majority of respondents agree, the average value (4.2) of their responses with medium variation (Sd. = 0.72) indicates that the respondents were decided their agreement to the level of agree; and hence, they perceived as errors of grammar and spelling made by the students while listening should be penalized. The 20% opposed respondents have perceived as these errors made by the student on grammar and spelling while listening skill assessment should not be penalized.

As indicated in Table 4.2 of item 5, EFL teacher respondents were asked their perception and to decide the level of their agreement on the idea that a listening cloze test is one way of selective listening skill assessment. To this end, 70(70%) of the total respondents decided their agreement to the level of agree/strongly agree as listening close test is one way of selective listening skills assessment. In contrast, 30(30%) were decided their agreement to disagree. The average value (4.0) of the responses with medium of decision variation (Sd. = 0.82) among their responses indicates that the EFL teacher respondents were commonly decided their level of agreement to agree, and hence, they perceived as a listening cloze test is one way of selective listening skill assessment.

In the same Table of item 6, EFL teacher respondents were requested to put their agreement regarding their perception on whether dictation is a kind of discrete-point testing approach in listening skills assessment. Accordingly, 50(50%) of the respondents putted their agreement to disagree/strongly disagree while 10(10%) of the respondents could not give decision level of their agreement on the item. In contrast, 40(40%) of the respondents were decided their agreement to the level of agree. The mean value (3.0) of the response given by the respondents revealed that they were commonly decided their agreement to the level of disagree with high variation (Sd. = 1.05) of responses; and hence, the majority of the respondents perceived as dictation is not a kind of discrete-point testing approach in listening skills assessment. From their decision, it is possible to say that the high variation of the response was raised from confused perception of the respondents on the item.

Similarly item 7 of Table 4.2, EFL teacher respondents were asked their perception to decide their level of agreement on the type and length of the listening text, the speed and quality of reading the text/audio, and position of the student in the classroom affect the listening skills assessment result of students. To this end, 90(90%) of the total respondents decided their

agreement to the level of agree/ strongly agree, and hence they perceived as the type and length of the listening text, the speed and quality of reading the text/audio, and position of the student in the classroom affect the listening skills assessment result of students whereas 10(10%) of them decided their agreement to disagree. However, the average response (4.2) with standard deviation (0.63) implies that, the majority of the respondents commonly perceived on the item with less variation of perception.

This finding realizes the idea suggested by Hasan (2000) indicated that unfamiliar words, difficult grammatical structures, and the length of the spoken passages are the most important factors that cause problems for learners' listening comprehension. He continued that clarity, lack of interest, and the demand for complete answers to listening comprehension questions are the serious difficulties of students' listening comprehension. Yagang (1994) said that there are four sources for listening comprehension problems. They are the message, the speaker, the listener, and the physical environment. Boyle (1984) stated that listener, speaker, medium, and environment factors are the main components that affect listening comprehension. According to Teng (2002), there are four factors called listener factors, speaker factors, stimulus factors, and context factors that impact students' listening comprehension.

III. EFL teachers' practices of assessing listening skills

As presented in table 4.3 below, the class room observation was made on the total of seven (7) randomly selected, medium experienced EFL teachers at 4 different secondary schools for 4 days at different date. One observation was conducted at each listening classroom; seven observations in total. From these seven observations, the first 2 of them made at Tobba secondary school, the second 2 of them made at Agaro secondary school, the third 2 of them made at Adu-Sigimo secondary school, the last; one observation was made at Gatira secondary school. Each of the classroom observation made was observed by the researcher and additional one supporter (vice director and cluster supervisor of the school) for the assumption that decision of two or more individuals is better than a single person decision.

To conduct the classroom observation at each of these secondary schools in the four different days, the researcher informed the objective of the observation to the school principals, and then briefly discussed on the issue with the randomly selected EFL teachers so that to select suitable topic and adjust possible period. Through each observation in the listening classroom, we have decided on pre designed items of listening activities to evaluate at what extent the listening skill

assessment actually practiced in the listening classroom. The decisions on these items of listening activities were made by using the five level rating scales: 1=not at all, 2= at poor extent, 3= at good extent, 4= at very good extent and 5= at excellent extent.

Table 4.3 Analyzed result on the classroom observation data on to what extent does EFL teachers practice assessing listening skills in English as foreign language classrooms?

No	Listening activities in the listening lesson, by the teacher	Total Observed EFL teachers = 7											
		Observed at not at all practice extent		Observed at poor practice		Observed at good practice		Observed at very good practice		Observed at excellent practice		Mean	SD
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		
1	Introducing the listening lesson by giving hints	4	57.1	3	42.9							1.43	0.52
2	Letting students discuss on the topic of the listening lesson in pairs/ groups before listening to the text			1	14.3	4	57.1	2	28.6			3.14	0.69
3	Telling students the purpose of each listening exercise/ Activity	4	57.1			2	28.6	1	14.3			2.00	1.29
4	Making the instructions					2	28.6	3	42.9	2	28.6	4.00	0.81

	of the listening exercises clear												
5	Encouraging students to predict what the listening text is about before listening			6	85.7	1	14.3					2.14	0.38
6	Explaining key terms/words in the listening text/passage before Listening			1	14.3			5	71.4	1	14.3	3.85	0.90
7	Informing students to read the exercise before listening to the text	1	14.3	1	14.3			1	14.3	4	57.1	3.86	1.67
8	Telling students to copy the listening Exercise							2	28.6	5	71.4	4.71	0.49
9	Informing students what to focus on while listening	3	42.9	3	42.9	1	14.3					1.71	0.75
10	Letting students do the exercise while listening					3	42.9	4	57.1			3.57	0.53

11	Correcting and feedback of the activities, and assess the listening improvement			1	14.3	5	71.4	1	14.3			3.00	0.57
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Source: SPSS-computed result/output and personal table created

The analyzed result of the decisions in table 4.3 indicate that; in regarding to item number #1: Introducing the listening lesson by giving hints, and Item #9: Informing students what to focus on while listening these observed EFL teachers were evaluated at not at all or poor rating scale decision with the mean rating scales =1.43 and 1.71, and their respective standard deviation= 0.52 and 0.75 respectively. This implies that these two listening skill assessment tasks were poorly implemented with only 2 EFL teachers form the seven observed in the listening class observed. The rest 5(71.4%) observed EFL teachers were totally passed over these tasks knowingly/unknowingly, not implemented at all. Hence, these two listening skill assessment tasks have being practiced at very poor level or not practiced at all in the listening classrooms at the secondary schools included in the study.

In the same table, regarding item #3: Telling students the purpose of each listening exercise/ activity, and item#5: Encouraging students to predict what the listening text is about before listening, the observed EFL teachers 6(85.7%) were evaluated at poor rating scale. The mean scale 2.00 and 2.14 with the standard deviation 0.29 and 0.38 respectively, of decision on these items also indicates that these listening skill assessment activities were poorly practiced in the listening class of these secondary schools. Whereas the listening skill assessment activities under: #2: Letting students discuss on the topic of the listening lesson in pairs/ groups before listening to the text (mean =3.14 and Sd. = 0.69) and #11: Correcting and feedback of the activities, and assess the listening skill improvement of the students (mean = 3.00 and Sd. = 0.57) have being practiced at good extent, as the observed EFL teachers evaluated at good rating scale.

In contrast, these observed EFL teachers were evaluated at the rating scale good/very good decision on the listening skill assessment activities under item #6: Explaining key terms/words in the listening text/passage before listening (mean = 3.85 and Sd. = 0.9), #7: Informing students to

read the exercise before listening to the text (mean = 3.86 and Sd. = 1.67/high variation/), and #10: Letting students do the exercise while listening (mean = 3.56 and Sd. = 0.53). The high value of standard deviation $1.67 > 1$ indicates that there was high difference among the observed EFL teachers on practicing the items #6 and #7. However, the practical observation made on these listening skill assessment activities showed that the activities relatively have been practiced at good/very good extent. In relative to the other listening skill assessment activities, item #8: Telling students to copy the listening exercise (mean = 4.71 and Sd. 0.49) was practiced at excellent extent in the whole observed listening classrooms. Therefore the extent at which assessing listening skills practiced in listening classrooms was highly depends on the EFL teacher's knowledge, experience, and commitment that he/she has to implement it.

IV. Challenges EFL teachers face in assessing listening skills

Table 4.4: Responses of the questionnaires on challenges EFL Teachers face in assessing listening skills.

No.	Items	Total number of respondents: N = 100										Mean	Standard Deviation
		I can't		I strongly		I disagree		I agree		I strongly agree			
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%		
1	listening texts in which there are too many unfamiliar words including jargon and idioms are difficult to assess listening skills	0	0	0	0	27	27.0	43	43.	30	30	4.00	0.79
2	Long listening text comprehension is difficult for listening skills assessment.	0	0	11	11.0	24	24.0	41	41.0	24	24.0	3.6	0.99

3	Lack of experience and background knowledge of the teacher on listening skills assessment techniques.	0	0	5	5.0	30	30.0	44	44.0	31	31.0	3.85	0.87
4	Complex grammatical structures in the listening lesson/text	0	0	6	6.0	23	23.0	47	47.0	24	24.0	3.9	0.85
5	The attention given by the curriculum to assess listening skills	0	0	0	0	10	10.0	21	21.0	69	69.0	4.25	0.63
6	Hot/cold classroom air-condition affects the listening ability of the learners; and hence, their result	0	0	0	0	55	55.0	41	41.0	4	4.0	3.5	0.60
7	Sound disturbance in the listening classroom and the surrounding	0	0	0	0	8	8.0	45	45.0	47	47.0	3.95	0.74
8	The shortage of time and large number of students in the listening classroom	0	0	0	0	9	9.0	36	36.0	55	55.0	4.38	0.69
9	Lack of audio-visual materials and their quality			3	3.0	39	39.0	33	33.0	25	25.0	4.0	0.91

Source: SPSS-computed result/output and personal table created

To answer the item 1 in the table 4.4, the EFL teacher respondents were asked to determine their decision from the given five alternatives on the item that the listening texts in which there are too many unfamiliar words including jargon and idioms are difficult to assess listening skills or not while they assess the listening skills of their learners on the listening lesson. The result revealed that 43% of them decided on “I agree” while 30% rated their agreement to disagree and 30% to

strongly agree. However, the average response (mean = 4) indicate that the respondents were tends to the decision 'I agree' with a medium standard deviation 0.79. From the sum result, 73% of the respondents were agree and strongly agree as the indicated item considered as one of the challenges affects listening skill assessment.

Regarding on item #2 of question number three in the same table, the same respondents were asked to rate their decision whether long listening texts interfered in listening comprehension are difficult for listening skills assessment. The result of their decision shows that there was high variation (Sd. = 0.99) among their response and difficulty to come to a common average value (mean = 3.6). This revealed that the respondents were in high confusion on the effect of long listening text interfered in listening skills assessment. However, the percentage of their agreement indicates that the majority 65(65%) of them tends to "I agree or I strongly agree" that long listening text interfered in the listening lesson is difficult to assess listening skill of the students while 35(35%) of them opposes this agreement.

Regarding this, the interview conducted with tow EFL-teachers who are relatively batter experienced in the school in teaching the subject at Adu-Sigimo secondary school said that: "What was the challenges EFL teachers face to implement listening skills assessment in English language classrooms from your experience?" He responded this issue as:

".....from the beginning, English is a third language for our students; they use it for the academic instructions only in the classroom, it is no more used for communication outside. Even if they use it for this academic instruction, most probably they focus on reading skill and try to understand the content of the subject and some difficult vocabularies. However, we perceived that listening skill is also an important language skill, and hence its improvement through assessment is also important. But the listening text that we shall use in the listening lesson highly affects the active participation of our students. That means, as you say, if we use long listening text in the listening skill assessment process, the students will over burdened by listening time length, understanding the vocabulary of some new words, and worry to catch up the expected answer for the predetermined questions. In addition, using long listening texts for listening skills assessment can take more time that is difficult to cover within the normal time period; and hence it is a challenge to identify and judge the listening skill improvement of the learners".

This interview indicates dynamic challenges of listening skills assessment in using long listening text. It also indicates a direction to the EFL-teacher that what length and type of content of the listening text should be specified for listening skill assessment purpose.

Therefore, from both quantitative and qualitative result analysis made, it is possible to say that using long listening text in the process of listening skills assessment is difficult and create overburden task on the students that cannot be managed with in one period of lesson presentation; and hence, challenge to improve the students' listening skill with in a fixed period of time. So as an EFL-teachers, we must selective on the length and content of the listening text that more preferable and manageable to conduct listening skills assessment of our learners within a fixed period of time and follow-up of their improvement.

In the same way these respondents were asked to scale out their agreement on the item that lack of experience and background knowledge of the EFL teacher on listening skills challenges him/her to conduct listening skills assessment of the learners. The analyzed result of their responses revealed that 65(65%) of them decided to agree or strongly agree while 35(35%) of them opposed to disagree and strongly disagree. However, their common agreement on average (mean=3.85) with a standard deviation (Sd. =0.87) gives a hint on the agreement to the decision agree with some level of variation.

An interview discussed with a teacher who has sixteen years experiences and MA holder in TEFL on the idea "lack of experience and background knowledge of the EFL teacher on listening skills challenges him/her to conduct listening skills assessment of the learners." The result of the discussion reflected that *"..... Actually, our experience and background knowledge can have their influence on the effectiveness of our daily lesson presentation. Through developing our experience on teaching and assessing our subject as an EFL teacher, we can identify the learning ability of our students and to adjust our approach for them, know their behavior and how to control it, to flexible our teaching and assessing approach or method, etc. Listening skill assessment is also in the range of this process. However, failing to do this has a negative effect on the students' result and their expected improvement in the listening skill. For example, if there is a student that he/she is misbehaved in the listening classroom, the other students may be do not attend the listening text and its test items properly; and hence, cannot achieve the expected activities from them. It also leads the teacher to wrong judgment about the*

students' listening skill. Because, listening skills assessment must take place in a stable and disturbance-sound free classroom environment so that the students give full attention to the listening text/speech and take in the message, think over it, and respond it accordingly. Similarly, an EFL teacher with low background knowledge may be challenged with what type of listening text and contents to use, test items to apply, how to manage the time of listening lesson, and even how to correct the responses answered by the learners. Due to this and other factors, some EFL teachers practically confused and tend to jump the listening part of the text book”.

As it was justified by other researchers, the perception that the listening skill is the most difficult skill to teach does not come just from the perception of the practitioners of classroom listening lesson; Anderson (1988), argue that *“lack of sociocultural, factual conditions related with the listening circumstance, and background context knowledge of the teacher on how to teach and assess listening skill can present an obstacle to listening comprehension of the learners”*. Listening skills assessment, therefore, requires understanding the ability of the listener to identify the phonology, syntax, lexis and information content of the listening text within a fixed real time. Apart from time pressure, there are also problems stemming from inexplicit information given by the speaker and environmental obstructions such as distracting noise in the background, unclear voice or sound of recording, and lack of visual support to assist listening (Zerin, Begum, and Shahnaz; 2009).

Brown and Yule (1983) place great importance to background knowledge of both the learners and the EFL teachers, particularly the understanding of context for successful listening skills assessment. They state that listeners encounter spoken language in real life in a context of situation. The native listeners usually have a prior knowledge about background knowledge context on listening skills, which helps them to deal with the difficulties associated with spoken discourse. Brown and Yule (1983: 61) break down the necessary background knowledge in terms of speaker, listener, place, time, genre, topic and co-text. EFL teachers expected to have the knowledge and experience on guiding the learner to relate the new text with the previous knowledge and try to fit in the new information with past experience.

Therefore; based on these quantitative, qualitative, and empirical evidences it is possible to say that lack of experience and background knowledge of the EFL teacher on listening skills

challenges him/her to conduct listening skills assessment of the learners in the listening classroom.

At the same time the EFL teacher respondents were asked to decide the degree of their agreement on the idea that a complex grammatical structure in the listening lesson/text affects the listening skills assessment result of their students. In doing this, the majority 71(71%) of them scaled their decision to agree and strongly agree whereas 29(29%) of them decided to disagree or strongly disagree. The average result (mean = 3.9) with its standard deviation (Sd. = 0.85) indicates the tendency or agreement of the respondents to agree on the item.

A study conducted by Hasan (2000), as cited in Hamuoda (2013), also shows that unfamiliar words, difficult grammatical structures, and the length of the spoken text are the most important message factors that can affect the listening skills assessment result of students; and also it was found that the factors which facilitate or hinder listening skills assessment are speech rate, vocabulary, and pronunciation. This finding is conforms to the idea suggested by Hamuoda (2013), as complex grammatical structures cause much trouble to students, and also by Vogely (1998), as cited in Hamuoda (2013), that the difficulty in listening skill assessment comprehension is partly due to the structural component of the listening text. It was also revealed that clarity of the listening lesson was the main cause for difficulties of listening skill assessment.

Therefore, from these quantitative result and empirical evidence, we can summarize that complex grammatical structure in the listening skill affects the listening skill assessment implementation, its expected result, the attitude and motivation of both the teacher and the students towards its importance. And hence, it can be considered as one of the challenges to implement listening skill assessment in listening classroom.

In the table 4.4, item #5 indicates that the decision level of EFL teacher respondents on their agreement towards the attention given by the curriculum to listening skills influences the implementation of its assessment in the listening classroom. The mean score (4.25) of the analyzed response revealed that the participants were agree with low standard deviation (0.62). The percentage result of the response is also indicates that the majority 90(90%) of the respondents decided the scale of their agreement to agree and strongly agree while only 10(10%) of them decided to disagree. This quantitative result of the response indicates that the attention

given to the listening skill is low compared to the other language skills in teaching EFL; and hence, it was accepted by the teachers as it was one influence to implement listening skills assessment unlike to other skills assessment of the language.

The interview conducted with two EFL teachers at shenen-Gibe special secondary school (Jida secondary school in its previous name) regarding the attention given by the curriculum to listening skill assessment influences the implementation of its assessment. They reflected the idea as:

“..... of Corse, all kinds of language skills have to be tested and assessed equivalently to identify the skill gap of the learners and improve it, and develop their language proficiency in EFL. However, when we compared the attention given to the listening skill assessment in EFL text books, practically more emphasis is given to the reading comprehension, grammar, witting, speaking, and vocabulary. Particularly, reading comprehensions and grammar takes more of the lesson periods. It is not only in the text book and in classroom practice, but also listening skill assessment has not given enough considerations at the evaluation of Ethiopian national standard examinations. The implication of this listening skills assessment ignorance reflected on both the EFL teachers and the students to give less attention to properly practice it in the classroom. Most of us as an EFL teacher do not properly teach and assess listening skill as like as that of reading comprehensions and grammar, we tends to jump it. In similar way, our students (even the high achievers) do not give attention to listening skills as they do for other skills in EFL. From my long year experience (about sixteen years in teaching EFL), I think, the reason behind for this ignorance on listening skills assessment and its improvement is the less attention given to it by the curriculum design and absence of its evaluation on national standard examination; usually both the teacher and the students are more sensitive to the future standard examination as a target while conducting the teaching learning process today”.

The reflection of this interview result indicates the impact of less attention given to the listening skill assessment by the curriculum design and its implication on both the EFL teachers to objectively assess the continuous improvement of the skill on their students, and on the learners to attentively learn and improve their listening skill gap in details. It is also more advocates the idea suggested by Ulum (2015) regarding listening skill as, “The main focus of teaching EFL and its assessment practice in the classroom is on language structures, reading comprehension, vocabulary and writing, as well as translation from one language into the other. Unfortunately,

listening skill is ignored in the English program. Consequently, when high school students unexpectedly face with more developed or complex listening courses or audio listening tools at universities, they find themselves in a big trouble before they form the needed listening skills”.

Therefore, from these quantitative and qualitative analyzed result, and empirical evidences one can say that less attention given by the curriculum design to the listening skills assessment challenges the EFL teachers to properly practice it in the classroom and to continuously improve the listening skill gap of their students.

In table 4.4 of item #6, respondents were asked to decide on the label of their agreement at which hot/cold classroom air-condition affects the listening ability of the learners; and hence, their result. The quantitative result analysis indicate that 55(55%) of the respondents decided their agreement to disagree while 41(41%) of them agree and only small number of them 4(4%) strongly agree. The average (mean = 3.5) with small variation shows that the respondents have a partial tendency of decision to disagree or agree; and hence, hotness or coldness of classroom condition has no series influence on the implementation of listening skill assessment in classrooms. However the decision depends on the nature of the classroom condition and some related environmental impacts. As the interview conducted on the idea “hot/cold classroom air-condition affects the listening ability of the learners” with an EFL teacher at Limmu-shay secondary school. The response of the idea indicates that,

“.....the influence of the weather fluctuations on the listening skill assessment may be varying with geographical area and from season to season. Whatever it is, we have not seen it as a series problem that hinder the implementation of this listening skills assessment. The implications may be observed to some extent during the winter season. But it can be treated by implementing it outside of the classroom at a suitable place in the school compound. For me, as one EFL teacher and experienced on the profession, the series problem concerning listening skills assessment is not this hotness or coldness of classroom weather condition. Rather, the motivation of the learners to learn the language and their background proficiency on it was our today’s headache. Not to listen a listening text and answer the required or expected response on the assessment, most of the learners have great difficulty to identify and properly pronounce a word. They need to get meaning in their mother tongue word-by-word. Specially, the problem is very high when they come from elementary grade to secondary school (grade nine)”.

This interview result clearly shows that the fluctuation of the weather condition in the classroom does not more influence the implementation of the listening skill assessment. Even if it is happen in some season in the study area, it can be treated or solved easily due to the available suitable environment (shadow and green area to resist the hot weather conditions) in the school compound. This implies that, the implication of the interview response reflects the impact of classroom weather condition (hotness/coldness) depends on the environmental and seasonal factors.

Therefore from these quantitative and qualitative response analysis result, one can clearly identify that hotness/coldness of a listening classroom environment has no serious negative impacts on students' listening skill assessment, it can be treated through alternative situation and hence, it cannot be considered as a series challenge that influences the EFL teachers to implement listening skill assessment.

As for item #7 of table 4.4, the researcher found out that most of the respondents 92(92%) were agree or strongly agree on the idea that sound disturbance in the listening classroom and the surrounding negatively affects the listening skills assessment while only 8(8%) of them disagree on the item. the average result (mean = 3.95) of their response indicates that the respondents were tends to a common decision of agree with less variation (Sd. = 0.74) among their response.

Regarding this, additional information that supports this quantitative result was gathered through conducting an interview with tow EFL teachers at Toba secondary school. Their response reflected that,

“ Our school is also affected by this sound disturbance problem at the surrounding. Unfortunately, the school is nearly connected with the Mosque of Muslim religion. Particularly, if the listening lesson period is match with the time of pray the students will be disturbed so that it is totally impossible to conduct both to teach and assess the listening lesson. The students who follow the religion cannot stable both in physical and mentally; they give their attention to the sound at the outside and to go to the place physically. Resisting this tendency or need of the students tends to negative attitude on the teacher by the students (even by the society) as the teacher opposes their religion. Due to this we obligated to have and adjust another extra/free time that is out of this sound disturbance condition to cover and compensate the missed listening

lesson. This, on the other hand, creates an over burden time on the teacher, and hence, additional wastage of time. These situations have been adopted at Toba secondary school”.

The reflection of this interview response revealed that the influence of the sound disturbance in the listening classroom and the surrounding is not limited to the challenge of implementing listening skill assessment; rather it tends to negatively affect the smooth relation between the students and the teachers, among the students with diversified religions, and the community. Moreover the effect also can be considered as one factor for low success of most of the students on other EFL skills and other subjects as EFL is media of instruction. Therefore, from these analyzed results one can easily understand that sound disturbance in listening classroom and the surrounding can be considered as a serious challenge in implementing listening skill assessment.

In table 4.4 of item numbered 8 the respondents were questioned to scale out the level of their decision in the idea that the shortage of time and large number of students in the listening classroom affects them to properly implement the listening skills assessment in the classroom. To this end, the majority 91(91%) of the respondents were decided their level agreement to agree or strongly agree while 9(9%) of the hundred respondents opposes to the decision disagree. their average result (mean = 4.38) tends the common decision of agree with a medium variation of (Sd.=0.69) among their response.

Lastly, but not the end, in item numbered 9 of table 4.4, the same respondents were simultaneously asked to scale their decision from the given five possibilities on the idea lack of audio-visual materials and quality of the material affects the EFL teachers to effectively implement listening skills assessment in the classroom. The analyzed result of their decision from the quantitative response shows that almost half 58(58%) of the respondents were decided to agree or strongly agree while 42(42%) of them opposes to disagree or strongly disagree. However, the central tendency of their common agreement (mean = 4) revealed that the respondents were tends to the common decision of agree with relatively high variation (Sd. 0.94) among their responses.

Additional qualitative information was gathered through the interview conducted in group discussion at Agaro Secondary School with three voluntary EFL teachers about the idea raised on lack of audio-visual material and poor quality of the material as a teaching aid affects the

practice of EFL teachers to effectively implement teaching and assessing of listening skills of the learners in the listening classroom. The result/response of the interview suggested as,

“..... Using audio-visual material as a teaching aid for both to teach and to assess listening skill of our students has no priority; that is to say not comparable with using only sound material. For instance, if you take plasma transmission students can take in the listening message through both in their eyes and ears; they accept both visual and sound signals at the same time. If the visual image and the audio sound of the material is more clear, it can controls the attention of the students towards it, reduces the activity to be done by the teacher; and hence, the teacher uses the time to motivate, guide, and control the students to accomplish the given listening skill assessment activities in the given limited period of time. It can be also easily addressable for large class size due to its visual and audio possible adjustment. From our experience in teaching EFL, using audio-visual material as teaching aid for listening lesson can be as one mechanism to attract the attention of the students through making the visual of the listening lesson more attractive and selective for the required listening skill assessment purpose. In contrast, the absence/lack of the audio-visual material in the listening lesson implementation and its assessment creates overburden activities on the teacher in the limited period. That is to say, the teacher obligated to present the listening lesson, eye control over the students for their follow-up, motivating the slow learners, guiding on confusions in the lesson, giving feedback/or corrections, etc. Accomplishing all these activities in the usual 40 or 50 minutes has been difficult for the EFL teacher, unless he/she used an extra time. We think, this is also one reason for why EFL teachers sometimes ignore and jump the listening part of the text”.

The reflection of this interview (conducted in group discussion) response highly appreciates the importance of audio-visual material and with its quality to effectively implement the listening skill assessment with respect to attract, manage, and control students on their listening activities/tasks, to save and wisely usage of instructional time in the listening lesson, and to support and success the students on their listening skill improvement. From this perspective, one can conclude that lack of audio-visual material and its quality as a teaching aid and facilitating the students' listening skill assessment highly affects the process; and hence, it is considered as one of the challenges that face EFL teachers to implement listening skill assessment in the listening classroom.

V. Implications of the findings of the study

The implications of those findings on teachers' perception on listening skill assessment reflect that there was great variation of perception among the teachers at the same level; 2/5(40%) of the teachers perceived as listening skill assessment is not important, time consuming, and can be covered through the assessment of the other skills. The actual practice observed in the classroom also more reflects that there was no equal emphasis given to listening skill assessment as that of other skills, it was overshadowed. On the other hand, listening activities required EFL teachers at high/very high extent for the success of the learners. However, the way they perceived and practice it in the classroom contradicted with language acquisition theory, educational intervention, and curriculum need. More of, it proves some of the findings of recent scholar researchs related with the study; such as: Hamuda(2013), Brown(2012), Coombe(2009), Hasan(2000). The implications of identified challenges not only affect the listening skill improvement of the students but also the smooth relation, social interaction, and success in other subjects that contribute to ignorance of the skill. In addition, it also reflects that a perfect language skill development is the integration of all improved skills through continuous assessment and evaluation in the language. Particularly, it clearly indicates that listening skill is the primary medium of receiving the required information from the speaker or lesson inputs. Assessing listening skills need more attention, skillful, experience and commitments, stable and save learning environment, and supporting device for more effectiveness. It also indicate that, the stakeholders who design the curriculum expected to increase the contents of teaching listening skill and activities of assessing listening skill in each EFL text books at secondary school. They also expected to give attention and conduct farther study on how to evaluate listening skill of students at the national exam so that both the teacher and the students sensitive to the skill while learning as that of other skills of the language.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, & RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE FINDINGS

To address the objectives, the researcher raised three basic research questions on the study. First, how EFL teachers actually perceived assessing listening skills in EFL classroom? Secondly, to what extent these teachers practiced assessing listening skills in EFL classrooms? Thirdly, what were the challenges face EFL teachers in assessing listening skills in listening classroom? To answer these research questions, the researcher employed mixed methods and followed some procedures and ethical issues.

5.1. SUMMARIES

The main purpose of the study was to investigate EFL teachers' perception and practice of assessing listening skills assessment, and the challenges they face in EFL classroom at Gumay, Goma, Setema, and Sigimo wereda secondary schools in west Jimma. To address this main purpose, the following specific objectives were in mind with the assumption that the achievement of each of them sum total to the success of the purpose of the study.

- To examine EFL teachers' perception of assessing listening skills in English classroom.
- To find out the extent to which EFL teachers practice assessing listening skills in English classrooms.
- To identify the challenges EFL teachers may face in assessing listening skills in the English classrooms.

To achieve each of these objectives the following three basic research questions were raised and used as a guide line:

1. How do EFL teachers actually perceived assessing listening skills in English as a foreign language classes?
2. To what extent do EFL teachers practice assessing listening skills in English as foreign language classroom?
3. What are the possible challenges that EFL teachers may face in assessing listening skills in English as foreign language classroom?

To answer these basic research questions different efforts were made through revising different empirical research documents, journals, and books directly related with this study; passing

different procedures and employing designs and methods. Descriptive survey research design was employed to describe the existing situation in the study area. Purposive, Available, and simple random sampling procedures were applied to select participants for questionnaire, interview, and classroom observation, respectively. Hundred percent of the EFL teachers in the targeted secondary schools have participated on the study. Survey method was followed to collect both qualitative and quantitative data through the instruments: questionnaire, semi-structured interview, and classroom observation checklists. Mixed approach was applied to analyze and combine the result of both quantitative and qualitative data.

The quantitative data collected through questionnaire (from 100 EFL teachers) and observation checklists (from 7 EFL teachers) was properly organized as required, presented in tables, and then analyzed using suitable statistical tools such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. To make the data analyzing process so simple and tangible, these statistical tools were measured through using the SPSS-version 23 software, as a measuring instrument. Similarly, the qualitative information gathered through semi structured interviews (from 15 EFL teachers) was narrated and presented in a quotation mark, to indicate that it was direct idea of the participants on the interview. Then, both the quantitative analyzed data and the reflection of qualitative information were briefly discussed and also interpreted. Finally, the following findings were arrived.

More of the participants were matured enough to give reasonable and evidential answer, first degree and above holders in educational status and six years and above in experience. This enables the researcher to get evidential and acceptable response as they were certified and teach the subject. Half percent of the participants believed the importance of listening skills assessment. However, the majority of them perceived listening skills assessment as boring, time consuming, and difficult task to implement it in one lesson period. Due to this, most of the listening parts of EFL textbooks were jumped by the teachers. They considered listening skills as an extra language skill that can be developed naturally and through the improvement of other skills in the language. They perceived as errors of grammar and spelling should be penalized in the process of correcting students' written response; listening text must be selective for conducting listening skills assessment and not all kinds of manuscripts used for assessing listening skills. In case of listening skill activities, they perceived as listening close test is one way of selective listening skill assessment and dictation is not a kind of discrete-pint testing

approach in assessing listening skills. Regarding on the effects on the students' result, all most all of the participants were commonly perceived as the type and length of the listening text, the speed and quality of the reading text/audio material, and position of the student in the classroom can affect the listening assessment result of the students.

The EFL teachers practiced or used listening skills assessment to different extent. They practiced to very poor or not at all the activities: giving hints and informing students what to focus on while listening, telling students the purpose of each listening activity, and encouraging students to predict what the listening text is about before listening. They practiced/used the activities: letting students to discuss on the topic of the listening lesson, correcting and feedback of students' response to poor extent. In contrast, they practiced/used the listening activities: explaining key terms/words in the listening text/passage before listening, informing students to read the exercise before listening to the text, and letting students do the exercise while listening to good extent. Therefore, the extent to which EFL teachers practiced/used the listening skill assessment activities in English language classrooms was highly depends on their knowledge, experience, and commitment that he/she has to implement it. However, on average, the activities of assessing listening skill were practiced by those EFL teachers to poor extent.

From the combined result of interview and questionnaire responses, EFL teachers face several possible challenges in the process of assessing listening skills in English as a foreign language classroom. However, the majority of participants identified the following issues as main challenges face them to implement listening skills assessment: listening texts in which there are too many unfamiliar words including jargon and idioms, long listening text interfered in the listening lesson was difficult to assess listening skill of the students, lack of experience and background knowledge of the EFL teacher on teaching listening skills challenges him/her to conduct listening skills assessment of the learners, complex grammatical structure in the listening lesson/text affects the listening skills assessment result of their students. Less attention given by the curriculum to listening skills influences the implementation of its assessment in the listening classroom, sound disturbance in the listening classroom and the surrounding seriously affects the listening skills assessment, shortage of time and large number of students in the listening classroom affects them to properly implement the listening skills assessment in the classroom.

5.2. CONCLUSIONS

- EFL teachers perceived listening skills assessment as boring, time consuming, and difficult task to implement it in one lesson period, extra language skill that can be improved through the improvement of other EFL skills. Due to this, most of the listening parts of EFL textbooks were jumped by the teachers; hence, assessing listening skill was overshadowed by the assessment of other skills in the language.

- The extent to which EFL teachers practiced activities of assessing listening skills in English as a foreign language classrooms was highly depends on their knowledge, experience, and commitment that he/she has to implement it. However, practically the activities of assessing listening skills were implemented by EFL teachers to poor extent.

- The main challenges EFL teachers face in implementing listening skills assessment were:
 - ✓ sound disturbance in the listening classroom and the surrounding
 - ✓ shortage of time and large number of students in the listening classroom
 - ✓ lack of experience and background knowledge of the EFL teacher on teaching listening skills
 - ✓ complex grammatical structure in the listening lesson/text
 - ✓ less attention given by the curriculum to listening skills assessment
 - ✓ long listening text interfered in the listening lesson
 - ✓ too many unfamiliar words including jargon and idioms in the listening text

5.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

EFL teachers were recommended to give more attention and well perceived the equivalent importance of assessing listening skills as that of other skills assessment in the language. A perfect language skill development is the integration of all improved skills in the language. Specifically, in the process of teaching and learning, listening skill is the primary medium of receiving the required information or lesson inputs. Without having proper lesson inputs, students may be challenged to understand the lesson and to do the correct instructions after the lesson passed, especially in a foreign language. This medium of receiving correct lesson inputs improved through continuously assessing listening skills.

In practice of listening skills assessment in English language classrooms, EFL teachers strongly recommended to practice all expected listening activities in a listening period to very high extent in respect to their sequential order effectively. In addition, EFL teachers also advised to understand and use what type of listening skills assessment items for what type of listening text and the correcting mechanisms (subjective or objective) they have to follow, the speed and quality of reading the text/audio material, and position of the student in the classroom affect (positively or negatively) the listening skills assessment result of their students.

To minimize challenges EFL teachers face in practicing listening skills assessment, they were advised to pre assess the listening text whether it is free from the identified challenges before directly using it in the classroom. Moreover, they were recommended to reduce the possibility of these identified challenges through sharing of experience from more experienced EFL teachers and continuously update themselves on what to do, how to do, and for what purpose concerning assessing listening skills.

To this end, the researcher would like also to recommend for future research to conduct a detail study on how both the EFL teachers and students able to give more attention to listening skills in similar to that of other skills in the language.

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Appendix A

Questionnaires

Introduction: Dear Sir, I am post Graduate (MA) student in EFL at Jimma University. I am conducting a thesis for the partial fulfillment of my MA program graduation on the topic “*EFL Teachers’ perception, practice, and challenges they face in Listening assessment at west Jimma zone secondary schools.*” The purpose of the study is to investigate the perception of teachers, their practice, and challenges they face in listening assessment. So, please, I need fact and use full information on these variables from you to conduct the study and to answer questions raised in it. For the success completion of my work, your fact based contribution on the study will have a great impact on the conclusion made at the end of the study. Remember that, your response is used only for this research contribution and secretly guaranteed. Your expected decision is leveled as: I cannot decide it, I strongly disagree, I disagree, I agree, I strongly agree. The level of each expected decision is scaled as: 1= I cannot decide it, 2 = I strongly disagree, 3 = I disagree, 4 = I agree, 5 = I strongly agree. Hence, please, take a time and try to think on each of the following questionnaire items and give your decision by using ‘√’ mark in the given rating scale.

1. Questionnaires on Participant’s demography

1.1.School_____

1.2.Educational status: BA in TEFL MA in TEFL PHD in TEFL

1.3. EFL teaching Experience in years: 0-2 years 3-5 years 6-8 years
9-12 years above 13years.

2. Questionnaires on how EFL teachers actually perceived listening skill assessment

Key: 1= I cannot decide it, 2 = I strongly disagree, 3 = I disagree, 4 = I agree, 5 = I strongly agree.

No.	Items	Rating scales
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		1	2	3	4	5
1	I have more awareness on the importance of listening skills assessment in TEFL					
2	I find that listening skills assessment is boring and not interesting lesson					
3	Any type of listening text can be used for listening skills assessment.					
4	Errors of grammar and spelling are penalized while assessing listening skills.					
5	A listening cloze test is one way of selective listening skill assessment.					
6	Dictation is a kind of discrete-point testing approach in listening skills assessment.					
7	The type and length of the listening text, the speed and quality of reading the text/audio, and position of the student in the classroom affect the listening skills assessment result of students.					

Source: Hamouda(2013): *Teachers' perception to the importance of listening skill assessment*. Qasim University, Soudy.

3. Questionnaires on to what extent listening activities required EFL teachers towards the listening skills assessment

Key: 1=At very v/low, 2= At low, 3= At medium, 4=At high, 5=At v/high

No.	Items	Rating scale				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Letting students to discuss on the topic of the listening lesson in pairs/groups before listening to the text					
2	Telling students the purpose of each listening exercise/ activity					
3	Making the instruction of the listening exercises clear					
4	Encouraging the students to predict what the listening text is about before listening					
5	Explaining key terms/words in the listening text/passage before Listening					
6	Informing students to read the listening exercise before listening to the					
7	Informing students what to focus in while listening and to do the listening exercise					
8	Reading the listening passage (at maximum 3 times) aloud or use audio-visual material					

9	Correcting and feedback of the listening exercise, and assess the listening skill improvement						
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Source: Sema(2013), *To what extent do the English teachers practice listening activities?* Bilkent University, Ankara.

4. Questionnaires on challenges face EFL teachers in implementing listening skills assessment.

Key: 1= I cannot decide it, 2 = I strongly disagree, 3 = I disagree, 4 = I agree, 5 = I strongly agree.

No.	Items	Rating scale				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Listening texts in which there are too many unfamiliar words including jargon and idioms are difficult to assess listening skills					
2	Long listening text comprehension is difficult for listening skills assessment.					
3	Lack of experience and background knowledge of the teacher on listening skills assessment techniques.					
4	Complex grammatical structures in the listening lesson/text					
5	The attention given by the curriculum to assess listening skills					
6	Hot/cold classroom air-condition affects the listening ability of the learners; and hence, their result					
7	Sound disturbance in the listening classroom and the surrounding					
8	The shortage of time and large number of students in the listening classroom					
9	Lack of audio-visual materials					

Source: Hamouda(2013): *What problems encounter EFL teachers in assessing listening text?* Qasim University, Soudy.

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Appendix B

Interviews

Aural Introduction:

Part one: *Interview on school name and interviewee information*

1. School _____
2. Educational Status; _____
3. Experience in teaching EFL. _____ years

Ok thank you;

Part two: *Interview on teachers' perception on EFL listening skills assessment.*

Dear teacher,

- How do you compare listening skill assessment in relative to the assessment of other skills in TEFL classroom, in terms of its importance and load?.....ok,
- Do you believe that any type of listening text can be used for listening skills assessment? Why/why not?.....ok,
- How do you correct the errors of grammar and spelling made by the students are while assessing listening skills?.....ok,
- Do you aware that listening cloze test is one way of selective listening skill assessment technique? How do you practice it in listening classroom.....ok,
- What about dictation, do you perceived as it is a kind of discrete point approach in listening skills assessment? Why/why not?.....Ok,
- How do you aware that the type and length of the listening assessment text, the speed and quality of reading the text/audio, and position of the student in the classroom affect the listening skills assessment result of students?.....ok,

- Finally, How do you perceived and differentiate the listening skills assessment activities expected form the teacher and from the students side, in terms of each of the three phases (pre, while, and post listening) ?.....ok.

Part three: *Interviews on challenges that face EFL teachers in implementing listening skill assessment.*

Oral introduction.....

- What are the main challenges related with these factors and others on implementing effective listening skill assessment of students in your school?, ok,
- What do you think the causes of these factors?....., ok,
- Can you suggest some ideas as a solution, to reduce these challenges from your practical experience knowledge?.....,ok

Thank you very much teacher for all of your contribution, have a nice time!

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Appendix-C

Observation Checklist: *To what extent do EFL teachers practice or use listening skills assessment in English as foreign language classes?*

1st Date: _____ Periods: _____ Sections: _____

Topics : 1. _____ 2. _____

School Name: _____

2nd Date: _____ Periods: _____ Sections: _____

Topics: 1. _____ 2. _____

School Name: _____

3rd Date: _____ Period: _____ Section _____

Topics: 1. _____ 2. _____

School Name: _____

4th . Date: _____ . period _____ Section: _____

Topic:1. _____

School Name: _____

Key: 1= Not at all 2= Poor 3= Good 4= Very good 5= Excellent

	Activities	1 st Date					2 nd Date					3 rd Date					4 th Date					Ave
		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
1	Introducing the listening lesson by giving hints																					
2	Letting students discuss on the topic of the listening lesson in pairs/groups before listening to the text																					
3	Telling students the purpose of each listening																					

Data gathered from classroom observation on *to what extent do EFL teachers practice or use listening skills assessment in English as foreign language classes?*

1st Date: 04/07 /2013 E.c. Period: 2nd, 4th Section: 12th A, 10th A,

Topics: 1. Ethiopia must move forward 2. Different forms of energy

2nd Date: 11/07/2013 E.c. Period: 3rd, 5th Section: 11th C, 9th B

Topics: 1. The Education system in Ethiopia . 2. My favorite free time activity

3rd Date: 18/07/2013E.c. Period: 4th, 6th Section 10th B, 9th D

Topics: 1. The story of an orphan, 2. A famous Ethiopian entrepreneur

4th. Date: 25/07/2013 E.c. Period 3rd Section: 9thA

Topic:1. A talk about nutrition

Key: 1= Not at all 2= Poor 3= Good 4= Very good 5= Excellent

No	Listening activities in the listening lesson, by the teacher	Observed EFL-teacher	1 st Date: 2-class observations at Toba Secondary School					2 nd Date: 2-class observations at Agaro Secondary School					3 rd Date: 2-class observations at Adu-Sigimo Secondary School					4 rd Date:1-class observation at Gatira Secondary School					
			1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	
1	Introducing the listening lesson by giving hints	1 st		x						x				x					x				
		2 nd		x							X				x								
2	Letting students discuss on the topic of the listening lesson in pairs/ groups before listening to the text	1 st				X				x					x								x
		2 nd				X				X						x							
3	Telling students	1 st		X					x					x					x				

	the purpose of each listening exercise/ Activity	2 nd			X			x			X									
4	Making the instructions of the listening exercises clear	1 st			X				X			X						x		
		2 nd			X					x				x						
5	Encouraging students to predict what the listening text is about before listening	1 st		X				x					x					x		
		2 nd		X				x						X						
6	Explaining key terms/words in the listening text/passage before listening	1 st				X			X					X					x	
		2 nd				X			X				x							
7	Informing students to read the exercise before listening to the text	1 st				X					x		x							x
		2 nd					X				x	x								
8	Telling students to copy the listening exercise	1 st				X					x									x
		2 nd				X					x									
9	Informing students what to focus on	1 st	x							X		x								x
		2 nd	x						X											x
10	Reading the	1 st				x			X											x

	listening passage aloud or use audio-visual material	2 nd				X					X					x				
11	Letting students do the exercise while listening	1 st				X				x						x				X
		2 nd				X				X						x				
12	Correcting and feedback of the activities, and assess the listening	1 st		X							X				X					X
		2 nd			X					X					X					